

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the  
Bergen County Board of Social Services  
August 3, 2021**

**PRESENT:** William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson  
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer  
Tracy S. Zur, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member (Arrived Late)  
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member  
Susan Silverstein, Board Member  
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel  
Adina Yacoub, Director  
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

**ABSENT:** Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson  
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer  
Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member  
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster  
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on August 3, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. by way of Webex video/audio teleconference.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

John L. Schettino, Esq. called the meeting to order and read the notice required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

"Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of the meeting scheduled for August 3, 2021 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2021, including a notice of the scheduled time, scheduled date, and location of this meeting at the Bergen County Administrative Building, One Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack, New Jersey.
2. The mailing of this notice of the time, date, and location of this meeting to "The Record", which was published on July 27, 2021 and to the Herald News, which was published on July 27, 2021.
3. By filing of the notice of the time, date, and location of this meeting with the Bergen County Clerk, said filing having taken place on July 22, 2021.

A quorum being achieved, the Board met in Public Session.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

Chairman William E. Connelly chaired the meeting.

**Flag Salute**

Chairman William E. Connelly led those present in a salute to the flag.

**Roll Call**

A Roll Call was taken for Open Session:

MEMBERS	TITLE	PRESENT	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X	
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON		X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER		X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER		X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER		X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER		X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X	
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER		X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	

**Open Public Comment Period**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to open the meeting for public comment. A motion to open the Open Public Comment Period, for a three-minute limit with the option of speaking again, was offered by Yris Encarnacion, seconded by Susan Silverstein, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

For the record, Commissioner Tracy S. Zur arrived late and was present.

**Gina Kennedy – BCBSS Employee**

Gina Kennedy spoke on behalf of CWA Local 1089. She discussed that they are currently working out a contract but the proposals coming back from management is an insult to the

staff. The entire staff during the pandemic did their due diligence, worked hard, and delivered benefits to residents of Bergen County timely. Staff made Bergen County come out with high rates compared to other county welfare agencies throughout the state. Many employees were going through tough times and had their own personal issues to contend with such as their own family members who were sick with COVID during the pandemic, but staff came through and made the agency excel. She pointed out that management and the confidential staff received raises and they are looking for what is owed to them too. They are looking for a cost-of-living increase and want to be recognized for their hard work during these hard times.

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to close the Open Public Comment Period of the Open Session. A motion to close the Open Public Comment Period was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Elaine K. Meyerson, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

**Adoption of Minutes:**

**(a) Open Session Minutes of July 6, 2021**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of July 6, 2021 was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**(a) Bills List:**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to approve the Bill’s List. A motion to

approve the Bill's List was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Yris Encarnacion, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

**(b) Schedule of Vouchers:**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to approve the Schedule of Vouchers. A motion to approve the Schedule of Vouchers was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Scott Modery reported that the Auditor is finishing up the audit and will most likely attend the September 9, 2021 Board Meeting. In addition, he reported that we received notification from the Division of Family Development that they approved the CY 2021 budget for the Bergen County Board of Social Services.

**Administration Report:**

**(a) Monthly Reports – Statistical & Financial:**

A snapshot of caseload and expenditures was included in each of the Board Member's packet.

Adina Yacoub reported that the TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) caseload decreased from 232 to 227 and is down by 5 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went down by 56 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased from 22,450 to 22,833 and is up by 383 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 3,391 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload decreased from 427 to 420 and is

down by 7 cases and compared to one year ago it went down by 137 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from 35,460 to 36,047 and is down by 413 individuals.

In July, the agency received a total of 1,103 cash and SNAP applications compared to last month 1,097. In July, we received 1,223 Medicaid applications compared to June when we received 1,157 new Medicaid applications. The total for July was 2,326 new applications compared to June which was 2,254. In July, we processed 2,736 applications compared to June when we processed 3,116 new applications. In July, we processed 8,585 actions compared to June when we processed 8,883 actions. We continue to remain timely with our processing of TANF, GA, SNAP, and Medicaid applications. We are first in the State with our Medicaid renewals for the last three months.

Starting in November 2021 and ending in May 2022 the Division of Medicaid and Health Services (DMAHS) will be adding over 18,000 renewals for individuals on Medicaid that we could not make disposition on due to the health emergency. That will certainly increase our normal workload. The Chairman graciously approved overtime for August and it will probably be needed for those seven months.

In the month of July, our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 30 individuals/families in motels. We have 17 families in the HEARTS Program, 10 in the Emergency Shelter, and 7 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 5 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We have 85 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance cases. We had 12 placements as referrals from 211. We have 254 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 85 referrals and currently have 44 open cases.

**(b) Memoranda to the Board**

Adina Yacoub reported that the following actions were initiated or occurred in July 2021. On July 12, 2021, we had our budget hearing with the County and it went very well. We received praise from several budget committee members. It was very gratifying to know that our good work is noted and appreciated. Also on July 12, 2021, we had representatives from Passaic County come in and learn our best practices about case banking and how they could implement it in their County. They will make several visits and meet with our staff. Adina Yacoub was invited and attended the Bergen County Food Pantry Summit in Van Saun Park on July 28, 2021. She was asked to present on the Board's programs with an emphasis on NJ SNAP. Adina Yacoub expressed that she is grateful for our partnership with the Bergen County Food Security Task Force headed by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur. The State issued a one-time \$500 diaper benefit to TANF families with children under the age of 3. She reported that for the last three months we have ranked first in our Medicaid renewal timeliness statewide. We received the closeout letter regarding the complaint of March 18, 2021 to the NJ Department of Health. The letter stated that no violations were found; therefore, the case is closed. For ABD clients we mailed 3,712 SNAP applications and 587 were returned; about 16%. Out of 587 returned: 403 were approved, 177 were denied, and 7 are pending. For the Family Care clients, we mailed out 1,783 SNAP applications. So far, 187 were returned of which 78 approved, 84 denied, and 25 still pending. This initiative thus far provided 5,495

households an opportunity to apply and so far, 481 families are approved and receiving SNAP benefits. Maximum SNAP benefits have been extended to July. Our Burial Assistance Program offers burial assistance to individuals who are active on Medicaid and don't have the funds for proper burial. In July 2021 we had 12 inquiries, 24 approved cases, and 8 denied cases. We paid out \$77,276 in assistance and recovered \$11,307 from those who had PNA (personal needs allowance accounts). We currently have 193 employees who are fully vaccinated, which is 83% of our total staff. In order to open to the public, we need staff that deals with the clients to be fully vaccinated and therefore, they have been advised to do so. We are working with the County, as well as, other partners to offer rapid rehousing to our TANF clients who currently reside in the HEARTS shelter. Adina Yacoub met with the Director and staff of Hunger Free NJ. They like the partnership they have with our agency and are looking to replicate it in other county welfare agencies.

Commissioner Tracy S. Zur sent out a big thank you to Adina Yacoub for attending and representing the agency at the first Bergen County Food Pantry Summit event in Van Saun Park. She mentioned that Adina Yacoub was wonderful and a big help to the pantries who were present. She reported that 29 pantries were present, and it was a very successful event.

### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman William E. Connelly thanked the County Executive and the Bergen County Commissioners for making the transition in the budget process work well.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee**

Yris Encarnacion reported from July 1 to July 31, 2021 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$151,717.35 and the year-to-date 2021 is \$295,409.88. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of July.

#### **(b) Audit & Budget Committee**

No report.

#### **(c) Building & Grounds Committee**

No report.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **(a) Next Board Meeting Date**

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on **Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** by way of **Webex.**

### **Action Items:**

**Resolutions:**

- (a) 2021.8.03 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2021.8.03 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2021.8.03 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from Part Time to Full Time for One Keyboarding Clerk 1
- (d) 2021.8.03 (4) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (e) 2021.8.03 (5) – Resolution Authorizing an Offer of Employment for One Internal Provisional Full-Time Assistant Administrative Supervisor of Income Maintenance
- (f) 2021.8.03 (6) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for Three Internal Part-Time Clerks 1 to Full-Time Clerks 1
- (g) 2021.8.03 (7) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for Two External Part-Time Clerks 1
- (h) 2021.8.03 (8) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for Two Provisional Internal Full-Time Human Services Specialist 3
- (I) 2021.8.03 (9) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Provisional Internal Full-Time Human Services Specialist 4
- (j) 2021.8.03 (10)– Resolution Authorizing an Offer of Employment for Four Provisional Internal Full-Time Human Services Specialist 1
- (k)2021.8.03 (11)– Resolution Approving Proposal for Call Accounting Software
- (l) 2021.8.03 (12)– Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12

A motion to approve Resolutions (a) – (k) was offered by Yris Encarnacion, seconded by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Board did not take action on Resolution 2021.8.03 (12) since it was determined that there was no need to go into Closed Session.

The Board continued in Open Session.

**Adoption of Minutes:**

**Closed Session Minutes of July 6, 2021**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes of July 6, 2021 was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Elaine K. Meyerson, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. With no further business to conclude, a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:51 p.m. was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Yris Encarnacion, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON	X			
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON				X
ERIN N. DELANEY	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
JOHN E. TEN HOEVE, JR., ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER				X
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Respectfully submitted,



Adina Yacoub  
Director