

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
October 5, 2021**

PRESENT: William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson
Elaine K. Meyerson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer
Erin N. Delaney, Secretary Treasurer (Arrived Late)
Tracy S. Zur, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member
Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member
John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., County Adjuster
Susan Silverstein, Board Member
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel
Adina Yacoub, Director
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

ABSENT: Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on October 5, 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 October 5, 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 September 27, 2021 and to the Herald News, which was published on September 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 September 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	

For the record, Erin N. Delaney joined the meeting by phone at this point.

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 Erin N. Delaney, seconded by John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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			

As there were no members of the public that wished to address the Board, 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 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			

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of September 9, 2021

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of September 9, 2021 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	

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 John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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 John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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			

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 222 to 220 and is down by 2 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went down by 32 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload increased from 22,858 to 23,067 and is up by 209 cases from last month and compared to one year ago it went up by 3,634 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload increased from 396 to 397 and is up by 1 case and compared to one year ago it went down by 145 cases, and Medicaid individuals decreased from 35,703 to 34,030 and is down by 1,673 individuals.

In September, the agency received a total of 1,739 cash and SNAP applications compared to August we received 1,392 new applications. In September, we received 1,147 new Medicaid applications compared to August when we received 1,151 new Medicaid applications. The total for September was 2,886 new applications compared to August which was 2,543. In September, we processed 2,810 new applications compared to August when we processed 2,613 new applications. In September, we processed 8,628 total actions compared to August when we processed 8,220 total actions. We continue to remain timely with our processing of TANF, GA, SNAP, and Medicaid applications.

In the month of September, our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 28 individuals/families in motels. We have 15 families in the HEARTS Program, 10 in the Emergency Shelter, and 5 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 9 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We had 68 Emergency Assistance applications and 121 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance cases. We received and placed 27 placements as referrals from 211. We have 255 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 77 referrals and currently have 37 open cases.

Elaine K. Meyerson asked Adina Yacoub if she had to add staff to address the increase in SNAP. Adina Yacoub explained that we have not added more staff but did request overtime, which Chairman William E. Connelly approved. With overtime, we were able to be timelier and catch up.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

Adina Yacoub reported that the following actions were initiated or occurred in September 2021. In October, staff will be at seven different outreach sites taking SNAP applications for seniors or whomever comes to these sites. Staff will be in Paramus, Dumont, Midland Park, Cliffside Park, Garfield, and Bergenfield. We are willing to go to additional outreach sites but we need the approval of the center. We also have an ongoing presence at the Housing, Health & Human Services Center in Hackensack. For ABD clients we mailed 3,712 SNAP applications and 610 were returned; about 16%. Out of 610 returned: 410 were approved, 181 were denied, and 19 are pending. For the FamilyCare clients, we mailed out 1,783 SNAP applications and so far, 245 were returned of which 90 approved, 109 denied, and 46 still pending. This initiative thus far provided 5,495 households an opportunity to apply and so far, 500 families are approved and receiving SNAP benefits. Our Burial Assistance Program offers burial assistance to individuals who are active on Medicaid and don't have the funds for a proper burial. In September 2021 we had 16 inquiries, 22 approved cases, and 1 denied case. We paid out \$62,381 in assistance and recovered \$87.00 from those who had PNA (personal needs allowance accounts). Although this month's memo reported that we currently have 206 employees, today we are actually up to 208 employee who are fully vaccinated, which is 91% 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. Some staff took a virtual class called Culture of Civility, which is how to create a harassment free work place. We are expecting some Afghan refugees to apply for our social service programs. The State told us that there are 9,000 refugees at Fort Dix. At this time, we do not know how many will remain in New Jersey and how many of them are going to be Bergen County residents. During Hunger Action Month, Governor Phil Murphy signed into law a comprehensive legislation package aimed at combatting food insecurity and ending hunger in New Jersey. The six bills will commit to addressing hunger by expanding access to the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and its benefits, bolstering school meal programs, and establishing the Office of the Food Insecurity Advocate. Additionally, the Governor also signed A5690, which directs the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to include information on SNAP on any materials pertaining to unemployment compensation benefits. This will result in an increase of SNAP applications for us.

Elaine K. Meyerson asked for a copy of the Agency's written vaccination policy.

Adina Yacoub explained that the policy is currently under Labor Counsel's review but once she gets it back from him she will share it with the entire Board. She mentioned that the County has a policy, and we adopted some of it.

Chairman's Report

In regard to the platform for next month's Board Meeting, Chairman William E. Connelly discussed whether the Board Members wanted to meet in person or by way of Webex. The Board agreed to meet in person but to also give the option for members to call in by phone on **Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** In addition, administration is currently working on the Adopt-a-Family project. More details will follow next month.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

In the absence of the committee, Michele Darmochwal read the committee report into the record. She reported from September 1 to September 30, 2021 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$5,407.88 and the year-to-date 2021 is \$314,461.20. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of September.

(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 in person on **Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.** in the Floor 4 Board Room.

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2021.10.05 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2021.10.05 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2021.10.05. (3) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment to Promote One Internal Data Processing Programmer to Provisional Supervisor of Data Processing Programming

- (d) 2021.10.05 (4) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment to Promote One Internal Account Clerk to Provisional Senior Account Clerk
- (e) 2021.10.05 (5) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment to Promote Two Internal Full-Time Clerks 1 or Keyboarding Clerks 1 or Records Support Technician 1 to Two Full-Time Human Services Aides
- (f) 2021.10.05 (6) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment to Promote One Internal Full-Time Records Support Technician 1 to One Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (g) 2021.10.05 (7) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Provisional Internal or External Part-Time Records Support Technician 1
- (h) 2021.10.05 (8) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for Two Internal Part-Time Clerks 1 to Two Full-Time Clerks 1
- (i) 2021.10.05 (9)– Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One External Part-Time Clerk 1 Bilingual in Spanish
- (j) 2021.10.05 (10)– Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One Internal or External Part-Time Human Services Aide Bilingual in Spanish
- (k) 2021.10.05 (11)– Resolution Terminating Shared Services Agreement with the County of Bergen for QPA Services
- (l) 2021.10.05 (12)– Resolution Approving Shared Services Agreement with the Bergen County Utilities Authority for QPA Services
- (m)2021.10.05 (13)– 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) – (l) was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Erin N. Delaney, 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 (m) 2021.10.05 (13) 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 September 9, 2021

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes of September 9, 2021 was offered by Chairman William E. Connelly, 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	

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 4:55 p.m. was offered by John E. Ten Hoeve, Jr., Esq., 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			

Respectfully submitted,



Adina Yacoub
Director