

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the  
Bergen County Board of Social Services  
August 2, 2023**

**PRESENT:** **Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson**  
**Susan Silverstein, Assistant Secretary Treasurer**  
**Diane DeCarlo, Esq., County Adjuster**  
**Yris Encarnacion, Board Member (Arrived Late)**  
**Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member**  
**John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel**  
**Scott Modery, Director**  
**Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary**

**ABSENT:** **William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson**  
**Elaine K. Meyerson, Secretary Treasurer**  
**Tracy S. Zur, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member**  
**Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member**  
**Junior Hernandez, Board Member**

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on August 2, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the 4th Floor Board Room of the Bergen County Board of Social Services, 218 Route 17 North, Rochelle Park, New Jersey.

**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 2, 2023 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2023, 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 31, 2023 and to the Herald News, which was published on July 31, 2023.

- 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 27, 2023.

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

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

In Chairman William E. Connelly’s absence, Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie chaired the meeting.

**Flag Salute**

Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie 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	
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURUER		X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASSISTANT SECRETARY TREASURER	X	
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER		X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER		X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X	
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER		X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X	
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER		X

For the record, Yris Encarnacion arrived at this point.

**Open Public Comment Period**

Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie 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 Alexandra Harwin, Esq., and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER				X

There being no comments from the public, Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie 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 Yris Encarnacion, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER				X

**Adoption of Minutes:**

**(a) Open Session Minutes of July 6, 2023**

Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of July 6, 2023 was offered by Alexandra Harwin, Esq., seconded by Susan Silverstein, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER				X

Geri Nestrowitz, Supervising Accountant, provided the Treasurer’s Report this afternoon. She mentioned that everyone should be looking at a revised Bill’s List & Schedule of Vouchers. In regard to the revised Bill’s List, Ms. Nestrowitz pointed out \$2,224 made payable to Scott Modery. She explained that expense was for the agency’s Log Me In subscription that ended approximately two months ago. The charge was put on Mr. Modery’s credit card to get the subscription back up and running. Mr. Modery explained that the company sent renewal notices to the agency’s IT supervisor who retired at the end of last year. As a result, we were not getting the renewal notices and they shut off the service. The agency has outstation and HEARTS staff that use this service so we had to get it back up and running as quick as possible. Scott Modery mentioned that prior to proceeding he spoke with the Chairman about this item.

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**(a) Bills List and Schedule of Vouchers:**

Vice-Chairwoman Randi Duffie requested a motion to approve the Bill’s List and Schedule of Vouchers. A motion to approve the Bill’s List and Schedule of Vouchers was offered by Alexandra Harwin, Esq., seconded by Diane DeCarlo, Esq., and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	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 packets.

Scott Modery reported that the TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) caseload for June 2023 was 369 and May 2023 was 385 cases, and compared to one year ago it went up 108 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload for June was 22,693 and May was 22,758 and compared to one year ago it went up by 882 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload for June was 402 and May was 421 cases and compared to one year ago it went down by 105 cases. In regard to Medicaid, there were 60,293 individuals in June and in May 2023 there were 61,043 individuals a decrease of 750 individuals.

Burial stats are as follows: 21 inquires, 21 approved, and 0 denials. The agency paid out \$113,965.00 and recovered \$1,740.03.

In June 2023, the agency received 1,540 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,295 Medicaid applications for a total of 2,835. In May 2023, the agency received 1,570 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,448 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,018.

Our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 5 individuals/families in motels. We have 25 families in the HEARTS Program, 14 in the Emergency Shelter, and 11 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 5 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We had 55 Emergency Assistance applications and 93 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance. We had 33 placements as referrals from 211. We have 248 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 81 referrals and currently have 45 open cases.

**(b) Memoranda to the Board**

Scott Modery reported that on July 28<sup>th</sup> Marilyn Gadomski, Social Worker, attended the “Age Friendly Bergen Roundtable” at the Garfield VFW. The gathering was attended by 40+ nonprofit and government entities who took the opportunity to exchange information. We have been notified that we are receiving an Area Agencies on Aging Adult Protective Services ARPA grant of \$319,683. Bergen has received the largest share of the total allocation of \$3,016,122. There are specific requirements on the usage of this funding, which dictate that it is to “enhance, improve, and expand the ability of APS” functions. It cannot be used for any other purpose and cannot supplant existing funding and therefore cannot be used to offset our general or APS budget. Rather, it will be used to enrich and increase the ability to deliver services. A preliminary CWA 1089 negotiation meeting is taking place on August 2, 2023 at 3:00 PM. It will be followed by the next negotiation meeting on August 24, 2023. We are hopeful that the contract will be settled before the current contract expiration of December 31, 2023. To date, we have heard no communication from CWA 1031 regarding their intentions to begin negotiations for their contract, which also expires on December 31, 2023. We have been instructed that until further notice, under the guidance of instructions promulgated in PHE unwinding releases, we are not permitted to impose recovery or recoupment from any beneficiary of Medicaid for incorrectly paid benefits. At current, this has only been communicated in an informal manner. We are awaiting further guidance from the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS) who is coordinating with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to publish this official guidance. This will affect our revenue as we collect a portion of Medicaid recoveries. We are in the process of onboarding Montvale to our General Assistance (GA) administration roles. With the addition of Montvale, we will have 65 of 70 Bergen County municipalities to which we administer GA. A resolution will be presented at the September Board meeting. We are experiencing increasing difficulty in confirming meeting quorums each month. There is a growing amount of time being invested in calling individual Board Members to confirm their attendance. Scott Modery respectfully requested each Board Member to the best of their ability ensure that they respond to the Board Secretary’s meeting notification either confirming or declining their attendance in order to simplify the process and guarantee that no members come to a meeting only to learn that a quorum is not met.

**Chairman’s Report**

No report.

**Committee Reports:**

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

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from July 1 to July 31, 2023 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$2,898.09 and the year-to-date 2023 is \$42,501.55. 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.

(d) **Personnel Committee**

No report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

(a) **Next Board Meeting Date**

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held in person on **Tuesday, September 5, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.**

**Action Items:**

**Resolutions**

- (a) 2023.8.02 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2023.8.02 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2023.8.02 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from One Internal Part-Time Human Services Aide to One Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (d) 2023.8.02 (4) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (e) 2023.8.02 (5) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2023.8.02 (6) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for Two Internal Part-Time Clerks 1 to Full-Time Clerks 1
- (g) 2023.8.02 (7) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (h) 2023.8.02 (8) – Resolution Denying 2<sup>nd</sup> Step Grievance Hearing
- (i) 2023.8.02 (9) – Resolution Denying 2<sup>nd</sup> Step Grievance Hearing
- (j) 2023.8.02 (10) – 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) – (i) was offered by Alexandra Harwin, Esq., seconded by Susan Silverstein, and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			

TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER				X

The Board did not go into Closed Session; therefore, no action was taken in regard to Resolution (j) 2023.8.02 (10).

**OPEN SESSION:**

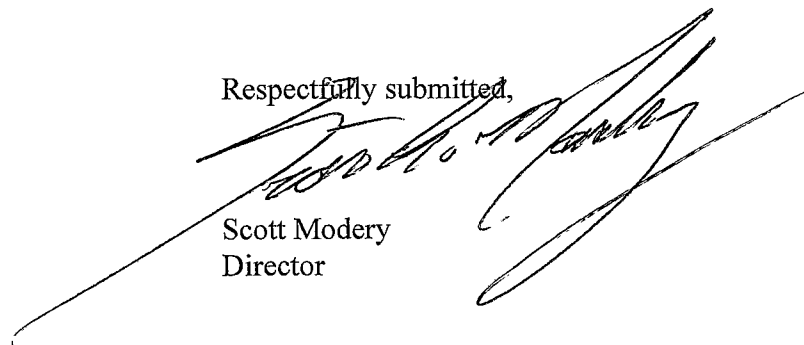
**Adoption of Minutes:**

There were no Closed Session Minutes of July 6, 2023.

Vice Chairwoman Randi Duffie requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. With no further business to conclude, a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:45 p.m. was offered by Susan Silverstein, seconded by Alexandra Harwin, Esq., and approved as follows:

MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON				X
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER				X
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER	X			
ALEXANDRA HARWIN	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ	BOARD MEMBER				X

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Modery  
Director