

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the  
Bergen County Board of Social Services  
September 5, 2023**

**PRESENT:** William E. Connelly, Jr., Chairperson  
Randi Duffie, Vice-Chairperson (Arrived Late)  
Elaine K. Meyerson, Secretary Treasurer  
Diane DeCarlo, Esq., County Adjuster  
Tracy S. Zur, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member  
Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member  
Junior Hernandez, Board Member  
John L. Schettino, Esq., General Counsel (Arrived Late)  
Scott Modery, Director  
Michele M. Darmochwal, Administrative Secretary

**ABSENT:** Susan Silverstein, Assistant Secretary Treasurer  
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member  
Alexandra Harwin, Esq., Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on September 5, 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. was not yet present; therefore, Chairman William E. Connelly 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 September 5, 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 January 17, 2023 and to the Herald News, which was published on January 17, 2023.

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 January 17, 2023.

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
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER	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	

**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 Commissioner Thomas J. Sullivan, 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
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, 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 Thomas J. Sullivan, 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
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 August 2, 2023**

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of August 2, 2023 was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, 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			

**Treasurer's Report:**

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

Chairman William E. Connelly 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 Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Junior Hernandez, 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			

For the record, Randi Duffie and John L. Schettino Esq. arrived at approximately 4:40 p.m.

**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 July 2023 was 353 and June 2023 was 369 cases, and compared to one year ago it went up 72 cases, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload for July was 22,958 and June was 22,693 and compared to one year ago it went up by 1,119 cases, GA (General Assistance) caseload for July was 407 and June was 402 cases and compared to one year ago it went down by 4 cases. In regard to Medicaid, there were 57,939 individuals in July and in June 2023 there were 60,293 individuals a decrease of 2,354 individuals.

Burial stats are as follows: 17 inquires, 29 approved, and 3 denials. The agency paid out \$72,408.00 and recovered \$765.90.

In July 2023, the agency received 1,691 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,615 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,306. 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.

Our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 4 individuals/families in motels. We have 26 families in the HEARTS Program, 14 in the Emergency Shelter, and 12 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 8 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We had 66 Emergency Assistance applications and 94 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance. We had 35 placements as referrals from 211. We have 247 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 124 referrals and currently have 36 open cases.

**(b) Memoranda to the Board**

During August AON released their analysis and recommendations for the 2024 State Health Benefits premium year. AON is commissioned by the State each year and their analysis has been regarded as a benchmark for rate increases over the years. This year, AON has recommended a 7.4% increase in health benefit rates for active employees. Medicare retirees are recommended to increase by 8.8%. My early forecast based upon these recommendations would mean an increase in our 2024 budget of approximately \$500,000 for health benefits alone. New Jersey has conducted its annual point in time survey of the homeless population. A very limited cross section of this



information was included as an attachment to Mr. Modery's memorandum and shared with the Board. An additional attachment contained a link to the full report and statistics for anyone interested. September will be the final month for ARPA funding to fund our SNAP overtime. As applications remain elevated and return to pre-pandemic processes increase workload, we can expect overtime costs to remain elevated. Our extensive attempts to have the fictitious Bergen County Board of Social Services Facebook page taken down have all failed. We have contacted the Prosecutors Office, forwarded multiple letters from our in-house attorney and received no response; contacted the local San Mateo County Social Services Department for advice, attempted to use a family member of an employee who works for Facebook, and filed internal red flags on Facebook itself. At the present time, we have exhausted all options. In regard to Facebook, at the Board's request, Scott Modery will forward all the documentation to John L. Schettino, Esq. so he can look into this issue further. Lastly, on site work for our 2022 audit has been completed. While there are still items to coordinate before a report can be issued, by all appearances the audit report will be on par with prior years.

### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman William E. Connelly welcomed everyone back after the Labor Day weekend.

### **Committee Reports:**

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

Randi Duffie reported from August 1 to August 31, 2023 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$2,123.09 and the year-to-date 2023 is \$44,624.64. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor's office during the month of August.

#### **(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, October 3, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.**

**Action Items:**

**Resolutions**

- (a) 2023.9.05 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2023.9.05 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2023.9.05 (3) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from One Internal Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Clerk 1
- (d) 2023.9.05 (4) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from One Internal Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Clerk 1
- (e) 2023.9.05 (5) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2023.9.05 (6) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for One Internal Part-Time Human Services Aide to One Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (g) 2023.9.05 (7) – Resolution Authorizing an Offer of Employment for Two Internal Full-Time Social Service Technicians
- (h) 2023.9.05 (8) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment for One Internal Part Time Human Services Aide, Full-Time Clerk 1, Full-Time Records Support Technician 1, Full-Time Mail Clerk, Full-Time Data Entry Operator or Full-Time Keyboarding Clerk 1 to One Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (i) 2023.9.05 (9) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Employment for One Internal Part-Time Human Services Aide, Full-Time Clerk 1, Full-Time Records Support Technician 1, Full-Time Mail Clerk, Full-Time Data Entry Operator or Full-Time Keyboarding Clerk 1 to One Full-Time Human Services Aide Bilingual in Spanish
- (j) 2023.9.05 (10) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for Two External Full-Time Clerks 1
- (k) 2023.9.05 (11) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for Two External Full-Time Clerks 1 Bilingual in Spanish
- (l) 2023.9.05 (12) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment to Promote One Internal Individual to Provisional Full-Time Senior Data Processing Programmer
- (m) 2023.9.05 (13) – Resolution Approving Transfer of Public Assistance Program for the Borough of Montvale
- (n) 2023.9.05 (14) – Resolution Approving Revision of Leave of Absence Request Form
- (o) 2023.9.05 (15) – 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) – (n) was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Randi Duffie, 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 (o) 2023.9.05 (15).

**OPEN SESSION:**

**Adoption of Minutes:**

There were no Closed Session Minutes of August 2, 2023.

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 4:50 p.m. was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, seconded by Junior Hernandez, 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