

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

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

**ABSENT:** Thomas J. Sullivan, Bergen County Commissioner, Board Member  
Yris Encarnacion, Board Member

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was held on December 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. 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 December 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER		X
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	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 Junior Hernandez, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER				X
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	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 Tracy S. Zur, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER				X
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

For the record, Alexandra Harwin, Esq. arrived at approximately 4:35 p.m.

**Adoption of Minutes:**

**(a) Open Session Minutes of November 9, 2023**

Chairman William E. Connelly indicated that two revisions were made to the minutes. A typo “senion” was corrected to “senior” and Yris Encarnacion was marked absent for the Roll Call when she was present. Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of November 9, 2023 with the above corrections was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER			X	
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Geraldine Nestrowitz, Supervising Accountant, was present. She reported on the Bill’s List and Schedule of Vouchers.

**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 Randi Duffie, 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			
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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	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 October 2023 was 361 and September 2023 was 357 cases, and compared to one year ago it went up 22 cases. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload for October 2023 was 23,423 and September 2023 was 22,918 and compared to one year ago it went up by 1,472 cases. GA (General Assistance) caseload for October 2023 was 467 and September 2023 was 442 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 69 cases. In regard to Medicaid, there were 52,011 individuals in October 2023 and in September 2023 there were 53,966 individuals a decrease of 1,955 individuals.

Burial stats are as follows: 26 inquires, 34 approved, and 1 denial. The agency paid out \$61,910.00 and recovered \$4,651.56.

In October 2023, the agency received 1,980 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,829 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,809. In September 2023, the agency received 1,754 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,642 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,396.

Our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 4 individuals/families in motels. We have 25 families in the HEARTS Program, 13 in the Emergency Shelter, and 12 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 9 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We had 63 Emergency Assistance applications and 88 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance. We had 26 placements as referrals from 211. We have 243 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 89 referrals and currently have 40 open cases.

**(b) Memoranda to the Board**

Scott Modery reported that we are planning to take a full Board photo at the January 9, 2024 meeting.

On November 27, 2023, Geraldine Nestrowitz and Scott Modery met with the County Treasurer, CFO, and several others to discuss our preliminary budget request. As the Board has been informed over the past months, Medicaid and SNAP have been overwhelming programs for Bergen and the entire state from application to case approvals, denials, and redeterminations. As such, we have requested an increase in funding to compensate for this crushing load. Mr. Modery included some graphs, which were distributed. He offered to discuss in more detail upon request. We are exploring the possibility of distributing “years of service” pins to employees. These pins are distributed in 5-year increments starting at 10 years of service and was done until several years ago when it was discontinued. We currently have 110 employees who would be eligible. Our longest serving employee Marilyn Gadowski will have 40 years of service in April 2024. In Mr. Modery’s August Board memorandum, he reported that we were receiving \$319,683 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding to “enhance, improve, and expand the ability of APS functions”. He reported that this money cannot supplant existing funding. As such, we have added some staff to our Adult Protective Service (APS) Department and purchased a 2023 Chevrolet Traverse to be used exclusively by our APS Department. The Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) will conduct five Deaf Sensitivity Training sessions for a portion of our staff during the month of December. We have adopted all interested families in the HEARTS shelter, 23 families in total. Additionally, 4 families outside of HEARTS have also been adopted. More families have been added to a waiting list. The deadline is December 15, 2023 for adopter gift delivery.

### **Chairman’s Report**

Chairman William E. Connelly wished everyone a Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas, and Happy & Healthy New Year.

### **Committee Reports:**

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

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from November 1 to November 30, 2023 the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$1,656.09 and the year-to-date 2023 is \$55,690.95. No new cases were referred to the Prosecutor’s office during the month of November.

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

No report.

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

No report.

#### **(d) Personnel Committee**

Elaine K. Meyerson reported that a discussion regarding contracts will be had in Closed Session.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**(a) Next Board Meeting Date**

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held in person on **Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.**

**Action Items:**

**Resolutions**

- (a) 2023.12.05 (1) – Resolution Approving Additions, Elimination, and/or Changes to Positions within the Bergen County Board of Social Services
- (b) 2023.12.05 (2) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement of Employment for Multiple Openings
- (c) 2023.12.05 (3) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Full-Time Clerk 1 Bilingual in Spanish
- (d) 2023.12.05 (4) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Full-Time Clerk 1
- (e) 2023.12.05 (5) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours for One Internal Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Clerk 1
- (f) 2023.12.05 (6) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1 Bilingual in Spanish
- (g) 2023.12.05 (7) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Internal Full-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (h) 2023.12.05 (8) – Resolution Authorizing the Advertisement and Offer of Employment for One External Full-Time Human Services Aide
- (i) 2023.12.05 (9) – Resolution Approving Extending Affiliation Agreement with Holy Name Medical Center
- (l) 2023.12.05 (10) – Resolution Approving Extending Affiliation Agreement with Englewood Hospital
- (m) 2023.12.05 (11) – Resolution Approving Extending Affiliation Agreement with Hackensack University Medical Center
- (n) 2023.12.05 (12) – Resolution Approving Extending Affiliation Agreement with Bergen New Bridge Medical Center
- (o) 2023.12.05 (13) – Resolution Approving Equitable for a Deferred Compensation Plan
- (p) 2023.12.05 (14) – Resolution Adopting a Fair and Open Process for Retention of Professionals and Consultants for the Calendar Year 2024
- (q) 2023.12.05 (15) – Resolution Approving Purchase of Vehicle through American Rescue Plan Act
- (r) 2023.12.05 (16) – Resolution Approving Director Contract Agreement

- (s) 2023.12.05 (17) – Resolution Approving Senior Personnel Technician Contract Agreement  
 (t) 2023.12.05 (18) – 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 remove Resolution (m) from the agenda was offered by Commissioner Tracy S. Zur, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to approve Resolutions (a) – (q), other than (i), (l), and (n) was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to approve Resolutions (i), (l), and (n) 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			
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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER			X	
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

A motion to discuss and approve Resolution (t) 2023.12.05 (18) 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 and to go into Closed Session was offered by Alexandra Harwin, Esq., 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

The Board went into Closed Session at approximately 5:02 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

The Board went into Closed Session to discuss personnel, contracts, and the Closed Session minutes. The minutes from the Closed Session will be available to the public once the items have been resolved or no longer require the minutes to be held and not distributed to the public. The Board will be in Closed Session for approximately 15 minutes at which time the Board will reopen the meeting and may take further public action in matters dealing with the Bergen County Board of Social Services. The public will be able to access the meeting remotely once the meeting reopens in Open Session.

**OPEN SESSION:**

The Board reconvened in Open Session at approximately 5:31 p.m.

**Adoption of Minutes:**

A motion to approve the Closed Session minutes of November 9, 2023 was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, seconded by Randi Duffie, and approved as follows:

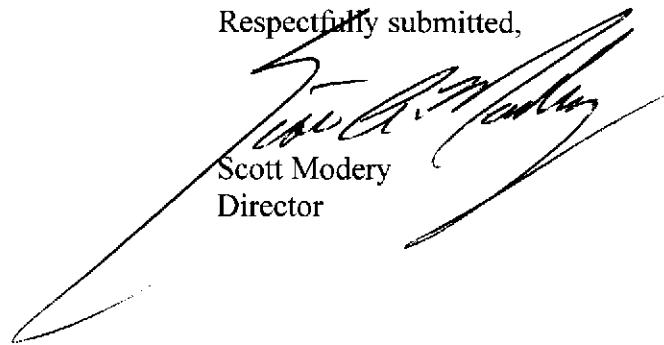
MEMBERS	TITLE	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
WILLIAM E. CONNELLY	CHAIRPERSON			X	
RANDI DUFFIE	VICE CHAIRPERSON	X			
ELAINE K. MEYERSON	SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
SUSAN SILVERSTEIN	ASST. SECRETARY TREASURER	X			
TRACY S. ZUR	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER	X			
THOMAS J. SULLIVAN	BERGEN COUNTY COMMISSIONER				X
DIANE DECARLO, ESQ.	COUNTY ADJUSTER	X			
YRIS ENCARNACION	BOARD MEMBER				X
ALEXANDRA HARWIN, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X		X	
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	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 5:31 p.m. was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Modery  
Director