

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the
Bergen County Board of Social Services
June 3, 2025**

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

ABSENT: None

A regular meeting of the Bergen County Board of Social Services was scheduled and held on June 3, 2025 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 June 3, 2025 has been provided in the following manner:

1. By a prominent posting of the schedule of meetings for 2025, 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 20, 2025 and to the Herald News, which was published on January 20, 2025.

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 15, 2025.

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 Commissioner Thomas J. Sullivan, 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, 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 Susan Silverstein, 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			

Adoption of Minutes:

(a) Open Session Minutes of May 6, 2025

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Open Session minutes. A motion to adopt the Open Session minutes of May 6, 2025 was offered by Junior Hernandez, Ph.D., 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			

Geraldine Nestrowitz, Supervising Accountant, was present. She reported on the Bills 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 Bills List and Schedule of Vouchers. A motion to approve the Bills List and Schedule of Vouchers 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			
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, Commissioner Tracy S. Zur arrived at approximately 4:36 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 April 2025 was 267 and March 2025 was 275 and compared to one year ago it went down 65 cases. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) caseload for April 2025 was 25,344 and March 2025 was 25,008 and compared to one year ago it went up by 1,344 cases. The GA (General Assistance) caseload for April 2025 was 581 and March 2025 was 557 cases and compared to one year ago it went up by 29 cases. In regard to Medicaid, there were 42,882 individuals in April 2025 and 42,972 individuals in March 2025 and compared to one year ago there is a decrease of 2,906 individuals.

Burial stats are as follows: 25 inquiries, 28 approved, and 0 denials. The agency paid out \$150,439.55 and recovered \$461.85.

In April 2025, the agency received 1,432 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,721 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,153. In March 2025, the agency received 1,491 applications for cash and SNAP applications and 1,884 Medicaid applications for a total of 3,375.

Our Emergency Assistance Unit assisted homeless individuals and families. Currently, we have 8 individuals/families in motels. We have 23 families in the HEARTS Program, 13 in the Emergency Shelter, and 10 in TANF/Bridge side. We have 6 families placed at the Center for Hope and Safety (DV shelter). We had 62 Emergency Assistance applications and 101 clients on Temporary Rental Assistance. We had 27 placements as referrals from 211. We have 227 active DDD cases. The Adult Protective Service (APS) Unit received 133 referrals and currently has 36 open cases.

For the record, Elaine K. Meyerson arrived at approximately 4:40 p.m.

(b) Memoranda to the Board

Scott Modery reported that on May 6, 2025 Allan LaRobardier attended the "Public Hearing on the Needs of Older Adults" at One Bergen County Plaza. The hearing serves as the

primary forum to gather information about the needs and concerns of seniors in Bergen County. On May 4, 2025, Linnybeth Canizales and Emily Sandnes staffed a table at the "*Bergen County Care Fair*" at Fairleigh Dickinson University's Bogota Savings Center Bank in Hackensack. The Care Fair's mission is to bring health care providers, support services, and field professionals together in one place to help residents make the necessary connections they need. On May 22, 2025, Ritzzy Morales-Diaz, Deborah Piccone, Geraldine Nestrowitz and Scott Modery met with three representatives from the NJCSC (New Jersey Civil Service Commission). NJCSC schedules regular meetings with entities across the state to answer questions, provide advice, and seek feedback as to how they can improve processes. On May 30, 2025, Kristen Nagy and Maya Jacob attended the Bergen County Food Pantry Summit at the Moses Center at Bergen Community College. The Summit is a conference where food pantry directors, emergency food providers, and direct service providers collaborate and share information. Also on May 30 2025, CWA 1089 sponsored a Jeans Day in benefit of the "Jed Foundation" which is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nations young adults giving them skills and support they need to thrive: Jedfoundation.org. On May 14, 2025, the BCBSS Budget was approved by the Bergen County Commissioners. We received official notification on April 24, 2025 that the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, Division of Family Development as well as the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services approved our budget. Our 2025 budget approvals are now complete. The 2025 Board plaque has arrived and is hanging in the Board room.

In regard to the BCBSS budget update, DFD (Department of Family Development) and DMAHS (Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services) continue to express persistent uncertainty about program changes and funding moving forward. Several items which relate to SNAP and Medicaid appear poised to advance.

SNAP - the final reconciliation bill will likely shift a portion of SNAP administrative costs to Bergen County. Initial estimates compiled by DFD forecast an additional \$2,790,000 which would be added to the BCBSS budget as county cost. For context, this would have increased our 2025 budget request well in excess of 30%. However, the DFD estimate does not take into account the increased administrative burden which accompanies proposed work requirements and the associated processes, mailings, phone calls, sanctions, and the inevitable Fair Hearings when residents face negative actions on their case. The complete DFD 21 county forecast is here: [DFD Analysis of SNAP Administrative Cost to County](#). Cost sharing for recipient benefits is still on the table. This proposal would shift benefit costs to the State of New Jersey. Just a 5% cost share to the State of New Jersey would exceed \$96,000,000 per year.

Medicaid - tightening of eligibility standards, semi-annual redeterminations, work requirements for certain recipients, and matching with Federal data to identify potentially ineligible persons.

All of the above will significantly increase the workload and budgetary needs of BCBSS staff.

Chairman's Report

No report.

Committee Reports:

(a) Welfare, Fraud, and Abuse Committee

Alexandra Harwin, Esq. reported from May 1 to May 31, 2025, the agency received Medicaid recoveries in the amount of \$1,247.26, of which BCBSS portion is \$311.82 and the year-to-date 2025 is \$9,656.55, of which BCBSS portion is \$2,414.14. No fraud referrals sent to the Prosecutor's office during the month of May.

(b) Audit & Budget Committee

No report.

(c) Building & Grounds Committee

A discussion will be held in Closed Session.

(d) Personnel Committee

Elaine K. Meyerson reported that there is nothing to report this month.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Next Board Meeting Date

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held in person on **Tuesday, July 1, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.**

Action Items:

Resolutions:

- (a) 2025.6.03 (1) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Internal Full-Time Human Services Specialist 1 to Full-Time Human Services Specialist 2
- (b) 2025.6.03 (2) – Resolution Authorizing a Change in Hours from One Internal Part-Time Clerk 1 to Full-Time Clerk 1
- (c) 2025.6.03 (3) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (d) 2025.6.03 (4) – Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of One External Part-Time Clerk 1
- (e) 2025.6.03 (5) – Resolution Authorizing a Promotion for One Internal Provisional Full-Time Investigator Bilingual in Spanish
- (f) 2025.6.03 (6) – Resolution Approving Updating Signature Page of ByLaws
- (g) 2025.6.03 (7) – 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.

A motion to remove Resolution (d) on the agenda because a candidate was not chosen and hired 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			
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) through (f) excluding (d) on the agenda was offered by Elaine K. Meyerson, 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 (g) 2025.6.03 (7) 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 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, ESQ.	BOARD MEMBER	X			
JUNIOR HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.	BOARD MEMBER	X			

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

CLOSED SESSION:

The Board went into Closed Session to discuss building issues, litigation, personnel, a Step 2 Grievance Hearing, and 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 30 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 5:50 p.m.

Adoption of Minutes:

Chairman William E. Connelly requested a motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes of May 6, 2025. A motion to adopt the Closed Session minutes of May 6, 2025 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			
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			

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 5:55 p.m. was offered by Randi Duffie, 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			

Respectfully submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Scott A. Modery, is written over the typed name and title.

Scott A. Modery
Director