

September 16, 2015

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. in the office of the Board at 600 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey, with James H. Rhodes, Chair, presiding. The following members were present:

Susan Michielli, Vice Chair; Dr. Leonard Krivy, PhD, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera; Ginny Betteridge

Also present were: Shawn Sheekey, Director; Christine Hentisz, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel; Sharon Faber, Esquire; MaryEllen Sittner, Personnel Officer; Mary Ann Pagano, Fiscal Officer; Greg Smith, Sr. Management Assistant; Sharon Hall, Administrative Clerk

Public Attendance: George Jackson, President, Communications Workers of America-Local 1084 (CWA); Gerald Baker, Vice President, CWA; Michelle Acevedo, Legislative Chair, CWA; Gladis Zambrana, Chief Shop Steward, CWA; Renita Singleton, CWA member, Darnell Hardee, CWA member, Allegra Reed, CWA member; Toni Bobiak, Vice Chair, Welfare Supervisors' Organization (WSO)

At 12:00 P.M., a quorum being present, Mr. Rhodes called the meeting to order, and announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the Courier Post Newspaper and the Philadelphia Inquirer were notified of the Board Meeting; notice of the agenda was posted in a prominent location at 600 Market Street and the County Clerk was notified.

Mr. Rhodes requested approval of the following items:

- Minutes of the July Board Meeting.
- The listed expenditures from both Clearing and Administration Accounts.
- The payment of salaries and traveling expenses for August and September.
- Requisition from the County Treasurer for administration expenses for September and October.
- To move funds, to be requisitioned from the State and County Treasurers less monies on hand for assistance payments for the months of September and October.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Ms. Michielli moved to approve. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was adopted.

**OPEN SESSION
Public Participation**

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to open the meeting for public participation. Ms. Betteridge moved to open the Public Participation portion of the Open Session, seconded by Dr. Krivy.

Mr. Jackson stated he wished to address the Board regarding a couple of issues. The first issue is that it has been over one and one half years without a contract settlement. Mr. Jackson provided the Board members with a typed contract proposal. There is concern over the length of the customer lines at the agency.

Ms. Acevedo stated that employees are experiencing a lot of problems with obtaining approvals for their prescriptions and medical procedures with the new health plan that the agency switched to in February 2015. Ms. Betteridge mentioned that universal changes in health care may be causing some of the issues with services. Mr. Rhodes stated that if Ms. Acevedo provides him with a list of names and the problems experienced he could address the situations. Ms. Sittner stated that the Personnel Department has been assisting employees directly with various problems with health care coverage.

Mr. Baker stated that there are concerns being voiced by employees regarding all the procedural changes that have been initiated at the agency in a short time – case banking, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, and transition to a generic workforce. Mr. Baker stated that the employees want this to work out but the frustration levels have been high since June. Mr. Baker stated that more leadership and training on CRM is needed. Having the elderly standing in lines for long periods of time with no seating is unacceptable and inclement weather is on its way, which is another concern since people have been lining up outside the building. Additionally, phone calls not being answered remains to be a problem as people are waiting on the Call Center lines for one to three hours.

Mr. Sheekey stated that the agency is conducting generic worker meetings each week and that needed adjustments to processes are being identified and worked on. When he came to the agency as director five years ago, less than 20% of customers were receiving timely benefits. According to past years' Intake reports, customers waited up to three weeks to receive an initial interview appointment for benefits and then could wait an additional two plus months to be issued any benefits at all. The agency workload was then handled on an individual worker caseload basis. If an employee was out of the office for any length of time, their cases would sit until their return to work. With the new process changes that have been initiated, there has been a remarkable turnaround over the last two years in terms of customers receiving timely benefits. Although timeliness has dropped to 75% for 30 day cases since June, three months ago the agency realized an 83% percent timeliness rate for 30 day cases and a 95% percent timeliness rate for 7 day expedited cases. Mr. Sheekey stated that the lines of people that are being seen now weren't plainly seen before because the number of customers and the lines were always there, but were segregated throughout the various waiting rooms on all floors of the building. Now all customer traffic is being funneled through the Navigator Desk in the lobby and customer access to the building has been limited to the lower level and first floors. This new process causes the perception of masses of people in line to visit the agency. Mr. Sheekey stated that people are working the lines and a ticket system has been developed so people may be seated in the first floor waiting area to wait to be seen. Mr. Sheekey stated that the answering of phone calls has also been an issue since his arrival at the agency. System data shows that one half of the phone calls the agency receives are being answered. The agency receives a large number of phone calls on a daily basis with only a small number of staff assigned to the Call Center. Mr. Sheekey mentioned that a meeting was recently held with representatives from Monmouth County. That county has 20 people on phones and they cannot answer all the calls they are receiving. Mr. Sheekey added that CRM is getting added to the Call Center which should prove to be beneficial.

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Mr. Sheekey stated that the agency is only three months into another major change. Any organization going through major process and procedural changes experiences growing pains. Through the weekly meetings, process and procedural problems have been discovered, discussed and the agency is working through the issues.

Ms. Zambrana stated that, although she likes the system, CRM was put out there when no one was prepared. She stated that she feels the agency does not have the capacity to handle the number of customers. She added that mail and lost paperwork and files are a huge problem.

Ms. Singleton stated that she disagrees that the processing of cases has gotten better with the new processes. Prior to case banking and the generic worker transition, a folder was touched less then now. As a folder is being transitioned from Interviewing, to Processing and back and forth from the Case Bank, the paperwork and folders themselves are being misplaced and lost. She stated that she is still doing cases that are being issued months' worth of benefits. Mr. Sheekey stated that the agency is still very paper driven and DIMS would be an asset in terms of dealing with the masses of paper flow still manually be manipulated throughout the agency.

Mr. Jackson requested information regarding next week's Papal Visit to the area. Mr. Rhodes stated that the County will be open Friday, September 25th and Monday, September 28th. Monday may be the only questionable day as roadways will be open until late on Friday evening. Ms. Acevedo stated that her concern is that there will most likely be congestion in the area due to the visit. Mr. Rhodes stated that leniency regarding late arrivals to work would be considered if warranted. Mr. Rhodes mentioned that volunteers are needed for hydration stations for the weekend of the Pope's visit and that the County will be utilizing the Code Red system to provide county employees with any visit related updates. Customers will be advised of any closings via the County website and by radio on KYW. Mr. Sheekey stated that he will sending something out to the staff regarding the matter.

Mr. Jackson, Mr. Rhodes, and meeting attendees thanked one another for the discussion.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Dr. Krivy moved to close the Public Portion. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

The Open Session of the meeting continued.

UPDATE STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES Shawn Sheekey, Director

Mr. Sheekey stated that all Board members would find a synopsis of informational transmittals, procedural bulletins, general assistance procedural bulletins and Division of Family Development instructions in their packet. If there were any questions on any of the material, Mr. Sheekey stated that he or his staff would be happy to comment on them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director's Update on the State and Federal Policies.

Ms. Michielli moved to approved. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was take and the motion was unanimously adopted.

**OPEN SESSION
Public Participation**

Resolution 219-2015 – Authorizing Award of Contract for Purchase of Copy, Computer Paper, and Envelopes under Cooperative Pricing Agreement

..... **Sharon Faber, Esquire**

Under the Cooperative Pricing Agreement adopted by resolution on June 10, 1998 with the County of Camden serving as the Lead Agency for the purchasing of work, materials and supplies. The County of Camden by Resolution adopted August 20, 2015 awarded contracts to the lowest responsible bidder for the purchase of copy, computer paper and envelopes for a term of six (6) months commencing on or about September 1, 2015 through February 29, 2016 with the option of an additional six (6) months extension to be exercised at the sole discretion of the County of Camden.

The BOSS is desirous of obtaining the benefits of said contract awarded by the County of Camden. The BOSS authorizes and awards a contract to the lowest bidder per County Resolution for the term mentioned previously.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve Resolution 219-2015.

Ms. Betteridge moved to approve. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no other discussion on the motion a vote was taken and unanimously adopted.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT..... Shawn Sheekey, Director

Mr. Sheekey stated that the annual CWDA Retreat was held last Friday. The main topic of discussion was technology. He stated that an RFI has gone out to rebid for information for State computer system technology, basically starting the process over, to replace the defunct CASS system.

Mr. Sheekey stated that the generic worker transition meetings are productive. Ms. Hentisz has also begun to conduct mini meetings with key people in order to resolve issues that are being discussed at these weekly meetings. The agency rolled out a lot in a short amount of time. CRM is designed for a generic workforce.

Mr. Sheekey stated that the statewide timeliness rates are 94% percent for 30 day cases and 98% percent for 7 day expedited cases. The agency is currently at 73% percent for 30 day cases, and 95% for 7 day expedited cases. Mr. Sheekey noted that CWAs will need to maintain a 95% timeliness rate come the end of this month. Mr. Sheekey provided the Board members with a customer traffic trending graph for the period of January 2014 – August 2015 for their information.

Mr. Rhodes stated that there have been discussions this week regarding the customer lines at the agency. Authorization has been given to purchase tablets in order to assist with working the lines to better service customers. Since the initiation of all the process changes at the agency, employees are more aware of what other employees are or are not doing and the importance of each employees’ part and roll in agency processes is becoming realized.

Ms. Hentisz stated that CRM has been rolled out to the last department and the program is constantly changing as issues and processes are identified and updated. Ms. Hentisz mentioned that it is necessary that all staff receive communications on all changes to the CRM system. More super user videos are being developed to share with the staff as well as additional training.

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Staff will be doing triage on the tablets in the lobby to assist with customer traffic flow. Ms. Hentisz mentioned that in regard to the customer traffic it should be noted that there are 300-400 new applicants scheduled daily and 3,000 to 4,000 customers are brought back to the agency for recertification each month, plus there are the customers with complaints, and people dropping off information. Some recertifications have been switched to phone interviews, but many people are still coming in in error.

Mr. Rhodes mentioned that the agency was selected by Rutgers University, Newark National Public Performance Institute based on achievements for being proactive, creative, responsible, and for being a leader in terms of being able to deliver benefits to our clients in an efficient and effective manner. He and Shawn will be in attendance at the conference on Friday to provide a presentation of CRM and various agency initiatives on behalf of the agency.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director's Report.

Ms. Michielli moved to approve. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

FISCAL REPORT..... Mary Ann Pagano, Fiscal Officer

Ms. Pagano stated that each Board member has received in his or her packet copies of Fiscal Reports for the months of July and August, 2015, and that expenditures are in line with the prorated budget. If there were any questions, she commented that he would be happy to address them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Reports for July and August 2015 as presented.

Ms. Michielli moved to approve. Ms. Betteridge seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.

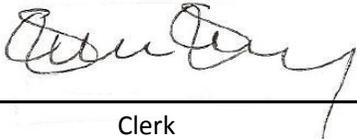
OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC SESSION

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC SESSION

There was none.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Open Session and move to the Closed Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal matters. Dr. Krivy moved to discuss such matters in closed session. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously adopted.



Clerk