

December 15, 2021

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 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:

Via Teleconference: Vice Chairperson, Virginia G. Betteridge, Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Edward Hill, Esquire; Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician (via teleconference) Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Rich Behm, IT Director; Fred Anderson, System Analyst Supervisor

Public Attendance via WebEx: Audrey Watkins-Kizee, Simone Moore, Jeanette Norcross, Vanessa Munoz, Chimere Lake, Cerina Muse

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 November Board Meeting.
- The listed expenditures from both Clearing and Administration Accounts.
- The payment of salaries and traveling expenses for December.
- Requisition from the County Treasurer for administration expenses for January.
- Movement of funds to be requisitioned from the State and County Treasurers less monies on hand for assistance payments for the month of January.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

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

Mr. Rhodes asked if there were any members of the public wishing to address the Board.

Chimere Lake inquired has the Board considered issuing hazard pay to the employees?
Mr. Rhodes replied the no Camden County governmental agencies has authorized hazard pay. Mr. Rhodes continued, if any point, circumstances would change, the Board will follow along with County government and the County Health Department.

Ms. Lake also inquired if there can be more details given to employees regarding an employee testing positive for COVID-19. Ms. Lake understands that names cannot be stated of the person that tested positive, however more details on when the positive person was last at work, would be appreciated.

Mr. Rhodes replied that the Agency's HR department follows strictly with the direction and guidance from the County Health Department regarding contact tracing. As always, the Board will adapt and follow any protocols that are recommended from County Administration and the County Health Department.

Jeanette Norcross stated there has been pestering from a department's administrator to employees that use sick and/or personal time. Employees in this department are being told that sick and personal time off requests must be pre-approved. Ms. Norcross stated that requirement is not in the contract and she would like to know why this is being allowed?

Ms. Hentisz asked if Ms. Norcross could forward any correspondence regarding this matter to Ms. Hentisz' email so that this issue can be addressed and corrected.

Simone Moore inquired why are some supervisors skipping the steps of discipline?

Ms. Hentisz asked if Ms. Moore may forward to her any instances where the skipping of discipline occurred. Ms. Hentisz also stated there is also an option to file a grievance. Ms. Hentisz continued, she meets regularly with union leadership, so any issues can be relayed through union leadership and then brought to her attention.

Ms. Moore inquired what are the steps of filing a grievance? Ms. Hentisz answered the grievance steps are as follows: supervisor, administrator, and then to the Director's Office.

Mr. Rhodes asked if there were any other members of the public wishing to address the Board.

Hearing and seeing that there was no one, Mr. Rhodes thanked the staff members for their questions and requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Ms. Betteridge moved to close the Public Portion of the Open Session. Ms. DeVera 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 POLICIESChristine Hentisz, Director

Ms. Hentisz 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, Ms. Hentisz stated that she or her staff would be happy to answer.

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

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

Resolution 235-2021 –Universal Service Fund.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 235-2021. The Camden County Board of Social Services desires to apply for and obtain a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approximately \$19,631.00, to carry out a project to code and verify FAMIS documents for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 235-2021.

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

**Resolution 236-2021 –Authorizing the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of NJ
Department of Human Services Regarding the
Administration of DMAHS Programs
Including the NJ Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance
Programs.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 236-2021. The Camden County Board of Social Services is desirous of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services regarding the administration of DMAHS programs including the New Jersey Medicaid and children’s health insurance programs. The execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services shall be for the periods of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 236-2021.

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

Resolution 237-2021 –Universal Service Fund.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 237-2021. Authorizing a salary increase for Management and members of the Administration for the year of 2022.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 237-2021.

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

**Resolution 238-2021 –Authorizing the Appointment of
Special Legal Counsel to Represent the Camden County Board of
Social Services in Child Support Matters.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 238-2021. The Camden County Board of Social Services has a need for special legal counsel to represent the Board in child support matters.

In response to publicly advertised Request for Proposals, the Board has received and reviewed proposals from the law firms of licensed attorneys eligible to practice law in the State of New Jersey.

The Camden County Board of Social Services hereby appoints the law firms of Mattleman, Weinroth & Miller, P.C., Law Firm of Raymond J. Zane and Associates and Angelini, Viniar & Freedman, L.L.P. as special legal counsel to the Camden County Board of Social Services at an hourly rate of \$97.00 for a one year term commencing January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2022. The annual limitation on each of the law firms of Mattleman, Weinroth & Miller, P.C., Law Firm of Raymond J. Zane & Associates and Angelini, Viniar, & Freedman, L.L.P. shall be \$30,000.00.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 238-2021.

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

DIRECTOR’S REPORT..... Christine Hentisz, Director

Ms. Hentisz provided an update to the Board of the Agency’s continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Hentisz reported on the current program changes from DFD (Division of Family Development) and DMAHS (Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services).

Ms. Hentisz stated initially the SNAP Options/Waivers were set to expire in January 2022. However, DFD informed the waivers have been extended until at least the first quarter of 2022. Telephonic signatures and no face-to-face requirements will continue to be allowed during the extension. Ms. Hentisz stated there are discussions regarding the non-closure of SNAP recertifications and how the cases will be affected with the waiver extension. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, DFD is very concerned with the extension, because majority of the SNAP cases have not been reviewed in almost two years. The Agency has been processing as many cases as possible to hopefully alleviate the number of cases to be recertified. DFD has also stated they are looking at possibly implementing a tier-program approach to assist those counties that have seen a huge

DIRECTOR'S REPORT (continued)..... Christine Hentisz, Director

increase in the number of applicants during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Hentisz continues to meet with the generic department administrators and discuss plans on how to get the Agency caught up with the SNAP recertifications.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated that the work participation and job search requirement with the county One Stop has also been extended until at least February 1, 2022. DFD and the Department of Labor (DOL) will be discussing the possible scenarios that may arise due to the extension. Protocols and mandates will need to be reviewed and discussed regarding clients being allowed to enter the One Stop building and the numerous vendors. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, the biggest change is the state of New Jersey is no longer a mandatory work participation requirement for SNAP recipients. The work participation program is now a voluntary program for SNAP recipients.

Ms. Hentisz thanked the Board for passing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) resolution. The MOU is an agreement between the Agency and DMAHS and how funding is allocated and distributed. Over the last two years, DMAHS has changed their focus to timeliness of processing applications. Ms. Hentisz has continued to update the Board in the past few months on the substantial progress the Agency's Medicaid Department has made. This huge accomplishment has a great effect on the amount of Enhanced Funding the Agency receives. Ms. Hentisz also informed the timeliness rate in the first quarter of 2021 was at 43%. The last quarter timeliness rate for 2021 is currently at 96%. Ms. Hentisz was very pleased to report this information to the Board and commended the Medicaid department for these huge accomplishments.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated that she and her management team are continuing to review current COVID-19 policies and procedures, and to adjust where necessary. The Agency is working along with the County Health Department and County Administration to ensure staff and client are safe. Recently, the County Health Department approved the Agency's client lobby to be reconfigured so to allow more clients in the building due to the colder temperatures. Staff that work in the lobby have been great with communicating any concerns or suggestions.

Ms. Hentisz reported that she continues to be involved in discussions and meetings with other directors within the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) regarding common issues with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) being delayed in promotions due to COVID-19. Ms. Hentisz stated she will provide more updates to the Board in the months to come.

Ms. Hentisz informed the Board that the annual homeless population count, Point in Time, will be held on January 26, 2022. The Agency's Housing Department staff are actively involved with collecting the data of the homeless population and to ensure an accurate count is submitted.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz was happy to report to the Board the Agency's involvement again in the Holiday Assistance Program. A few staff members along with the assistance of the Camden County Sherriff Department will be delivering gifts to families and their children on December 20th. Due to an anonymous donor from Cherry Hill, donations from the Cherry Hill Fire Department, and an administrator, the Holiday Assistance Program was able to assist an astounding 44 families this year which included 109 children. Ms. Hentisz thanked and appreciates the generosity of all the donors that assist those less fortunate in our community.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Hentisz for her Director's Report and commended the Medical Department for their tremendous efforts. Mr. Rhodes also shared his commendations to all involved in the Holiday Assistance Program. Mr. Rhodes asked if there were any questions or comments for the Director.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Betteridge moved to approve. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the motion approving the Report was unanimously accepted.

FISCAL REPORT.....Christine Hentisz, Director

Ms. Hentisz stated that each Board member had received copies of the Fiscal Report in their packet for the month of November 2021.

Ms. Hentisz stated that if anyone had any questions, she would be happy to address them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Report for November 2021 as presented in the packet.

Ms. Betteridge moved to accept. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the Report was unanimously accepted.

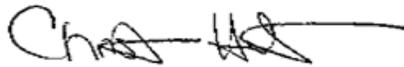
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no motion to grant the educational leave that was presented and discussed.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Open Session of the meeting and move to the Closed Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal matters. Ms. Betteridge 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 approved.



Clerk