

July 19, 2023

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, July 19th, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. in the office of the Board at 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 161, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 08003 with James H. Rhodes, Chair, presiding. The following members were present:

Commissioner Virginia Betteridge, Gwen DeVera, John Kendall

Via WebEx: Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer

Public Attendance: Jennifer Lucas

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Ivory Marrero, Deputy Director; Edward Hill, Esquire; Rich Behm, IT Director; Fred Anderson, IT Supervisor, Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician, Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Carla Avellino, Confidential Aide to Commissioner Betteridge

At 12:00 p.m., a quorum being present, Chairman Rhodes called the meeting to order, and announced that in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the Courier Post Newspaper was notified of the Board Meeting; notice of the agenda was posted in a prominent location at 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 161, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003, and the County Clerk was notified.

Chairman Rhodes requested approval of the following items:

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

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Commissioner 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**

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to open the meeting for public participation. Commissioner Betteridge moved to open the Public Participation portion of the Open Session, seconded by Ms. DeVera and the motion was unanimously adopted.

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

Jennifer Lucas referenced Ms. Hentisz

Ms. Hentisz answered the annual audits are typically a couple years behind and with the pandemic, the State audits have been delayed. Ms. Hentisz stated however the 2020 and 2021 audits are completed and will be available on the Camden County website.

Chairman Rhodes thanked Ms. Lucas for her question and asked if there were any other members that wished to address the Board.

Hearing and seeing that there was no one, Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Mr. Kendall 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 POLICIES Christine 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.

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

Mr. Kendall 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.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Hentisz provided information and updates to the Board from DFD (Division of Family Development).

Ms. Hentisz stated early in the month, President Biden signed the ‘Debt Ceiling Bill’ which could cause a few changes within the county welfare agencies. Currently, DFD is reviewing and discussing these changes and it will be implemented. Ms. Hentisz continued, that one upcoming change is an improvement to the TANF/GA Work Participation program. There will be a test pilot involving 5 states to seek how to improve the process with TANF/GA applicants and the OneStop agencies. Also, another change involves the SNAP/ABAWD (Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents) recipients. ABAWD recipients have a stricter work requirement than other SNAP recipients. Currently, New Jersey has a waiver in place that does not require the ABAWD program to be implemented, however this waiver is set to expire at the end of 2023. The change also raises the age requirement to comply with the work requirements to 55 years old. Additionally, there will be exemptions made for homeless individuals, veterans, and persons who have aged out of foster care to not have to comply to the ABAWD work requirements.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated there continues to be a major discussion regarding the skimming and phishing of SNAP benefits. DFD has been working with the federal government to get their plan approved. Systematic changes for replacements benefits should take effect on July 1st. Ms. Hentisz stated staff have started training on how to issue the benefits and who are eligible to receive the replacement benefits. Clients can receive up to two months of replacement SNAP benefits within a fiscal year. (October 1st- September 30th). Welfare agencies will have 60 days from July 1st to issue SNAP replacement benefits to clients that have reported their benefits since October 2022. Ms. Hentisz informed that the Agency’s Legal and Fiscal departments have kept a list of clients that have reported their SNAP benefits stolen, and staff members will be contacting those clients to assess if they meet the criteria to have their benefits replaced. Once this process begins on July 1st, clients have 30 days to report to the Agency of their stolen SNAP benefits, to be eligible for replacement benefits. Ms. Hentisz stated she will continue to keep the Board updated regarding this matter.

The last update from DFD is on July 1st, current TANF recipients will receive a one-time payment of \$200 from PEAFF (Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund).

Ms. Hentisz provided Agency updates and projects to the Board. Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency will be restarting an Employee Committee. Prior to the pandemic, the employee committee assisted in morale boosting employee events and fundraisers. Ms. Hentisz stated that she was very pleased with the number of employee responses that want to join the committee.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz provided updates from the CWDA (County Welfare Directors Association). Ms. Hentisz stated there is still much discussion regarding Civil Service and the delay in issuing eligibility lists. Fortunately, DFD is now involved in these discussions and has offered to provide any assistance in getting eligibility lists issued more quickly.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Hentisz for her Director’s Report and asked if there were any other questions or comments for the Director.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Director’s Report.

Mr. Kendall 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.

OPEN SESSION

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 June 2023.

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

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Report for June 2023 as presented in the packet.

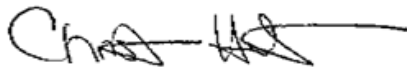
Mr. Kendall moved to accept. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken, and the Report was unanimously accepted.

OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to grant the discretionary leave requests as were presented in Closed Session. Mr. Kendall moved to approve the request. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously adopted.



Clerk