

July 21, 2021

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, July 21, 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: Commissioner Carmen G. Rodriguez; Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Not present: Vice Chairperson, Virginia Betteridge

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Lauwana Martin, Deputy Director; Edward Hill, Esquire; Charles Oppermann, Esquire; Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician (via teleconference) Donnette (Molly) Brown, Human Resource Manager (via teleconference); Joan Quinton, Confidential Aide to County Commissioner Carmen G. Rodriguez (via teleconference); Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Rich Behm, IT Director;

Public Attendance via WebEx: Various members from CWA Local 1084

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 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.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Ms.Morman 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. Commissioner Rodriguez moved to open the Public Participation portion of the Open Session, seconded by Ms. Morman and the motion was unanimously adopted.

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

Simone Moore inquired if the Board has considered giving hazardous pay to the employees of Camden County Board of Social Services who worked through the COVID-19 Pandemic. Ms. Moore also inquired has the Board considered reimbursing Work-from-Home expenses such as: internet, laptop/computer purchases to employees. Mr. Rhodes answered that there has been some discussion regarding hazardous pay, however, there currently is no final determination. Mr. Rhodes stated that if the County decides in favor of hazardous pay, then he would suggest that the Board follows the same course. Mr. Rhodes continued, the Board had made the decision at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic to allow employees to work from home, to limit the amount of people inside of the building and ultimately to keep everyone safe. Reimbursing of work-from-home expenses has never come up before, although Mr. Rhodes is not against having the discussion regarding it. Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Moore for her questions.

Tiffany Cobourne inquired if Juneteenth will be recognized and added as a federal paid holiday in the future. Ms Cobourne also inquired if the Board would consider reimbursing the employees for Juneteenth 2021. Mr. Rhodes replied that all federal holidays are negotiated within the union contracts. Mr. Rhodes stated that he would be willing and happy to discuss adding Juneteenth as federal paid holiday to the contract. Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Cobourne for her question.

Mr. Rhodes asked if there were any other members of the public wishing to address the Board. Hearing that there was no one, Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Commissioner Rodriguez moved to close the Public Portion of the Open Session. Ms. Morman 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. Morman 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 225-2021 –RATIFYING A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BY
AND BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF CAMDEN (DIVISION OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS)
AND THE CAMDEN COUNTY
BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE PROVISION
OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 225-2021. Resolution No. 81 adopted June 17, 2021, the Camden County Board of Chosen Commissioner authorized a Shared Services Agreement with the Camden County Board of Social Services for the provision to the Board by the County of information technology services for a period of five (5) years, effective September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025.

The proper Board officials are authorized to execute all documents necessary to ratify a five (5) year Shared Services Agreement with the County for the provision of information technology services, effective September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2025.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 225-2021.

Ms. Morman 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 226-2021– END OF WAIVER OF EMPLOYEE
HEALTH INSURANCE WAITING PERIOD.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 226-2021. Governor Murphy issued Executive Order 103-2020 which declared a Public Health Emergency and Executive Order 172-2020 waived the sixty (60) day waiting period for enrollment in the State Health Benefits Program while the public health emergency is in effect.; and

The Camden County Board of Social Services through Resolution 230-2020 waived the sixty (60) day waiting period for new hire or rehired employee to receive health insurance through the Camden County Board of Social Services.

The Public Health Emergency was terminated effective June 4, 2021, with the temporary exclusion of certain Executive Orders. Executive Order No. 172 was not extended and therefore expires thirty (30) days after the termination of the Public Health Emergency.

Resolution 230-2020 will also expire thirty (30) days after the termination of the Public Health Emergency. However, to allow sufficient time for programming, the waiver of the sixty (60) day waiting period for enrollment in the health insurance through the Camden County Board of Social Services will terminate as of July 31, 2021, and any employee hired after July 31, 2021, will be subject to the sixty (60) day waiting period.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 226-2021.

Ms. Morman 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.

OPEN SESSION

**Resolution 227-2021—Authorizing an Award of Contract (NJ Contract A-40467),
For the Lease of One (1) Ricoh PRO8300S
for the Period of sixty (60) Months.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 227-2021. Camden County Board of Social Services desires to authorize an award of contract to RICOH USA for the Camden County Board of Social Services to Lease of one (1) RICH OH Pro8300S Copier for a period of sixty (60) months commencing on or about September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2026 under New Jersey State Contact A-40467, at a cost of six hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$625.00) per month.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 227-2021.

Commissioner Rodriguez moved to adopt. Ms. Morman 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 that due the recent passing of Governor Murphy’s budget, there have been changes to the General Assistance (GA) program. Previously, if a person had a drug distribution charge, they were automatically disqualified from the GA program. Now a drug distribution charge will no longer disqualify a person from receiving for GA. Since this change is considered a ‘budget initiative’ it has only been approved for this fiscal year. There is no guarantee that this qualification change will continue, or if it will become a permanent change.

Ms. Hentisz stated DFD has informed that all SNAP Options/Waivers have been extended until the end of 2021 barring that the ‘State of Emergency’ continues in New Jersey. Although the ‘Public Health Emergency’ ended on June 30, 2021, it has been clarified from the federal government, that this will not affect the waivers at this time. Those waivers include: accepting telephonic signatures, maximum allotment issuance, extensions for recertifications and Interim Reporting Forms (IRF).

Ms. Hentisz provided an update regarding the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) program. Over the past couple of weeks, the program has issued several benefits to many families. The latest issuance included school aged children between the time periods of January 2021 through June 2021. The allotment can vary due to whether the child was full remote or a hybrid school schedule. Also, the State has issued a one-time payment of \$1,700.00 to all Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) households in the month of June. The State has also issued an additional one-time payment of \$500.00 to families who have children under the age of 3 years old. These funds were issued to current active TANF households, so there is no way to provide retro/back pay.

Ms. Hentisz reported that the State is looking to put together a work group that would consist of a few welfare directors and county one-stop directors to discuss the possibility of employment and training requirements to resume. Although the program waivers have been extended until December 2021, there still needs to be a discussion on what type of employment programs will be available after the extension expires.

OPEN SESSION

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

Next, Ms. Hentisz reported that Governor Murphy signed a bill which pushes for all children in the State of New Jersey to have medical coverage. This program initiative, ‘Cover all Kids’, states for no medical premiums and no waiting periods for children to receive health insurance. This program does not affect the Agency’s Medicaid programs; however, it may affect the higher-income Medicaid programs administered by the State vendor. Ms. Hentisz will provide more information to the Board when she receives it.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated the federal waiver which prevented any Medicaid case from closing during the COVID-19 pandemic is going to expire in December 2021. The Agency’s Medical Department will be reevaluating numerous cases and to check if a redetermination is needed so as to prevent a large quantity of cases from closing In January 2022.

Every fiscal year, the budget includes prenatal care for ineligible aliens. Now, the NJ Supplemental Prenatal and Contraceptive Care Program (NJSPCP) now also include contraceptive care for ineligible aliens. This program is currently only being run through health clinics and hospitals.

Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency’s Medicaid Department is continuing to make great improvement with clearing up the Medicaid redeterminations. The Medicaid redeterminations were over three to four years behind. Currently, the redeterminations are within two years behind. Ms. Hentisz commended the Medicaid staff for their great work. Also, a new procedure for processing redeterminations will be implemented soon.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz wanted to commend all staff on reporting back to work five days a week in the office. Staff have continued to adhere to the procedures that have been put in place to ensure the safety of all.

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

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

Ms. Morman 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 June 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 June 2021 as presented in the packet.

Ms. Morman 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.

OPEN SESSION

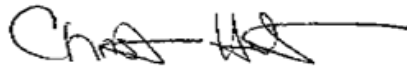
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rhodes asked if everyone could keep Mr. Martin McKernan in their thoughts and prayers as he continues to push through a difficult health situation. Mr. Rhodes hopes that Martin can meet back with us soon.

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. Morman 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