

June 16, 2021

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, June 16, 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: Virginia Betteridge, Vice Chairperson; Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Lauwana Martin, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel (via teleconference); Edward Hill, Esquire; Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer (via teleconference) 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: Simone Moore, Stephen Johnson, Vice President of CWA Local 1084; Pamela Coursen

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

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. 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 would consider recognizing Juneteenth as a holiday in the future, as the holiday was unanimously passed at the United States Senate.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Moore for her question. Mr. Rhodes stated that the County has always recognized the importance of Juneteenth. He went to say, that the Board will certainly consider and discuss recognizing Juneteenth as holiday in conjunction with the County in the future.

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. Ms. Betteridge 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. Betteridge moved to approve. Ms. Morman 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

Resolution 224-2001 – Authorizing to Amend an Agreement with the ComPsych for EAP Services.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 224-2021. The Camden County Board of Social Services is desirous of amending its contract with ComPsych Corporation for Employee Assistance Plan from the current end date of May 31, 2021 to a new end date of May 31, 2022.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 224-2021.

Ms. Betteridge 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 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’ will end 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, extensions for recertifications and Interim Reporting Forms (IRF).

Next, Ms. Hentisz informed the Board of a recent update from DFD regarding Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT). The program was renewed in October 2020 and benefits were issued for school-aged children only. This latest update now is issuing \$122.00 per child under six years of age for existing SNAP households. Any SNAP case that was active from October 2020 through June 2021, and has a child(ren) under the age of six years old, will receive backpay of \$122.00 for each child and for each month of that time period.

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 is also discussing issuing additional TANF benefits to TANF households with children under the age of four years old. There is currently no official date as to when that issuance will begin, however Ms. Hentisz will update the Board as she receives more information.

Ms. Hentisz stated there continues to be no requirement for clients to participate in the Employment and Training programs, which is usually mandatory to complete within the SNAP/GA/TANF programs. However, customers are still able to voluntarily enroll into the Employment and Training program. The State has begun to form work groups with the OneStops to discuss ways in which the Employment and Training programs can improve.

Ms. Hentisz reported that the Utility Shutoff Moratorium will end July 1, 2021. However, a grace period will be in effect from July 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 to allow residents to catch up on owed utility bills.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency’s Medical Department has made tremendous improvement with clearing up the Medicaid backlog. At the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Medicaid backlog was over a year behind. Currently, the backlog is under six months behind. Ms. Hentisz commended the medical staff for their great work. Also, a new procedure for processing redeterminations will be implemented soon.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated the Q-Less queuing system that is located in our lobby has been working great. The system assists with checking customers in and directing the customer to where they need to go. This system has been a huge asset to the receptionists in our Agency.

Beginning on June 7, 2021, most staff began working three days in the office and work two days from home. The next phase will begin on July 6th where all staff will return in the office five days a week. On July 12th, the Agency will be completely opened for full public access.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz reported that many staff have been involved in various outreach events throughout the county which include assisting at the homeless shelters and at the pop-up vaccine sites. She thanked those staff members for their great efforts in assisting residents in Camden County.

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. Betteridge moved to approve. Ms. Morman 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 Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer

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

Ms. Konopka 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 May 2021 as presented in the packet.

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

OLD BUSINESS

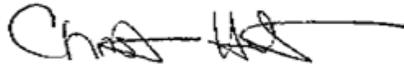
There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

OPEN SESSION

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. Morman seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.



Clerk