

May 19, 2021

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, May 19, 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 Freeholder Carmen G. Rodriguez; Jaritza Nunez, Clerk Typist 3; Rich Behm, IT Director

Public Attendance: none

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

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

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 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. 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 Participation 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 222-2021 – Authorizing the Budget for Year 2021.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 222-2021 which sets forth the total budget for 2021.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 222-2021.

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.

Resolution 223-2021 – Resolution Authorizing a Dividend from the Camden County Insurance Fund Commission for Fund Years, 2015, 2016, & 2017Edward Hill, Esquire

The Camden County Insurance Commission (FUND) is duly constituted as a joint insurance fund. The FUND has obtained a calculation from its Actuary and Executive Director that an excess of money is available as a dividend from its 2015, 2016, and 2017 Year Fund Accounts for the FUND’s member entities. The Year Fund Accounts is consistent with maintaining the financial integrity of the FUND, and it is in the best interest of the County taxpayers for the CCBSS to accept this distribution of excess monies.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 223-2021.

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 several updates from the Division of Family Development regarding several of their programs. Ms. Hentisz stated about seven hundred thousand letters were sent out by New Jersey Unemployment informing the recipients that the \$300.00 extra they receive from the federal unemployment should not be counted towards their SNAP benefits. Ms. Hentisz stated there was a change on how we calculated the SNAP and the letter encouraged all the people that were previously denied to reapply. Ms. Hentisz stated several of the people who reapplied were found eligible and some ineligible even after not counting the additional \$300.00 assistance received from the federal level UIB.

Ms. Hentisz stated the SNAP options and waivers are still in effect which include no recertifications or Interim Reporting Forms, due to the pandemic, which also include the telephonic signatures. Ms. Hentisz stated DFD is in communication with FNS regarding the governor’s announcement that he will not extend the public health emergency. Ms. Hentisz stated DFD is trying to figure out how it will affect any of our options and waivers. Ms. Hentisz stated the State is working on a complete refresh on their online application, OneApp, which is used by clients to apply for assistance through the state online portal. Ms. Hentisz stated the State is looking into adding updates; for example, clients will be able to upload documents, and other enhancements will be added to the system.

Ms. Hentisz stated that another update on DFD is an emergency broadband benefit FCC is putting out. Clients can apply directly through FCC and receive a \$50.00 credit on their broadband bills. Ms. Hentisz stated this benefit is for current SNAP and Medicaid recipients.

Ms. Hentisz reported that DFD is still working on the 2021 P-EBT benefits for the children on free and reduced lunch in New Jersey. Ms. Hentisz stated that there is a concern because it is only allowed for the days the children are not in school and each school district has different days in which the children are in school. Ms. Hentisz stated DFD received approval to continue the program through the end of Summer. This will be easier to handle because every child will receive \$55.00 a day if they are in a free or reduced lunch program throughout the school year.

Ms. Hentisz stated that, through the American Rescue Plan, money was approved at the Federal level to be solely used on TANF households. Ms. Hentisz said that the State has decided to issue a one-time benefit of \$1,700.00 on June 1, 2021 to each TANF household. Ms. Hentisz stated the additional money will not be counted for their SNAP.

Ms. Hentisz stated that DFD is planning on doing a caseworker survey in partnership with Rutgers University to look at the TANF program to determine how it can be improved. Ms. Hentisz stated that part of the survey includes current TANF recipients and includes our employees.

Ms. Hentisz reported that, through the Housing Department, we are keeping a close watch on the current moratorium on all utility shut off. This is where utilities cannot be shut off throughout the pandemic. Ms. Hentisz stated the moratorium ends June 30, 2021 and there is a huge concern for the people who have not been able to pay their utilities and have high balances. Ms. Hentisz stated we are watching to see how we can help and direct people to other programs that will help with utilities payments.

Ms. Hentisz stated that the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services is implementing an ABD application assistor program, which allows nursing home and other entities to assist ABD applicants with applying for Medicaid. Ms. Hentisz reported that DMAHS started communicating with counties to address redeterminations since the public health emergency is ending June 30, 2021, meaning that the ability to not have to do redeterminations on Medicaid is going to end.

Ms. Hentisz reported that an update on the agency COVID response is our new system Q-Less is going live next week in our lobby. This will allow clients to check-in at a Kiosk. Ms. Hentisz stated the client will be put into queues and workers will call them through the system, with the result that clients will have less "people contact" with this system.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz reported that we are working on a return to work plan so employees can come back to work at the agency more often. Ms. Hentisz stated we have a date of June 7, 2021 for employees to come back to the building to work three days a week (most employees are now working in the building only two days a week) and that, hopefully, by the end of July 2021 we will have everyone working in the building five days a week.

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. 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..... 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 April 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 April 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.

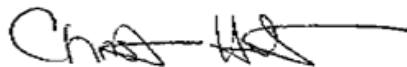
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

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