

May 20, 2020

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 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: Freeholder Carmen G. Rodriguez; Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Not present: Dr. Leonard Krivy, PhD, Vice Secretary/Treasurer; Virginia Betteridge, Vice Chairperson

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Lauwana Martin, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel (via teleconference); Edward Hill, Esquire (via teleconference); Charles G. Oppermann, Esquire (via teleconference); Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer (via teleconference); Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician (via teleconference); Donnette (Molly) Brown, Human Resource Manager (via teleconference); Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; 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. 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. Ms. Morman 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. Seeing that there was no one, Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Ms. Morman 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. 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.

OPEN SESSION

Resolution 219-2020 – Authorizing the Budget for Year 2020.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 219-2020 which sets forth the total budget for 2020.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 219-2020.

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 220-2020 – In Memory of Gerald Baker

Mr. Rhodes presented and read into the record, Resolution 220-220 In Memory of Gerald Baker.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 220-2020.

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

Mr. Rhodes went on to express his deep sorrow and sympathies of the passing of Gerald Baker. Mr. Baker was well known throughout the Agency, as well as throughout the community. He was an advocate and a beacon of light to all that knew him. Mr. Rhodes, Ms. Hentisz, members of the Board, and on behalf of all of the staff members of Camden County Board of Social Services, will deeply miss Mr. Gerald Baker. We all send our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

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 recent program changes from DFD and DMAHS. Many Food Stamps recipients received supplemental allotments for the month of May and will for June. A waiver was issued for all Food Stamps application interviews, with verbal verification being permitted. Also, telephonic signatures are allowable for those clients that cannot apply online or come into the Agency. Food Stamps, TANF/GA re-certifications for March, April, May, and June have been extended for six months. Work Activity requirements for these programs have also been lifted. The State Medicaid program has reinstated coverage for those who terminated on March 31st. The State Medicaid program will only terminate cases of clients that move out of state or voluntarily close their case. There has been a temporarily hold on Medicaid redeterminations, which will allow county welfare agencies to focus on processing new applications. New Medicaid applications will now include self-attestation. Also, any clinical assessments for ABD/LTC applications will be completed after the pandemic is over.

Next, Ms. Hentisz reported that the State approved Pandemic EBT will be issued to New Jersey residents sometime in June. Pandemic EBT provides SNAP benefits of \$416.10 per child, to all households in which the child was receiving reduced or free lunch as of March 15th. The State is working along with the NJ school districts to gather all necessary information of children that were receiving reduced or free lunch. If the household was already receiving SNAP benefits, the additional benefits will be issued to their EBT card. If the household was not previously receiving SNAP benefits, an EBT card will be mailed by the State. At this time, this is a one-time issuance.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Hentisz stated there are currently about 200 staff members working from home due to child care/school closures or an underlying medical condition in relation to COVID-19. The remaining staff that are coming into work are on alternating shifts so as to adhere to the social distancing requirements. Temperature checks are being conducted on anyone that enters the building. Masks are mandatory while inside the building. Client access has been limited. If a client does come in, a phone booth is available for the client to contact a case worker, eliminating the case worker having to bring the client to their work cubicle. Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency’s daily cleaning has been increased. Frequently touched points and surfaces are being cleaned every few hours and there is a deep sanitizing being done every Saturday.

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 adopted

FISCAL Report Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer

Ms. Konopka stated that each Board member had received copies of the Fiscal Report in their packet for April 2020.

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 2020 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.

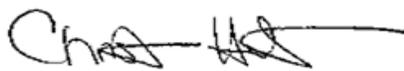
OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rhodes made mention of the April Foot Traffic report which showcased, 1,347 clients entered the Agency, whereas in January 2020, 20,036 clients entered the Agency. Certainly, the Agency has made vast adjustments and accommodations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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. Morman moved to discuss such matters in closed session. Freeholder Rodriguez seconded the motion, and there being no discussion on the motion a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.



Clerk