

November 18, 2020

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, November 18, 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: Virginia Betteridge, Vice Chairperson; Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Not present: Dr. Leonard Krivy, PhD, Vice Secretary/Treasurer

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Lauwana Martin, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel (via teleconference); Edward Hill, 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 October Board Meeting.
- The listed expenditures from both Clearing and Administration Accounts.
- The payment of salaries and traveling expenses for November.
- Requisition from the County Treasurer for administration expenses for December.
- Movement of funds to be requisitioned from the State and County Treasurers less monies on hand for assistance payments for the month of December.

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. DeVera 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 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. 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 232-2020 –Authorizing an Award of Contracts (State Contract #A811721), for the Purchase of Interview Room—Guest Seating.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 232-2020. The Camden County Board of Social Services requests to authorize an award of contract to County Business Systems, Inc. for the purchase of Interview Room – Guest Seating under State Contract #A81721, at a cost not to exceed five thousand two hundred eleven dollars and sixty cents (\$5,211.60).

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 232-2020.

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 233-2020 –Authorizing an Award of Contract (State Contract #A81714), for the Purchase of Interview Room—Task Chairs.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 233-2020. The Camden County Board of Social Services requests to authorize an award of contract to County Business Systems, Inc. for the purchase of Interview Room – Task Chairs under State Contract #A81714, at a cost not to exceed nine thousand and twenty-two dollars (\$9,022.00).

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 233-2020.

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.

Resolution 234-2020 –Authorizing an Award of Contract (State Contract #19-Food-00876), for the Purchase of Front Counter w/ New Wall & Interview Room.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 234-2020. The Camden County Board of Social Services requests to authorize an award of contract to County Business Systems, Inc. for the purchase Front Counter with a New Wall & Interview Room under State Contract #19-Food-00876, at a cost not to exceed ninety-four thousand two hundred and forty-six dollars and thirty-two cents (\$94,246.32).

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 234-2020.

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.

Resolution 235-2020 –Authorizing an Emergency Award of Contract for the Purchase of Workstation Dividers.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 235-2020. In response to Governor Murphy’s declaration of a state of emergency via the Executive Order 103 regarding the coronavirus outbreak, the Camden County Board of Social Services may, without advertising for bids, purchase certain materials, supplies or in circumstances where an emergency affecting the public health, safety or welfare requires the immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services.

The Camden County Board of Social Services requests to authorize an award of contract to Bellia Office Furniture for the purchase of Workstation Dividers, at a cost not to exceed eighteen thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight dollars and twenty-eight cents (\$18,868.28).

OPEN SESSION

Resolution 235-2020 (continued) –Authorizing an Emergency Award of Contract for the Purchase of Workstation Dividers.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 235-2020.

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.

Resolution 236-2020 –Authorizing an Award of Contract (State Contract #A-81619), for the Purchase of Glass Existing Cubicles.....Edward Hill, Esquire

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 236-2020. The Camden County Board of Social Services requests to authorize an award of contract to Bellia Office Furniture for the purchase of Glass Tops to be installed on existing cubicles under State Contract #A81619, at a cost not to exceed seventy-three thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven and eighty-nine cents (\$73,997.89).

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 236-2020.

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 a supplemental SNAP increase of the maximum allotment for the month of November was issued. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, the Federal Government has approved the extension of telephonic signatures, re-certifications, and Interim Reporting Forms (IRF) to June 2021. The June 2021 extensions also include TANF/GA applications, which allows telephonic interviews and signatures, regardless of whether or not there is a public emergency. Ms. Hentisz stated, these extended waivers are a huge benefit for the Agency in processing the increased amount of applications.

Ms. Hentisz stated that all DMAHS current waivers have been extended. Ms. Hentisz continued, that the Agency is continuing its focus on getting new applications processed. The Agency’s Medicaid Department has made a vast improvement with clearing up the Medicaid backlog. Ms. Hentisz was pleased to report the Medicaid backlog is only a couple months behind, whereas at the beginning of the year, the backlog was close to year behind in the of processing applications.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated the Senate Bill (S2519) passed in New Jersey. This bill allows certain inmates to be released from prison early because of receiving credits towards their sentence. Approximately 150 inmates will be released into Camden County due to the passing of this bill. On November 4, 2020, most of those inmates were released, and the Agency assisted 22 of them with housing assistance. Ms. Hentisz stated that she and some of her management staff will continue to be working along closely with the State, as well as the County jails and re-entry programs, to ensure that prior to the inmates being released, they are offered applications to apply for welfare benefits and/or housing assistance.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Hentisz reported to the Board that the Agency has received additional coronavirus relief funds from the State. These funds will be utilized to complete the renovations of the former Surrogate Office. This new space will be modified to accommodate the clients and staff with new interviewing booths and a new queuing kiosk system to allow clients to self-check in. Ms. Hentisz hopes that the renovations will be completed by the end of 2020. Also, with the coronavirus relief funds, additional masks were purchased for staff, overtime was allowed to process the increased amount of applications, and rolling carts with locks were distributed to staff that are working from home. Ms. Hentisz continued, that beginning on November 18, 2020, client access to the Agency has been extremely limited. As the COVID-19 cases are steadily increasing, Ms. Hentisz and Deputy Director, Lauwana Martin, put procedures in place to limit client access only to homeless clients. Eligibility Workers are stationed in the lobby daily to filter and quickly assist all other clients that try to enter into the building. Informational flyers with departmental telephone or email contacts are being distributed to clients that need to report a change or update their case.

Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency’s open enrollment for 2021 healthcare benefits began today, November 18, 2020. There was no increase in the health insurance rates, and the rates were able to stay the same until next year.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency is working along with the State in transitioning out of the Agency’s current overpayment and claims system. Beginning on January 1st, the Agency will be utilizing the OneTrac system to track all overpayment and claims. The OneTrac system will calculate and accurately recoup any funds from federal programs. This new system will be a great addition to the Overpayment Department.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz was happy to report that the Agency will still able to conduct its annual Holiday Assistance Program for 2020. Thankfully, a private donor was able to still donate toys for the program. Ms. Hentisz and the County Sheriff Department, will be safely delivering presents to families within the city of Camden for the holiday season.

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

Mr. Rhodes expressed his gratitude to Ms. Hentisz and her team in diligently working to ensure the health insurance benefits for 2021 remained flat.

Mr. Rhodes also inquired if the Agency will be participating in the New Jersey Employees Charitable Campaign (NJECC) this year. Ms. Hentisz replied that the Agency is participating in the NJECC, although the annual event to encourage employees to sign up has been scaled back this year. The Agency is still holding a virtual event to promote donating to various charities.

Mr. Rhodes stated the Agency has had the largest participation rate in the NJECC and he wished to thank all of the employees for their dedication and generosity.

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.

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 October 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 October 2020 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.

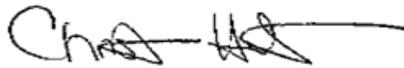
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

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