

September 18, 2019

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2019 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:

Virginia Betteridge, Vice Chair; Gwen DeVera; Sharrae Morman, Vice Secretary/Treasurer

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

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Lauwana Martin, Deputy Director; Martin F. McKernan Jr., Esquire, Board Counsel; Edward Hill, Esquire; Charles G. Oppermann, Esquire; Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer; Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician; Greg Smith, Senior Management Assistant; Joan Quinton, Confidential Aide to Freeholder Carmen G. Rodriguez; Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk

Public Attendance: Stephen Johnson, CWA Local 1084 Vice President; Jim McAsey, CWA National Staff Representative; CWA Local 1084 members: Darnell Hardee, Allegra Reed, Lachandra Young, Audrey Watkins-Kizee, Jeanette Norcross, Simone Moore, Maria McCain, Rebecca Harbora, Tyniquah Mullen, Precious Diggs; Mr. Amos Brown III

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

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.

Mr. Amos Brown III addressed the Board with claims of experiencing illegal homelessness in Camden for more than three years. Mr. Brown also stated his appeals through the District and US courts have been denied. Mr. Brown provided documents to the Board.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Mr. Brown for presenting his claim to the Board.

Mr. Stephen Johnson, Vice President of CWA Local 1084, presented to the Board a signed petition from many of their members in efforts to secure a fair contract. Mr. Johnson thanked the Board for retracting the Medical proposal, however he stated there is still a long road ahead in finalizing a fair contract.

Lachandra Young, an HSS2, stated in 2013 she happily accepted a job as an HSS1 at Camden County Board of Social Services. She was informed that after satisfactory job performance, she would be promoted to a HSS2 which included a higher compensation. By her third year of employment and receiving a promotion, Ms. Young stated her pay has remained stagnant, while her medical coverage contributions have consistently increased.

Ms. Young wanted to personally inform the Board about the impact the increase of medical contribution is having on the employees.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Young for her statements.

Simone Moore, an HSS2 has been employed at Camden County Board of Social Services for almost 10 years. She also addressed the Board regarding the significant increase of employee medical contributions. Ms. Moore stated she is well aware of the rising health care costs, however she hopes with the new pending contract the employees will see a decrease in the medical contributions.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Moore for her statements.

Ms. Jeanette Norcross addressed the Board and inquired if there is leadership training provided to supervisors and administrators. Ms. Hentisz stated supervisors and administrators are sent to the Civil Service Supervisory Steps Training. She also went on to say that, one of her initiatives is to implement Strategic Planning Sessions with administrators, as well as providing supervisory training for current and newly promoted supervisors. Also, Ms. Hentisz stated that if there is an issue with a supervisor or administrator that needs to be addressed, please contact the Personnel Department.

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Norcross for her statements.

Rebecca Harbora, an HSS3, has been employed at Camden County Board of Social Services for almost 18 years. Ms. Harbora is grateful for her job, however she stated the increase in medical contributions have greatly affected her net pay, as well as increased daily living expenses. Ms. Harbora stated she hopes that the Board truly takes into consideration how the increase in medical contributions are affecting the employees.

**OPEN SESSION
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Rhodes thanked Ms. Harbora for her statements.

Seeing that there was no one additional, 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. 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. 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.

Resolution 218-2019 – Authorizing Award of Contracts (Bid A-41/2019) to Various Vendors for the Purchase of Copy, Computer Paper and Envelopes Under Cooperative Pricing System, ID#57-CCCPS, On an As-Needed Basis..... Edward Hill, Esquire

By Resolution adopted August 15, 2019, the County of Camden authorized a contract to the lowest responsible bidders for Bid A-41/2019 Copy, Computer Paper and Envelopes for various Camden County Departments, Authorities and Agencies under the Camden County Cooperative Pricing System, ID#57-CCCPS, on an as-needed basis, for a term of six (6) months commencing on or about September 1, 2019 through February 28, 2020, with one six-month option to renew, with the various vendors having extended pricing to both Camden County and to the members of Camden County Cooperative Pricing System.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 218-2019.

Ms. Betteridge moved to approve. 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 219-2019 – Authorizing an Award of Contract, Pursuant to Solicitation of Quotations, By and Between Camden County Board of Social Services and SHI International Corp., for 500 Tripp Lite 6ft DisplayPort Cables..... Edward Hill, Esquire

The Camden County Board of Social Services is in need of 500 Tripp Lite 6ft DisplayPort Cables. SHI International Corporation is willing and able to provide services for a total cost not to exceed Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$4,500.00).

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 219-2019.

Ms. Betteridge 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.

OPEN SESSION

DIRECTOR’S REPORT. Christine Hentisz, Director

Ms. Hentisz provided updates to the Board from the Division of Family Development (DFD) and Division of Medical and Health Services (DMAHS) meeting, as well as the County Welfare Director’s Association (CWDA) Director’s Retreat.

At the retreat, Commissioner Carole Johnson, provided updates on a few topics to the directors. The first topic was in regards to the State 2019 Budget. The WFNJ cash increases were approved for TANF and GA. These cash increases will most likely cause a decrease in Food Stamps benefits. The State is closely monitoring how the minimum wage increase will affect client benefits and housing assistance. The commissioner went on to report a few policy initiatives she is working with along with Governor Murphy. A major focus will be on infant mortality. They are looking to include doulas, non-medically warranted caesarean sections, and change the payment process for deliveries to an episodic payment. There is also a big focus on the opioid epidemic.

Next, the Public Charge Rule takes effect on October 15th. It was advised to direct client inquires or concerns to Legal Services or their immigration attorney. Lastly, the Senate Bill 499 requires DMAHS to implement a system to track all counties’ Medicaid applications and the processing of the applications. Although the State already has a tracking system in place, the Bill also requires an incentive/penalty towards counties that do or do not meet certain requirements. Discussions will be had between the Executive Committee of CWDA and the Director of DMAHS to determine what the incentives/penalties will be and what time frame will these incentives/penalties be based upon.

Ms. Hentisz went on to say, she along with the Deputy Director, Lauwana Martin, are continuing to meet weekly with certain administrators regarding each contingency that was placed on the 2019 Budget. Ms. Hentisz reported that we are showing major improvement in all areas. There is a decrease in the days to process applications, as well as approximately 10,000 decrease in overdue redeterminations.

Ms. Hentisz stated that she has been working along with the administrators on having Strategic Planning Sessions. The second session is scheduled for some time in October. Ms. Hentisz and her management staff are working together to plan their two-year, five-year, and ten-year vision plans for the agency. Those plans and goals also include improvement with technology and staff development training.

The One-Stop building has officially moved from Mt. Ephraim Ave in Camden, to Woodcrest Ave in Cherry Hill. Ms. Hentisz also stated the County and the Improvement Authority is looking to provide shuttle services from the train station and Echelon mall. Also, PATCO was able to provide some transportation assistance.

Ms. Hentisz introduced the agency’s new one-site wellness coach, Raven Szasz to the Board. Raven will provide coaching services and one-on-one nutrition counseling to the staff. She will be located in the agency three days a week. Raven mentioned she has received a great response and interest from staff and is very excited to provide these services and supporting the employees’ health and wellness needs.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated that she and 5 staff members are looking forward in assisting at the county’s third annual Homeless Resource Fair that will be held on Thursday, September 26th, at the Cathedral Kitchen in Camden. The county library will also be providing a mobile computer lab at the fair to allow CCBSS staff to assist with online welfare applications.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Maria McCain, who is a clerk in the Medical Department, stated she has concerns of the agency’s Medicaid long term care backlog.

Mr. Rhodes stated he appreciated Ms. McCain’s comments, although the Public Participation session was closed at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Rhodes went on to say, that the agency is making improvements in their Medicaid backlog, but the Board is aware that there is still more work to be done.

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 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 August 2019.

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 August 2019 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.

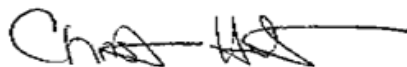
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Gwen DeVera invited all in attendance to Diversity Day, at the Voorhees Town Center, September 21st.

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