

August 18, 2021

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

Vicechairperson, Virginia G. Betteridge

Via Teleconference: Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Edward Hill, Esquire (via teleconference); Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician (via teleconference) Joan Quinton, Confidential Aide to County Commissioner Carmen G. Rodriguez (via teleconference); Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Rich Behm, IT Director;

Public Attendance via WebEx: David Jones

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

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. 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.

OPEN SESSION

**Resolution 228-2021 – AUTHORIZING CREATION OF CIVIL SERVICE TITLE
PRINCIPAL SYSTEMS ANALYST FOR THE
CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 228-2021. The Camden County Board of Social Services believes it is necessary and advantageous to establish the management position of a Principal Systems Analyst at the Camden County Board of Social Services.

The creation of a Principal Systems Analyst position would allow for an increased efficiency in carrying out the overall responsibilities of the Camden County Board of Social Services.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 228-2021.

Ms. Bettridge 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 229-2021– END OF WAIVER OF EMPLOYEE
HEALTH INSURANCE WAITING PERIOD.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 229-2021. Executive Order 103-2020 declared a Public Health Emergency and Executive Order 172-2020 waived the sixty (60) day waiting period for enrollment in the State Health Benefits Program while the public health emergency is in effect.

The Camden County Board of Social Services through Resolution 230-2020 waived the sixty (60) day waiting period for new hire or rehired employee to receive health insurance through the Camden County Board of Social Services.

The Public Health Emergency was terminated effective June 4, 2021, with the temporary exclusion of certain Executive Orders. Executive Order No. 172 was not extended and therefore expires thirty (30) days after the termination of the Public Health Emergency, but the State of Emergency related to the Covid-19 virus is still in full force.

Resolution 230-2020 shall also expire thirty (30) days after the termination of the Public Health Emergency or State of Emergency, whichever is later.

Resolution 226-2021 stated the waiver of the sixty (60) day waiting period for enrollment in the health insurance through the Camden County Board of Social Services will terminate as of July 31, 2021 and that the waiver of the sixty (60) day waiting period for enrollment in the health insurance through the Camden County Board of Social Services shall continue if there is State of Emergency related to Covid-19. Resolution 226-2021 is rescinded.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 229-2021.

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.

OPEN SESSION

Resolution 230-2021–Resolution 230-2021 in Memory of Martin F. McKernan Jr.

Mr. Hentisz presented and read into the record, Resolution 230-2021 In Memory of Martin F. McKernan Jr.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 230-2021. 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.

Ms. Betteridge went on to express deep sorrow and sympathies of the untimely passing of Martin McKernan. Martin was a true champion and friend. Ms. Betteridge stated it was a pleasure to have worked alongside Martin for many years. She will miss him greatly.

Mr. Rhodes, Ms. Hentisz, members of the Board, and on behalf of all the staff members of Camden County Board of Social Services who had the pleasure of knowing Martin McKernan, extend our deepest condolences to his family and friends.

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

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’ ended 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, maximum allotment issuance, extensions for recertifications and Interim Reporting Forms (IRF).

Ms. Hentisz stated a supplemental SNAP increase of the maximum allotment for the month of September was approved. These supplemental increases are approved monthly by FNS.

Ms. Hentisz provided an update regarding the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) program. All back benefits have now been issued. Summer P-EBT benefits were issued timely for the months of July and August. At this time, there has been no information on benefits being issued for this upcoming school year, however, Ms. Hentisz will provide an update to the Board as soon as possible.

Ms. Hentisz reported that all Employment and Training (E&T) programs will resume in January 2022. The State is continuing to put together a work group that would consist of a few welfare directors and county one-stop directors to discuss improvements to the E&T programs. Although the program waivers have been extended until December 2021, there still needs to be a discussion on what type of employment programs will be available once the programs begin in January 2022.

OPEN SESSION

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

Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency’s Medicaid Department is continuing to make a huge improvement with clearing up the Medicaid backlog of new applications. Ms. Hentisz was happy to report, that as of today, no applications are more than 100 days overdue. In addition to that, Ms. Hentisz stated the redeterminations were three years behind, and currently they are two years behind. Ms. Hentisz commended the Medicaid staff for their tremendous efforts.

Next, Ms. Hentisz stated the federal waiver which prevented any Medicaid case from closing during the COVID-19 pandemic is going to expire in December 2021. This is a concern since numerous applicants will be wanting to reapply in January. The State and county welfare agencies are working to contact the applicants before the cases close and to complete a redetermination over the phone.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency will be updating COVID-19 policies and reinstating the mask mandate soon. Currently, if an employee is vaccinated, wearing a mask is not required; however due to the surge in cases, masks may soon be required by all employees regardless of vaccination status. Ms. Hentisz recently met with CWA Local 1084 leadership who stated they are in support and will endorse the updated policies that are in relation to COVID-19. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, clients are still being screened at the Agency’s new lobby entrance, which also has been a huge help in keeping the number of clients inside the building as low as possible.

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.

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 July 2021.

Ms. Konopka stated that if anyone had any questions, she would be happy to answer them.

Mr. Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Report for July 2021 as presented in the packet.

Ms. Betteride 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.

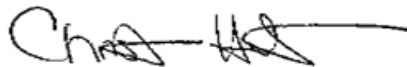
OLD BUSINESS

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