

June 15, 2022

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held virtually on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 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: Vice Chairperson, Virginia G. Betteridge, Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer; Gwen DeVera

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Ivory Marrero, Deputy Director; Edward Hill, Esquire (via teleconference) Charles Oppermann, Esquire; Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer; Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Rich Behm, IT Director; Fred Anderson, IT Supervisor, Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician (via teleconference), Joan Quinton, Commissioner Aide (via teleconference)

Public Attendance via WebEx: Darnell Hardee, Tamila Carr, Lizzie Jones, Dyon Draft

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

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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 and seeing 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. 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.

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

Ms. Hentisz provided information to the Board from DFD (Division of Family Development) and DMAHS (Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services).

Ms. Hentisz stated that most of the waivers issued by DFD have expired. There has been a substantial influx of clients coming into the Agency due to their cases being closed for not completing recertifications or Interim Reporting Forms (IRF). Staff are continuously working to process and reopen these cases as quickly as possible. Ms. Hentisz stated that she foresees the influx to continue for the next couple of months, until clients get accustomed to the requirement of recertifying again. Ms. Hentisz stated that both the Emergency Housing Assistance waiver and the Work Activity waiver will expire at the end of June. The housing department social workers have continued to prepare and assist clients for this upcoming change which includes trying to find alternate housing. The Case Management Department is working along with the Camden County OneStop, in contacting clients to inform that the work activity waiver is expiring at the end of June. The TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) and GA (General Assistance) clients will need to resume being placed either in an appropriate work activity or being deferred due to medical condition or childcare. DFD has suggested that the welfare agencies have a bit of leniency when it comes to sanctioning clients due to non-compliance. Welfare agencies need to ensure that clients are not being sanctioned due to the fault of the OneStop not having placement availability.

OPEN SESSION

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

Next, Ms. Hentisz provided updates from DMAHS. Currently, the existing waiver of Medicaid redeterminations and non-closing of cases remain in place. It is a possibility that the waiver will be expiring sometime in the summer. This waiver is linked to the federal public health emergency, which differs from the state’s public health emergency. Once the federal public health emergency is lifted, the State of New Jersey will be issued a one-year time allotment to clean up any backlogged cases and redeterminations. Ms. Hentisz also stated that fortunately the Medicaid Department has already done a tremendous job cleaning up cases these past two years and remain over 95% timely with redeterminations. So, Ms. Hentisz is more than confident the Medicaid department is prepared to handle this task.

Ms. Hentisz stated that the DIMS (Document Image Management System) Project is continuing to move along nicely. This project consists of scanning all document files from case folders into DIMS. The administrators have created new procedures for their departments on how documents will be scanned into DIMS. This project has been jumpstarted due to the upcoming move to the new building. Also, with all documents being scanned into DIMS, this will eliminate paperwork being misplaced or paperwork needing to be requested again to process a case. The goal is for the Agency to work towards becoming paperless.

Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency is involved with Camden County’s Health and Justice Systems and Solutions Mapping Initiative. This project focuses on how mental health individuals are handled through the judicial court systems. Two employees are on the panel of working to create solutions to improve the current process. Ms. Hentisz stated she will continue to update the Board on this project.

Ms. Hentisz provided an update on the Agency move. She stated we are still in the floor planning and designing stages. Ms. Hentisz has also tasked the administrators to create or update departmental procedures due to being in a new building and layout. Staff will be able to tour the new building this summer. Ms. Hentisz has begun holding her bi-weekly town hall meetings. These meetings allow staff to ask questions and bring up their concerns related to the move.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) is continuing to work through the state-wide issue of the Civil Service Commission delay in issuing tests, certifications, etc. These delays have caused a challenge for welfare agencies to promote and hire. CWDA, DMAHS, DFD, and NJAC (New Jersey Association of Counties) have all branDED together in hopes that this issue will soon be resolved. Ms. Hentisz stated she will continue to keep the Board apprised.

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

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 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 May 2022.

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 May 2022 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.

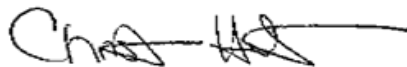
OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hill stated that it was the consensus of the Board to grant the discretionary leave request as presented in Closed Session.

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