

January 18, 2023

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. in the office of the Board at 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 161, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, 08003 with James H. Rhodes, Chair, presiding. The following members were present:

Gwen DeVera, John Kendall, Andres Camacho, Sharrae Morman, Secretary/Treasurer (via teleconference)

Public Attendance via WebEx: Tareema Redd, Audrey Watkins- Kizee, Lizzie Jones, Jacqueline Plaza, Kelli Ellis, Jamila Odom-Garnett

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Ivory Marrero, Deputy Director; Edward Hill, Esquire; Rich Behm, IT Director; Fred Anderson, IT Supervisor, Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer; Christine Colbert, Principal Personnel Technician, Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk;

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 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 161, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003, and the County Clerk was notified.

Chairman Rhodes requested approval of the following items:

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

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Mr. Camacho announced he would abstain from voting on the minutes. Mr. Kendall 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, except for the minutes, which were approved. 3-yay, 0-nay, 1-abstain.

**OPEN SESSION  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to open the meeting for public participation. Mr. Kendall moved to open the Public Participation portion of the Open Session, seconded by Ms. DeVera and the motion was unanimously adopted.

Chairman Rhodes asked if there were any members of the public wishing to address the Board.

Hearing and seeing that there was no one, Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to close the Public Participation portion of the Open Session. Mr. Kendall 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 POLICIES .....Christine 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.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director's Update on the State and Federal Policies.

Mr. Kendall 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 201-2023 Ratifying an Award of Contract, Pursuant to Solicitation of Quotations, By and Between Camden County Board of Social Services and Market Street Printing for Printing for Printing Envelopes.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 201-2023. The Camden County Board of Social Services is in need of printed envelopes. Market Street Printing, Inc. is willing and able to provide said services for a total cost not to exceed forty-four thousand dollars (\$44,000.00) for the term of January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. Market Street Printing, Inc. has completed and submitted a Business Disclosure Certification which certifies that Market Street Printing, Inc. has not made any reportable contributions to a political or candidate committee in the County of Camden in the previous one (1) year, and that the contract will prohibit Market Street Printing, Inc. from making any reportable contributions through the term of the contract.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 201-2023.

Mr. Camacho 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 202-2023(walk-on) –Authorizing an Agreement by and between the County of Camden and the Camden County Board of Social Services for Lease Payments for Space at the Woodcrest Corporate Center..... Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill walked on Resolution 202-2023. The Camden County Board of Social Services is desirous of entering into an agreement with the County of Camden to assume all lease payments for space at the Woodcrest Corporate Center effective January 1, 2023.

The Camden County Board of Social Services hereby authorizes the execution of a contract with the County of Camden for the assumption of all lease payments for space at the Woodcrest Corporate Center effective January 1, 2023, and authorizes Christine Hentisz, Director of the Camden County Board of Social Services, to sign such a contract.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 202-2023.

Mr. Kendall 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 203-2023(walk-on)– Authorizing an Agreement by and between the County of Camden and the Camden County Board of Social Services for Lease Payments for Satellite Office Space .....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill walked on Resolution 203-2023. The Camden County Board of Social Services is desirous of entering into an agreement with the County of Camden to assume all lease payments for Satellite Office Space located at 525 Market Street, Camden, NJ 08102. The Camden County Board of Social Services hereby authorizes the execution of a contract with the County of Camden for the assumption of all lease payments for satellite office space located at 525 Market Street, Camden, NJ 08102, and authorizes Christine Hentisz, Director of the Camden County Board of Social Services, to sign such a contract.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to adopt Resolution 203-2023.

Mr. Camacho 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.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT..... Christine Hentisz, Director**

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

Ms. Hentisz stated there will be many upcoming changes within both the DFD and DMAHS programs due to recent signing of the federal omnibus bill.

The first change is the discontinuation of maximum SNAP allotments. At the beginning of the pandemic, all SNAP recipients were issued the maximum allotment of SNAP benefits for their household. This provision is ending on March 1, 2023, with the last issuance being February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. There is no recourse for clients to request a fair hearing due to this change. DFD is requesting county welfare agencies to review client's cases for accuracy to ensure the original SNAP allotment is correct. DFD has disseminated notices to clients alerting of the upcoming change. The Agency has also informed county and local elective officials. Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency is prepping for the influx of calls from clients regarding the decrease in SNAP benefits.

OPEN SESSION

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT (cont.).....Christine Hentisz, Director**

Next, Ms. Hentisz reported there has been a state-wide issue with skimming of benefits. In many instances, a client's EBT card and PIN number were stolen due to a skimming machine that was put on the card reader. DFD has informed that soon there will be a process set to replace the stolen benefits.

Ms. Hentisz informed that the TOP (Treasury Offset Program) has resumed after being discontinued during the pandemic. This program recoups any federal money from a client that has an overpayment case with a welfare agency.

Ms. Hentisz stated that some staff and supervisors will be attending the Child Support Conference at the end of February. The conference entails various workshops and presentations which is very beneficial for all that attend.

Ms. Hentisz informed the Board that DFD has decided to reschedule the in-person quarterly directors meeting due to spacing and capacity concerns. DFD is also focusing on county welfare agencies SNAP timeliness again. Prior to the pandemic, DFD implemented a huge initiative to get the entire state's SNAP timeliness rate to about 95 percent. DFD is starting to notice a decrease in the SNAP timeliness rate which most likely is due to the increase in SNAP applicants. Ms. Hentisz continued, that although our agency's timeliness has slightly decreased, she is happy to report that our Agency has maintained at processing SNAP applications at a 90 percent timeliness rate. She commended the staff for their tremendous efforts in keeping the Agency timely and is sure that the Agency can obtain the 95 percent timeliness rate again.

Next, Ms. Hentisz provided updates from DMAHS.

Ms. Hentisz stated since the start of the pandemic, Medicaid redeterminations were not permitted to be closed. This directive was linked to the federal public health emergency, which differs from the state's public health emergency. Beginning on April 1<sup>st</sup>, the directive for non-closure of Medicaid cases and/or redeterminations will end. Ms. Hentisz stated it may take a little while for clients to get back in the habit of submitting documents again for their Medicaid redeterminations.

Ms. Hentisz informed the Board that the location of the Agency's satellite office will be at: 525 Market Street in Camden. Fortunately, the new location is a very short distance from our original location at 600 Market Street. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, the clean out project of the 600 Market Street location is almost completed. Many of our files will be scanned into DIMS (Document Imaging Management System) which would cut down our paper drastically. The internal processes for DIMS will be implemented very soon and will certainly cut down the time to file documents. Ms. Hentisz is very excited to finally get this project up and running.

Next, Ms. Hentisz informed that the Agency's Open House has been scheduled for next week. She is looking forward to seeing our partner agencies, state staff, and county officials.

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated the CWDA (County Welfare Directors Association) are continuing to have discussions regarding staffing concerns throughout the welfare agencies. Ms. Hentisz stated although there has been some improvement, there is still a few challenges with the hiring process and eligibility lists.

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

**OPEN SESSION**

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve the Director's Report.

Mr. Kendall 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 December 2022.

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

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to accept the Fiscal Report for December 2022 as presented in the packet.

Mr. Kendall 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.

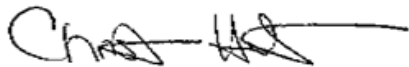
**OLD BUSINESS**

There was none.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Rhodes formally introduced and welcomed a new board member, Mr. Andres Camacho. Mr. Camacho stated he was very happy to be a part of the Board and is looking forward to working along with everyone.

It was the consensus of the Board to grant the four discretionary leave requests as presented in Closed Session.



---

Clerk