

April 17, 2024

At 12:00 P.M., a quorum being present, Ms. Purvin called the annual reorganization 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.

**Reorganization – Board Members of the Camden County Board of Social Services**

Ms. Purvin requested a roll call:

Mr. James H. Rhodes	Present
Ms. Gundelina 'Gwen' DeVera	Present
Mr. Andres Camacho	Present
Ms. Sharrae Morman	Absent
Mr. John Kendall	Present
Mr. Joseph Ripa, County Clerk	Absent
Commissioner Director Louis Cappelli	Absent
Commissioner Virginia Betteridge	Present

Ms. Purvin called for election of officers:

Chairman  
Vice Chairman  
Secretary/Treasurer

Ms. Purvin requested a motion to elect the officers.

Gwen DeVera moved to elect the current slate of officers as Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. John Kendall seconded the motion.

Ms. Purvin asked if there were any other nominations.

Ms. Purvin stated there being no other nominations she would direct that the nominations be closed. There were no objections to the motion.

Ms. Purvin stated that the nominations are:

Chairman – James H. Rhodes  
Vice Chairman – Andres Camacho  
Secretary/Treasurer – Sharrae Morman

**Reorganization Meeting**

Ms. Purvin declared that the slate of officers as previously mentioned in the motion is hereby elected for the forthcoming year.

Ms. Purvin turned the meeting over to the Chairman, James H. Rhodes and the Open Session resumed.

Chairman Rhodes requested approval of the following items:

- Minutes of the March Board Meeting.
- The listed expenditures from both Clearing and Administration Accounts.
- The payment of salaries and traveling expenses for April.
- Requisition from the County Treasurer for administration expenses for May.
- To move funds, to be requisitioned from the State and County Treasurers less monies on hand for assistance payments for the month of May.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve.

Mr. Camacho 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**

The regular meeting of the Camden County Board of Social Services was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. in the office of the Board at 101 Woodcrest Road, Suite 161, Cherry Hill, New Jersey, with James H. Rhodes, Chair, presiding. The following members were present:

Commissioner Virginia Betteridge; Andres Camacho, Vice Chairman; Gwen DeVera, John Kendall

Also present were: Christine Hentisz, Director; Susan Purvin, Esquire; Edward Hill, Esquire; Paulette Konopka, Fiscal Officer; Christine Colbert, Personnel Officer; Nicole Jefferson, Administrative Clerk; Rich Behm, IT Director; Fred Anderson, System Analyst Supervisor; Carla Avellino, Confidential Aide to Commissioner Betteridge

Public Attendance: Jennifer Lucas, HSS2, Sarah Cepeda, via Zoom

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

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

Ms. Lucas inquired if the Agency would consider requesting to DFD, a bilingual Haitian-Creole position. Ms. Lucas stated the Agency has seen an influx of Haitian-Creole speaking clients. Ms. Lucas stated she can attest to the delays and long wait times of getting a translator on the Language Line phone systems. There are not enough translators for the Haitian-Creole clients.

Ms. Hentisz replied that the Directors have spoken to DFD about the increase of Haitian-Creole clients. Currently, Civil Service does not have that particular bilingual title. Also, it would take time to create the title and create a bilingual test. However, DFD is aware that this is a state-wide issue.

Chairman Rhodes thanked those for their comments and asked if there were any other members that wished 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. Vice Chairman Camacho 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 comment on them.

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

Mr. Kendall moved to approved. 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 206-2024 – Authorizing the Memorandum of Understanding with the Camden County One-Stop Career Center Partners..... Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 206-2024. The Camden County Board of Social Services is desirous of entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Camden County One-Stop Career Center Partners regarding the operation and management of the Camden County One-Stop Career Center, in the Workforce Development Board Area. The Camden County Board of Social Services hereby authorizes the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Camden County One-Stop Career Center Partners for the period April 1, 2024 to December 31, 2026 regarding the operation and management of the Camden County One-Stop Career Center, in the Workforce Development Board Area and authorizes Christine Hentisz, Director of the Camden County Board of Social Services, to sign such Memorandum of Understanding.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve Resolution 206-2024

Vice Chairman 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.

**Resolution 207-2024 – Adopting Meeting Schedule and Designating a Newspaper to Receive Notices for the Camden County Board of Social Services..... Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 206-2024. Mr. Hill stated that the Open Public Meetings Act states that the Board is required to adopt its annual meeting schedule and designate newspapers to receive notices for the Board of Social Services Board meetings.

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve Resolution 206-2024

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 208-2024— Authorizing the Camden County Board of Social Services to Recognize May 5<sup>th</sup>- May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as Public Service Recognition Week in Honor of the Millions of Public Employees at the Federal, State, County, and Municipal Levels.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Mr. Hill presented Resolution 208-2024. The Camden County Board of Social Services recognizes its employees for their dedicated efforts on behalf of the citizens of Camden County in meeting its mission to provide timely, efficient, and cost-effective delivery of social, medical, and economic programs in a compassionate and financially responsible manner. The Camden County Board of Social Services values the rights and worthiness of all customers and staff. The success of our mission requires the cooperation, commitment, active participation, and ideas of all our employees. The Camden County Board of Social Services recognizes public servants include social service workers, teachers, doctors, scientists, nurses, policemen, firemen, safety inspectors, laborers, and countless other occupations. Day in and day out they provide the diverse services demanded by the American people of their government with efficiency and integrity.

**Resolution 208-2024 (cont.)— Authorizing the Camden County Board of Social Services to Recognize May 5<sup>th</sup>- May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as Public Service Recognition Week in Honor of the Millions of Public Employees at the Federal, State, County, and Municipal Levels.....Edward Hill, Esquire**

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to approve Resolution 208-2024.

Mr. Kendall moved to adopt Resolution 208-2024 as presented. 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 reported on the current program updates or changes from DFD (Division of Family Development) and DMAHS (Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services).

Ms. Hentisz stated that last month’s DFD meeting was cut short due to the earthquake, so she has just a few updates to provide to the Board. The first update is DFD is looking to rebrand all County Welfare Agencies. One change will be changing all correspondence and communication to no longer state, ‘County Welfare Agencies’ but rather ‘County Social Services Agencies’. DFD is hoping this change will have a positive effect on how the public views those that receive assistance. Next, Ms. Hentisz informed that DFD’s newly updated Call Center and website went live in March. Ms. Hentisz hopes to have more updates on how the Call Center and website are progressing next month. Lastly, Ms. Hentisz stated the previously reported mandatory SNAP interview provision that was slated to resume on June 1<sup>st</sup>, has been requested to be extended to resume on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency is still however preparing for a June 1<sup>st</sup> start date, as this will still be a huge increase to the number of interviews that need to be conducted by the Interviewing Department. There has been no update just yet if the waiver extension has been approved.

Next, Ms. Hentisz provided updates from DMAHS.

The Agency’s Medicaid Department is still focusing on the Medicaid ‘unwinding’, which is the continuous review of Medicaid redeterminations that were open during the pandemic. The unwinding period did come to an end on April 1<sup>st</sup>. However, the Agency’s Medicaid Department continues to do their best while working through the huge influx of cases, that is also occurring state-wide. Also, Ms. Hentisz reported that DMAHS implemented a new ABD (Aged Blind & Disabled) Renewal Pilot with Ocean County. The pilot allows the ABD renewal applications to be completed within the Worker Portal. This process would greatly improve the processing times, whereas currently, ABD renewal applications are completed manually.

Ms. Hentisz provided Agency updates and projects to the Board. Ms. Hentisz stated the Agency is collaborating with Camden Coalition in the State’s initiative to ‘Cover All Kids’ This initiative was implemented by Governor Murphy to ensure that all children within the state of New Jersey has health care coverage. Deputy Director, Ivory Marrero attended the press conference held by the Camden Coalition today about the ‘Cover All Kids’ roll out for Camden County.

Ms. Hentisz also informed the Board the Agency is currently working on fully implementing the State’s OneTrac system to assist in streamlining the processing of SNAP, GA and TANF applications. Deputy Director Marrero continues to closely work along with administrators, the Agency’s Training Departments, and DFD in hopes to have the Agency fully utilizing the OneTrac System by June.

**OPEN SESSION**

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

Lastly, Ms. Hentisz provided an update from the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA). There was a request made to DFD last year for a reallocation of unspent funds and to review how allocations are determined. Fiscal Officer, Paulette Konopka is now become a member of the Reallocation Committee.

Also, as reported last month, Ms. Hentisz informed that FNS (Food Nutrition Services) did in fact put a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the State of New Jersey to improve their SNAP timeliness and accuracy. Ms. Hentisz went on to say, the Agency has not been informed on whether it will be including in the CAP. The Agency’s SNAP timeliness rate has remained in the lower 90 and higher 80 percentiles, which is commendable considering the number of cases that are coming in. Ms. Hentisz will continue to update the Board in the months to come.

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

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 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 the month of March 2024.

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 March 2024 as presented in the packet.

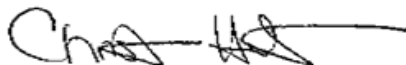
Mr. Kendall moved to accept. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken and the Report was unanimously accepted.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was none.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Rhodes requested a motion to grant the discretionary leave requests as were presented in Closed Session. Mr. Kendall moved to approve the requests. Ms. DeVera seconded the motion and there being no discussion on the motion, a vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously adopted.



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Clerk