

BURLINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES

February 19, 2026, at 4:32 p.m.

MINUTES

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT: Harriette Cohen, Vice Chairperson
Dee Bayles, Secretary/Treasurer
Pamela Hall-King, Citizen Member
Jaclyn Veasy, Citizen Member (via telephone)

EXCUSED: Sarah Holley, Chairperson
Saima Bhutta, Citizen Member
Michael Trainor, Citizen Member
Tyler Burrell, County Commissioner
Felicia Hopson, County Commissioner

STAFF: Lila Myers, Acting Deputy Director
Evan Crook, Esq., General Counsel
Natalia Hudson-Cheek, Paralegal Specialist

VISITORS: Marietta DiBartolomeo David Mauro Valerie Ingling
At least 15 Visitors

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT: (read by Lila Myers, Acting Deputy Director)

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by: (a) prominently posting the annual Notice of Meetings Resolution and maintaining such notice on a public bulletin board reserved for such or similar announcements; (b) submitting the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution for publication in the Burlington County Times, the Board's official newspaper, on February 1, 2026, and the Courier Post, the Board's alternative official newspaper on February 4, 2026, within seven business days of the Board's reorganization meeting of January 27, 2026; (c) filing the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution with the Clerk of the County of Burlington; and (d) mailing the Annual Notice of Meetings Resolution to any persons who shall have prepaid to receive such notice.

ROLL CALL

VISITORS ANNOUNCED

2026 BOARD COMMITTEES:

Harriette Cohen stated that interviews for the Temporary Director's position would start in the next few weeks.

MINUTES: Motion made by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Dee Bayles, motion carried to approve the open and executive minutes of January 27, 2026.

Member Name	Yay	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Cohen	√			
Holley				√
Bayles	√			
Bhutta				√
Hall-King	√			
Veasy	√			
Trainor				√

Burrell				√
Hopson				√

CORRESPONDENCE: Read into record by Lila Myers, Acting Deputy Director.

- A. Thank you from a customer to Celina Woodall, Paralegal Specialist – Legal
Lila stated that I don't see Celina here but I want to thank Celina for her hard work.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

- A. Resolution No. 2026-11 CWA/OPEIU Salary Adjustment MOA

Motion made by Dee Bayles, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, unanimously carried to approve.

OTHER BUSINESS: (by Lila Myers, Acting Deputy Director).

- A. Agency Update

As the Board is aware, we cleared the 2025 backlog and made tremendous progress in our timeliness for expedited SNAP benefits. The agency was above 90% for SNAP expedited cases in January; we are moving in the right direction. I would like to recognize NJFC and ABD, as we remain among the top for NJFC new application processing in the State. Adding additional staff in the ABD unit has made a difference for us. DMAHS has recently acknowledged that we are making improvements across all areas of processing. We are currently number one in the state for NJFC intakes and number two for NJFC renewals. We completed HSS1 interviews, and clerk interviews are still pending. We transitioned from the GA system to the new CAPEs system with some growing pains and informed the State of the issues. We continue to offer overtime before and after work until 5:30 p.m., as well as on two Saturdays per month. Changes to SNAP and Medicaid were included in the Federal Reconciliation bill; continuing conversation with DMAHS. Changes to Medicaid include required bi-annual redeterminations for Medicaid expansion members with eligibility and customer compliance; nothing is finalized. Last week, the staff toured the new downstairs space, which streamlines client service in one area. New security measures are in place. The project is almost completed. Nicole has been overseeing the project, and I thanked her for all her hard work. We received some feedback from staff with suggestions for improvement.

Harriette Cohen, Vice Chairperson, asked, when would the Board have an opportunity to see the renovated area downstairs, Nicole indicated that she would set up tours for Board Members.

REQUISITION OF ESTIMATED FUNDS:

Motion made, duly seconded, and unanimously carried to approve the reports for Assistance payments and approval of Assistance payments, initial grants and changes in grants, closings, denials, withdrawals, and dismissals. Also,

approved receipts and disbursements for CSP, Administration, Unemployment, and Clearing Account. Also, approved payment of Administrative bills and ratified the administrative actions of the Director.

TAB A, TAB B, and TAB C:

Combined, the motion made by Dee Bayles, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to approve.

TAB D:

Motion made by Dee Bayles, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to approve.

Member Name	Yay	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Cohen	√			
Holley				√
Bayles	√			
Bhutta				√
Hall-King	√			
Veasy	√			
Trainor				√
Burrell				√
Hopson				√

PERSONNEL:

- A. Authorize the Acting Deputy Director’s action in the provisional appointment of Geanina Palasanu, Human Services Specialist 1 to Human Services Specialist 2, Range 13, \$52,104 to Range 17, \$61,976, effective January 21, 2026, in accordance with the New Jersey Civil Service Commission procedures.

Motion made by Pamela Hall-King, duly seconded by Dee Bayles, and unanimously carried to approve.

PUBLIC COMMENT: (commenced at 4:42 p.m.)

Please raise your hand to be recognized by the Board Chairperson. Once recognized, introduce yourself. Be sure to address all comments to the Board Chairperson. Each public commenter will be afforded four minutes. Thank you for your cooperation.

John Edmonds, representing the OPEIU Supervisors’ Union, stated that he represents about twenty Supervisors. At the last Board meeting, Chrissy Herb and Shawn Rhodes addressed the Board about the disparities in salary. At the end of last year, we rushed to address the healthcare open enrollment options. We appreciated the Board’s conclusions. However, the majority realized that some individuals would make more money than others would. I am not sure if or how the Board is going to address it. That is our question.

Evan Crook, General Counsel, stated that he thought he communicated that they were not going to change anything in the MOA, and that is still their position. In terms of going forward, we understand the issue. We can begin negotiations sooner than later, not this month or March. Perhaps, in April or May, we can work out something that addresses the concerns.

John Edmonds thanked Evan for his response and stated that he would bring the information back to his members.

Harriet Cohen, Vice Chairperson, thanked John Edmonds for coming and for the information.

PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED (concluded at 4:45 p.m.)

BOARD ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: None

Evan Crook, General Counsel, stated that he had nothing for the executive session and asked the Board if they had anything for the Executive session.

Harriet Cohen, Vice Chairperson, stated that the Board had nothing for the executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: NONE

ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Dee Bayles, duly seconded by Pamela Hall-King, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:47 p.m.