

New Jersey School Employees' Health Benefits Commission
Open Session Minutes
January 23, 2023

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided through the annual notice of the schedule of regular meetings of the Commission filed with and prominently posted in the offices of the Secretary of State. The 2023 annual meeting schedule was mailed to the Secretary of State on December 29, 2022, and Star Ledger and the Trenton Times on December 20, 2022. The annual meeting schedule was posted to the Division website on December 1, 2022.

The meeting of the School Employees' Health Benefits Commission of New Jersey was called to order on Monday, January 23, 2023 at 10:00 am, taking place at the New Jersey Division of Taxation; 3 John Fitch Way, Trenton, New Jersey, 08611.

The text of Resolution A (Closed Session) and Resolution B (Executive Session) were read in their entirety in the event that the Commission desires, at any point in the meeting, to approve a motion to go into Closed or Executive session.

The Secretary took Roll Call and established that a quorum was present.

Board Members:

Sonia Rivera-Perez, Chair

Julie Giordano Plotkin

Sarah Favinger

Carl Tanksley

Denise Graff Policastro

Michael Maillaro

Phillip Gennace

Also Present:

Ken Lang, Applicant

Mike Rucci

Michelle Rucci, Applicant

Kate Miller, Optum RX

Monica Valentine, Optum RX

Bill Crawford, Optum RX

Joyce Malerba

Interim Chair

Board member Michael Maillaro nominated Sonia Rivera-Perez to Interim Chair. Ms. Favinger seconded. The commission voted in favor of the motion, and Sonia Rivera-Perez was named Interim Chair for the meeting.

Mr. Maillaro made a motion to go into Closed Session to hear the Closed Session appeals that contain protected health information. Ms. Favinger seconded. All voted in favor.

The following cases, due to HIPAA regulations, were heard in Closed Session:

Case #2023012301: This appeal was originally tabled from the September 2022 commission meeting to allow additional time to receive medical records from a retired doctor due to a denial of medication. The member is requesting approval of the Rabeprazole 20 milligram tablet. The member and physician have been advised of formulary and OTC alternatives. Records show the member has not tried any of the alternatives. Optum RX stated it would be clinically reasonable for the member to try one of the formulary alternatives.

Mr. Maillaro made a motion to deny the appeal. Ms. Favinger seconded; all voted in favor and the motion had been denied.

Case #2023012302: A dependent child of the member had been deactivated from Horizon as of January 1, 2022. The member stated would like this resolved as the dependent child is autistic. Ms. Fields stated that the dependent child needs to be renewed annually for overage handicap coverage and that renewal forms had been sent in November 2021 and February 2022 with no response from the member.

Board member Ms. Favinger made a motion to allow the submission of paperwork to apply for the overage coverage. Mr. Maillaro seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Case #2023012303: The member is requesting an in-house nurse for their wife whom is struggling with MS for 20 years and deteriorating quickly. Horizon provided additional information regarding the appeal. Horizon stated the member was denied for an in-house nurse but provided one that comes to change the wife's catheter every one to two weeks. The member stated they had to close down their construction business in order to be with the wife 24/7.

Board member Maillaro made a motion to go into Executive Session. Chairperson Rivera-Perez seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Upon return from Executive Session, Chairperson Rivera-Perez made a motion to deny the appeal but also request that there be an expedited process for this appeal to be sent to the OAL for additional fact finding. Board member Gennace seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Case #2023012304: The member had been covered under Medicare but was told they did not have coverage due to not receiving the Medicare proof. Documents were provided to the member stating that a confirmation was not received of the member/their partners' enrollment in Medicare Parts A and B, therefore terminating the coverage. The member did provide documentation but not by the date it was asked for.

Ms. Graff Policastro made a motion to grant the appeal and reimburse the member for \$1,039.50. All voted, the motion passed with a total of 6 yes's and 2 no's.

Case #2023012305: This appeal is in regards to the members' denial for their authorization for additional occupational therapy services so it's pre-service. The authorization was denied and marked as not clinically necessary. The members did not join this appeal, therefore more information is needed.

Board member Tanksley made a motion to table this appeal to allow the parents to submit proof of an IEP or some other contracts with the school district about the services being requested here. Ms. Favinger seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Board member Maillaro made a motion to move to Open Session. Mr. Tanksley seconded. All voted in favor.

Before returning from Open Session, Board member Favinger made a motion to have the four Employees Health Benefits commissioner and State health benefits commission have a joint commission meeting to discuss RFP in February. Mr. Tanksley seconded the motion. The motion had been denied.

Chairperson Perez-Rivera made a motion to move to Executive Session to request advice from the Attorney General. Mr. Maillaro seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Upon returning from Executive Session, Chairperson Rivera-Perez made a motion to delegate the procurement authority for the dental RFP to the Division of purchase of property. All voted in favor.

Chairperson Rivera-Perez made a motion to the Commission to delegate the procurement of the matter of the commercial medical their seats of the Division of purchasing property. Mr. Maillaro seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Ms. Favinger made a motion to request for employees and state health benefits Commission to have a joint meeting in February. Ms. Castro seconded the motion; with a vote of 4-3, the motion did not pass.

Contract Discussion/Extension Updates:

Board member Malerba touched base on contract extensions, such as, a 2-year extension agreement for the Medicare Advantage plan, 1-year extension for all the dental carriers, and a 1-year extension for the commercial health benefits contract. All extensions were approved through DPP.

Board member Gannace made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Maillaro seconded. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 12:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Fields
Acting Secretary
State Health Benefits Commission