### NORTH JERSEY MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS FUND OPEN MINUTES MAY 23, 2024 RANDOLPH MUNICIPAL HALL- 9:30 AM

Meeting of Fund Commissioners called to order by Scott Heck, Chair. Open Public Meetings notice read into record.

### **ROLL CALL OF 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND FUND COMMISSIONERS**

2024 Executive Committee			
Scott Heck, Chair	Borough of Ringwood	Present	
Tom Russo, Secretary	Town of Newton	Present	
Barbara Russo	Township of Berkeley Heights	Present	
Tammy Smith	Knowlton BOE	Present	
Silvio Esposito	Township of Hanover	Present (9:45am)	
Carinne Piccolo- Kaufer	Township of Hardyston	Present	
Greg Poff	Borough of Randolph*	Present	
<b>Executive Committee Alternates:</b>			
Adam Brewer	Township of Pequannock	Present	
Cathy Shanahan	Township of West Milford	Present	
Dina Valente - Stoel	Borough of Lincoln Park	Present	

Fund Commissioners		Absent
Mike Sondermeyer	Borough of Bloomingdale	Present
Michael Restel	Township of Wantage	Absent
James Zepp	Township of Sparta	Present
Patricia Bussow	Andover Township*	Absent
Ralph Blakeslee	Borough of Netcong*	Absent
Keith Kazmark	Borough of Woodland Park	Absent
Victoria Dobrusin	Township of Dover	Absent
Andrew Fiore	Borough of Harding	Absent
Katie Yanke	Borough of Montville*	Absent
Joe Sabatini	Township of Byram*	Absent
James Burnett	Borough of Madison*	Absent
	Township of Prospect Park*	Absent
John Shepherd	Township of Roxbury*	Absent
Debra Millikin	Township of Jefferson*	Present

James Freda	Kinnelon	Absent
Gabby Evangelista	Borough of Wharton	Present
Karen Fornaro	Borough of Chatham	Absent
Tina Kraus	Township of Vernon	Present
	Town of Boonton	Absent
	Madison Housing Authority	Absent
Mitchell Stern	Mountain Lakes	Absent
Claudia Quinn	Mt. Olive	Absent
Fund Commissioner Alternates		
Ashleigh Frueholz	Township of Byram*	Absent
Jennifer Dodd	Town of Newton	Absent
Lisa Spring	Township of Roxbury*	Absent
Joseph Kovalcik	Borough of Wharton	Absent
Perry Mayers	Borough of Lincoln Park	Present
Jasmin Azcona	Township of Bloomingdale	Absent
Michele Lantau	Township of Sparta	Absent
	Borough of Netcong*	Absent
	Township of Dover	Absent
Sandra Emmerich	Borough of Madison*	Absent
Nancy VanHorn	Township of Wantage	Absent
Deborah Bonanno	Randolph Township	Absent
William Egan	Township of Jefferson	Absent
Dana Vitz	Township of Hardyston	Absent
Stephen Williams	Borough of Chatham	Absent
Shawn Bennett	Mountain Lakes	Absent

### APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Executive Director	PERMA Risk Management	Brandon Lodics
	Services	Emily Koval
Program Manager	Vozza Agency	David Vozza
		Randi Gerber
Attorney	Dorsey & Semrau	Ed Pasternak
Claims Administrator	Aetna	Jason Silverstein
Dental Administrator	Delta Dental	
Prescription	Express Scripts	Charles Yuk
Administrator		
Treasurer	Michael Soccio	Present
Auditor	Nisivoccia	Bud Jones
Actuary	John Vataha	Absent

### PRESENT FUND PROFESSIONALS:

Renee Gear, World Insurance Lois Manzella Marchietta, Fitness Knocking Staci Grant, Acrisure/Henry O Baker Wayne Dietz, Skylands Risk Management

#### **FLAG SALUTE**

**CORRESPONDENCE - None** 

### MOTION TO APPROVE OPEN MINUTES FOR JANUARY 25, 2024 AND MARCH 28, 2024:

MOTION: Commissioner Brewer SECOND: Commissioner Kaufer

VOTE: Unanimous

### **REPORTS:**

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Fast Track Financial Reports** as of March 2024 – Executive Director reviewed Financial Fast Track through March which showed a positive gain of \$482,000 to the surplus. Although, he noted that this is the month that Mt. Olive entered, so the income is received but not many would have been processed yet. In addition, the rebates were understated so there was a catch up in the actual receipts. There is still a loss through the first quarter. He said that the finance committee will be reviewing the status in more detail. Mr Heck said finance committee would like usual quarterly meetings.

**Auditor and Actuary Year-End Reports** - A draft of the Fund Year 2023 Audit, performed by the Fund auditor, Nisivoccia is attached. The Finance Committee will be reviewing prior to the meeting and will send a final upon receipt. A representative from Nisivoccia will be in attendance to present

their findings. Should there be any comments, PERMA will be prepared to answer. Resolution 24-17 approving and authorization to file with the state is included in the consent agenda, along with the affidavit to be signed by all present Commissioners.

Fund Auditor reviewed the audit report for Fund Year 2023 that was distributed. He said the statements of net position showed a loss of \$1.36 million in surplus. He said there was a dividend released that this is heavily attributed to. In addition, he added a comment about new GASB requirements for next year.

Chair Heck said that the loss in surplus was somewhat intentional because of the dividend decision.

Once this audit is filed, PERMA recommends the closure of Fund Year 2022. All IBNR has been expensed and there are no outstanding accounts receivable or payable. Resolution 24-18 allows for closing this year.

### MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT FOR PERDIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024:

MOTION: Commissioner Brewer SECOND: Commissioner B. Russo

VOTE: 16 Ayes, 0 Nays

#### **MOTION TO CLOSE FUND YEAR 2022:**

MOTION: Commissioner Meyers SECOND: Commissioner T. Russo

**VOTE:** 16 Ayes, 0 Nays

**FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES** - All Fund Commissioners should have received their financial disclosure statements the first week of April. As a reminder, the role of Fund Commissioner is a separate filing from that of your municipality obligation. As of 5/6/2024, the following Commissioners need to complete the filing for the Fund. Reminder: All elected positions, JIF and HIF Commissioner positions must have a separate filing.

As of 5/15/24, There are 3 Commissioners out of compliance that have been contacted. We expect full compliance.

**CONTRACT REVIEWS -** The North HIF has professional contracts that expire at the end of 2024, and others that have possible extensions. We will have a contracts committee meeting prior to the July meeting to review and recommend certain RFPs and/or extensions. Executive Director said he will set the contracts committee meeting in a few weeks.

HIF COOPERATIVE PURCHASING SYSTEM - We are pleased to report that the Health Insurance

Cooperative Pricing System has been approved by the State.

Due to the collective value of the Medical Third-Party Administrator contract, the Co-op will need pre-approval from the Office of the Comptroller. We are working with the MRHIF QPA to develop the draft for OSC review. We are working towards a release date by end of June.

Executive Director said that he has been working closely with the Fund Attorney and QPA to get this complete for the OSC filing.

**WEX (BENEFITS EXPRESS) BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION - MANDATORY USE** - Beginning in 2011 on behalf of the Local Funds the Executive Director of the MRHIF entered into a subcontract agreement with WEX (formerly Benefits Express) to provide Benefits Administration services. These services included: enrollment, billing, COBRA, and other administrative services.

The intent of the transition was to support the rapid growth of the Funds by introducing automation into an analog and manual process. It was approved by vote that Fund entities would take over the function of entering employee, retiree and dependent enrollments utilizing the Web based WEX system. This transition of duties was agreed to be mandatory for all Fund participants.

We do not have 100% compliance in this requirement by our HIF members. As a reminder, eligibility, and enrollment the requirement of the entities, though PERMA has in place support to assist members in troubleshooting the system, the team is multifaceted with other roles and responsibilities dedicated to servicing our members. To assure our resources are properly aligned with their intended scope of services, the mandatory requirement will be reinforced.

Beginning on <u>June 1, 2024</u>, the enrollment/billing team members have been instructed that they are no longer able to process enrollments on behalf of entities.

As a reminder regular live video system training is available every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 10:00.

**GASB 75 REPORTS** - The Fund contracts with an Actuary to provide GASB 75 reports on behalf of its medical members. Please reach out to Emily Koval if your audit requires a full report or update to last year's report. During its 'busy' season, reports can take up to 4 weeks to turn around.

### PRORAM MANAGER REPORT

Program Manager Dave Vozza reviewed the report included in the agenda.

**TOWN VISITS/MEETINGS/PLAN CHANGE REQUESTS -** Our office frequently works with towns for review of plan options for union negotiations. If anyone is entering union negotiations and needs assistance, please feel free to contact our office directly to discuss.

**ENROLLMENT, ELIGIBILITY, BILLING -** The funds policy is to limit retro corrections, including terminations to 60 days. Please check your monthly invoice for accuracy. If you find a discrepancy, please report it immediately to the NJHIF enrollment Team at <u>northernnjenrollments@permainc.com</u> *Use of the WEX (formerly Benefits Express) enrollment system is mandatory*.

### Online Enrollment System Training Schedule - 2024 - UPDATE NOTICE FOR ALL WEX USERS:

There has been a new update to the WEX system that could affect your member termination process, where the "Quick Term" option has been removed. To accommodate this change, we have provided updated termination instructions attached separately for your reference. Going forward, please review these instructions and follow the updated process when terminating a member. Afterward, you can access the quick look feature to confirm coverage is ending on the desired date. You can also reach out to the enrollment team if you need assistance.

PERMA offers virtual training and a refresher class of the online enrollment system the third Wednesday of each month. The session provides an overview of the Fund's enrollment system and shows HR users how to perform tasks in the system. To gain access to the Fund's enrollment system, each HR user must complete a system access form.

 Wednesday June 19th 10:00 am - 11:00 am

 Wednesday July 17th 10:00 am - 11:00 am

 Wednesday August 21st 10:00 am - 11:00 am

 Wednesday September 18th 10:00 am - 11:00 am

 Wednesday October 16th 10:00 am - 11:00 am

 Wednesday November 20th 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Please email Austin Flinn at PERMA to join a training session.

In the subject line of the email, please include *Training - Fund Name and Client Name*. Please be sure to add the date of the training you would like to attend to your email so an invite can be sent.

Email: HIFTraining@permainc.com

I have also attached an updated enrollment team contact list for your reference.

**NEW MEMBER SUBMISSION -** The Operations Committee met on May 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss and approved membership for the Twp of Mendham.

The Twp of Mendham is currently receiving their benefits through the SHBP. They have expressed an interest in becoming a member of the NJMEBF. We will be duplicating the plans from the SHBP for which there is current enrollment and adding two additional plans, the NJ Direct 2035 and the HDHP 3000. The actuary has added a 5% margin.

#### ♦ Size - 24 Actives

- ◆ Current type of plan(s) NJ Direct 10; NJ Direct 2035, HDHP 3000
- ♦ Commitment to JIF philosophy and Active Participation in the Fund
- ♦ Mendham Age/Sex Factor 1.1115
- ◆ Fund Average Age/Sex Factor 1.2676
- **♦** Relativity 0.8768

## MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-19 OFFERING MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL TO THE TOWNSHIP OF MENDHAM

MOTION: Commissioner T. Russo SECOND: Commissioner B. Russo

VOTE: Unanimous

**LITIGATION** - Our office has been and continues to work directly with the fund attorney to provide assistance in research and discussion regarding complaints received for OON reimbursements.

# AETNA- New Jersey - Northern Aetna network - Negotiations with Hackensack Meridian Health for a July 01, 2024, effective date.

### Aetna's notice of possible termination is listed below:

Aetna's contract with Hackensack Meridian Health (HMH) Hospitals Corporation is set to expire July 1, 2024. While both Parties continue to negotiate to avoid potential disruption, we remain far apart on the terms of the agreement.

Hackensack Meridian Health is a not-for-profit hospital system located in Ocean, Monmouth, Middlesex, Bergen, Essex, Somerset, and Hudson Counties. They are licensed acute care facilities that provide a full range of both Inpatient and Outpatient services.

There will not be an adequacy issue because of the termination.

Due to differing requirements on when we need to notify members, letters will mail in a staggered approach.

In conjunction with the hospital expiration date, the following HMH providers; Physicians, Rehabilitation Hospitals, Behavioral Health Hospital, Skilled Nursing Facility, Urgent Care, Orthotics and Prosthetics, Durable Medical Equipment, Diagnostic Imaging and Radiology, Ambulance, Laboratory, Home Health Care, Hospice, Infusion, Ambulatory Surgery Centers will also terminate effective 7/1/24.

Program Manager said that other Funds are considering offering another network option, such as AmeriHealth. Should there be any concerns, please contact our office. He said it isn't a bad idea to have a second network in place for major contract issues like this.

**Member Claims Utilization -** 117 NJHIF Aetna plan enrollees have utilized this hospital and/or physicians between 04/01/2023 and 03/31/2024.

A separate global email notification has been sent from our office to our groups / brokers which includes a listing of hospitals and physicians affected by this termination along with an alternate hospital listing.

We will continue to keep you updated on negotiations.

### **UPDATE:** New York Presbyterian Healthcare System - Possible Termination

Aetna reached an agreement with New York - Presbyterian Healthcare System effective April 01, 2024, that will keep NewYork-Presbyterian's physicians and hospitals in Aetna's network.

This means the high-quality care provided by New York - Presbyterian Hospitals and New York - Presbyterian Medical Group clinical practices will continue to be covered as in-network with no interruption to patient care.

There has been no interruption to member access because an agreement was reached before the contract's termination date.

Aetna shad sent notice letters to Medicare and commercial members; therefore, member retraction letters will be released as soon as possible.

**ENCIRCLE RX PROGRAM - GLP-1 DRUGS -** Ms. Gerber introduced the program below and asked that Express Scripts go over in further detail.

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Operations Committee met with fund professionals and Express-Scripts to discuss a new program, Encircle RX to better manage the increasing demand and costs for GLP1 drugs for both weight loss and diabetes. The Operations Committee is recommending approval of this program. Further presentation will be provided by ESI during the meeting. Proposed effective date of Program is 9/1/2024.

The Encircle Program establishes specific criteria that must be met for the approval of a GLP1 drug being prescribed for weight loss such as BMI and enrollment in a lifestyle modification program. Members who are approved for weight loss medications must meet the following criteria:

- BMI > 32 **OR**
- BMI between 27 < 32 WITH 2 or more documented comorbidities

In addition to receiving an approved prior authorization (PA), mandatory guidelines of the program are as follows:

- Members will receive a welcome kit from Omada free of charge. The kit includes a digital scale and information on downloading the mobile app and/or using the web browser. The scale is Pre-programmed to the member's ESI account prior to delivery. The scale will record each weigh-in by the member automatically the member does not need to upload the data into their ESI account. Members must weigh-in a minimum of 4 times per month.
- Members must engage with an assigned online Omada coach via a mobile application or web browser a minimum of 4 times per month.
- If members do not adhere to the mandatory requirements of the program; following the month in which they are noncompliant, they will not be able to refill their weight loss medication. Members will be required to complete the missing weigh-ins and / or online couching engagement(s) in order to refill their medication.
- Members who have a current PA (Prior Authorization) on file will be grandfathered until their PA expires. Upon renewal of their PA, they will have to meet the above BMI requirements and engage in the program in order to obtain approval to continue their weight loss medication.

Members receiving approval will receive the Omada welcome kit and will need to adhere to the Encircle program as outlined above.

Communications will be sent to all impacted members with registration information. Once registered, members will receive an access code to sign up for the Omada Welcome Kit.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Only those who are due to renew their PA or have recently been approved for a weight loss medication will receive a communication in the mail.

• Any medication being prescribed for diabetes will now require clinical documentation to support the members diagnosis. This may include medical history showing an ICD 10 code specific to diabetes or current lab work providing A1C and Glucose levels.

The Encircle RX Program will be implemented for any new groups joining the NJHIF on 9/1/24 and after.

An overview of the program is also attached separately for your review.

The cost of the program is .75 PMPM for the weight loss portion of the program and .04 PMPM for the Diabetes portion. Based on the funds current 4,400 total lives, the program would run about \$41,712 annually or about \$10,428 for the remainder of 2024 assuming 9/1 implementation date. The NJHIF has a PMF (Pharmacy Management Fund) allowance from ESI of \$9515 that can be used to supplement the cost of the program. The program also guarantees a 3 for 1 savings.

Mr. Yuk said that the program is intended for doctors and users to be held accountable and request for more documentation for co-morbidities. Once approved, members must use a lifestyle modification, and log into the app 4 times a year with a weight in. If they don't meet these requirements, they will not be given the next PA.

This is needed because patients need to be held accountable and the cost is getting higher and utilization is picking up. There is a shortage issue, as well. The program would be a 9/1 start date. Express Scripts will be grandfathering those with PAs already. Mr. Yuki said the baseline BMI of 32 for all future weigh ins. Commissioner Smith asked how many patients currently, in which Mr. Yuk responded about 200. He said the PA usually lasts 7-8 months. Once they are reapproved, members must lose 5%. Yuk said the weight loss one time, as long as you are engaged and documentation is received by the doctor to continue to the drug.

Mr. Brewer said that diabetes does not apply to this program and this is strictly for weight loss. If you are doing the right thing, you will not be disrupted. He said that treating obesity is great and bring down the claims. Mr. Yuk said that 2023, the Fund spent \$940K. At this point in Q1, the Fund is over \$300K. Mr Brewer said this could be \$12K-\$25K a year per person. He said he appreciates everyone working on this implementation. Chair Heck said it's important to get the right message out.

Ms. Gerber said the communications were sent and now working on the member communications. Executive Director said this is a statewide, nationwide issue. Program Manager said the cost for the program is \$42K annually and we have an allowance for this so it will be budget neutral this year and the guarantee is 3 to 1.

MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-20 TO IMPLEMENT THE ENCRICLE RX PROGRAM WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

**MOTION:** Commissioner T. Russo

SECOND: Commissioner Meyers

VOTE: Unanimous

**SAVEON SP PROGRAM** - SaveOnSP, your copay assistance benefit administrator, continues to monitor available specialty manufacturer copay assistance programs to optimize your savings opportunity. Drug list modifications for July 1, 2024, ensure alignment with ESI's research and are based on the inclusion of the copay assistance benefit in your pharmacy benefit plan design. These changes have minimal plan participant impact. The updated SaveOn SP drug list is attached separately.

### **Additions:**

o Highlighted in green on associated drug list

#### **Removals:**

Highlighted in red on associated drug list

Communication plan: SaveOnSP will send notification letters to any impacted plan participants followed by outbound calls.

**ESI FORMULARY UPDATES EFFECTIVE 7/1/2024 - -**ESI has issued their list of formulary exclusions to be effective 7/1/2024. There is a total of 5 members impacted by the formulary changes. A copy of the new exclusion list is attached for your reference.

If there is a clinical reason identified by the member's doctor that requires the member to continue taking their current medication, their doctor can request a coverage review by visiting the Express Scripts online portal at esrx.com/PA.

A copy of the ESI exclusion list effective 7/1/2024 is attached for your reference.

### Carrier Appeals:

Appeal Number Appeal Reason Appeal Results Date Completed 2024-04-01 Infertility IVF 4<sup>th</sup> cycle denial IRO Medical Review Overturned May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**WELLNESS** – Program Manager said that Brittany has been working with various towns to join the wellness program. The dental action report was included in the agenda. Healthy members continue to increase.

**TREASURER**: Fund Treasurer review the April and May bills and cash report included in the agenda.

## MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-21 APPROVING THE APRIL AND MAY BILLS LIST AND TREASURERS REPORT

MOTION: Commissioner T. Russo SECOND: Commissioner Brewer

16 Ayes, 0 Nayes

VOTE:

**ATTORNEY REPORT**: Fund attorney updated the Executive Committee on 4 litigations the Fund has been handling this year. He thanked the Vozza Agency for their assistance and gaining the documentation. He said that all the litigations are out of network disputes. The first two were discussed in March and were settled. There were 2 additional reviewed by the Claims committee yesterday that is being requested for approval.

MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-22 APPROVING THE SETTLEMENT FOR CS AND MB

MOTION: Commissioner Mayer SECOND: Commissioner Brewer VOTE: 16 Ayes, 0 Nayes

### MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-23 APPROVING THE SETTLEMENT FOR GD AND CW

MOTION: Commissioner T. Russo SECOND: Commissioner B. Russo

**VOTE:** 16 Ayes, 0 Nayes

In response to Commissioner Kaufer, Fund Attorney said the amounts on the resolution do not match the notice because the settlement was reduced afterwards.

**AETNA:** Mr. Silverstein reviewed the Aetna report included in the agenda.

Mr. Silverstien said the Hackensack Meridian negotiation is not going well. There were letters to those who visited a facility once in the past year. There will be letters again June 1. The hospital hasn't discussed in 2 weeks and asking in mid teen increases. It is possible that settlement could take place after July 1. In response to Commissioner Smith, Mr. Silverstein said there is no cooling off period in self insured groups, but Medicare will not be disrupted because they need to accept Medicare. In response to Chair Heck, Mr. Silverstein said that mid therapy treatments could be reviewed for transition of care and covered in network. But, not guaranteed. If this does go past 7/1, but renews, the coverage would most like be retroactive. Ms. Gerber said she is available for those who need help. In response to Program Manager, Mr. Silverstein said that there are no other contracts that are high risk at this time.

**EXPRESS SCRIPTS:** Mr. Yuk reviewed the monthly utilization tracking report for the month of March and thanked the Committee for approving the GLP 1 program.

**DELTA DENTAL:** None

**OLD BUSINESS: None.** 

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

PUBLIC COM	MENT: None.	
EXECUTIVE S	ESSION:	
MOTIO	N TO ADJOURN:	
	MOTION: SECOND: VOTE:	Commissioner Mayer Commissioner T. Russo All in Favor
NEXT MEETIN	JOURNED AT: 10:28 am IG: July 25, 2024, 9:30 am	
Emily Koval	For	
Tom Russo, See	cretary	

# APPENDIX II

# North Jersey Health Insurance Fund July 11, 2024 Contracts Committee Via Microsoft Teams

### **Committee Attendees:**

- Greg Poff, Randolph Township
- Tameisha Smith, Knowlton Board of Education
- Silvio Esposito, Hanover Township

### **Professional Attendees:**

- Fred Semrau, Fund Attorney
- Brandon Lodics, Fund Executive Director

### Discussion:

- o Mr. Lodics reviewed the status chart of Contract for professionals and vendors for the North Jersey HIF.
- o Committee discussed the professional contracts and agreed to extend the following:
  - Actuary, Attorney, Treasurer and Executive Director for the term of January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025
  - o Program Manager contract expires on December 31, 2024. Th Committee will be recommending an RFP for a 3- Year contract
  - As part of the RFP development the Committee will be doing a scope of service review prior to releasing the RFP.
  - The approval was conditional with the request from Mr. Poff that an updated chart be circulated inclusive of the 2024 and 2025 proposed fees to assure all fees were within reason.
- o The updated chart was distributed on June 12, 2024, electronically.
- o Mr. Semrau suggested that he and Mr. Lodics excuse themselves from the discussion so the Committee members may discuss the Attorney and Executive Director's contract.
- o The Committee members concluded the meeting separately.
- o Upon closure Mr. Poff sent an electronic record informing that the Executive Director and Attorney contracts were being recommended for extension
- On July 16, 2024, the Executive Director's office contacted the Contracts Committee electronically advising that the Actuary's contract also needed to go out to RFP for effective date beginning January 1, 2025.
- Necessary resolutions for extensions RFP approvals will be included in the July 25, 2024 meeting of the Executive Committee