Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium

Executive Committee

Minutes

February 19, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.

GTCMHIC Headquarters – 408 East Upland Road, Ithaca, NY

Present: Amie Hendrix (Vice-Chair); Wendy Cole (At-Large); Judy Drake (Audit and Finance Committees Chair); Bud Shattuck (Claims and Appeals Committee Chair); Peter Salton (Secretary); Scott Steve\* (At-Large) *arrived 3:40pm*; Gary Mutchler\* (Nominations & Engagement Committee Chair)*;* Lorrie Scarrott, Tompkins County (appointed CFO for GTCMHIC); Ellen Hersey, Joint Committee Chair

Excused: Rordan Hart (Executive Committee Chair); Laura Granger\* (Operations Committee Chair)

Absent:

Guests: Steve Locey, Locey & Cahill

Staff: Elin Dowd, Executive Director; Lynne Sheldon, Clerk of the Board; Kylie Rodrigues, Benefits Manager; Jennifer Sandsted, Finance Manager

\* - Due to extraordinary circumstances - attended remotely

**Call to Order**

Mr. Hart, Chair, was excused for today’s meeting. Ms. Hendrix, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2024**

It was MOVED by Ms. Cole, seconded by Mr. Shattuck, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present and via remotely due to extraordinary circumstances, to approve the minutes of December 18, 2024. MINUTES APPROVED.

**Chair’s Report**

Mr. Hart, Chair, was excused from today’s meeting. Ms. Hendrix. Vice Chair started the meeting.

**Executive Director’s Report *(Ms. Dowd presented a PowerPoint presentation of items discussed)***

Ms. Dowd reported on the recruitment of a benefit specialist position in the 2025 budget and the ongoing interview process.

**Financial Performance and Reserve Levels**

Ms. Dowd discussed the year end 2024 financial performance, noting that claims (medical and prescription drugs) over budget. More details were provided later in the meeting.

Ms. Dowd said reserves are being depleted to pay the high volume of claims, and the end-of-year figures are misleading due how we report catastrophic or rate stabilization reserves throughout the year.

Ms. Dowd reported the annual audit will commence in March, with an Audit meeting on April 22, 2025 and a Finance meeting immediately following. She also said the Finance committee will look at the amended 2025 budget next week. A medical claims audit has also commenced.

**Department of Financial Services (DFS) Updates**

Ms. Dowd mentioned that invites for the audit and finance meetings were sent out, and the annual Jurat will be filed with DFS once the audit is complete.

Ms. Dowd said the 2025 Municipal Cooperative Agreement (MCA) approval documents were sent to municipalities in December, with a reminder sent out this week to those that haven’t returned the requested signed documents yet.

Ms. Dowd said the DFS has reviewed the new Summary Plan Descriptions, including amendments for the recent mandated benefits including coverage of pasteurized donor human milk and additional mental health care facilities.

Ms. Dowd mentioned the IT portion of the DFS audit is complete.

**Website Vendor and Resolutions**

Ms. Dowd reported that the new website vendor has been selected, and a kickoff meeting and several design meetings have been scheduled. She said the goal is to launch the new website on July 15th.

**Potential New Members**

Ms. Dowd said the Consortium is receiving several calls from potential new members. She said that she already has meetings set up for March to meet with some municipalities.

**Wellness Survey**

Ms. Rodrigues presented the results of the wellness survey, noting confusion among employees about the wellness program coming from the Consortium rather than their employers.

Ms. Rodrigues said it also revealed a lack of communication regarding receiving the promotional flyers from their employers, leading to a new initiative to encourage employees to directly subscribe to Consortium wellness emails. She also said the survey provided good ideas for prizes to encourage participation.

**Discussion: Participant Plan Option Parameters Policy**

Ms. Dowd discussed the Plan Participation Policy, emphasizing the goal of maintaining fairness, clarity, and cost-effectiveness. She said the policy aims to consolidate plans and reduce administration. She also said the policy allows for waivers under certain conditions usually due to labor contract negotiations.

The committee’s discussion included the need for flexibility for small employers and the importance of reducing plan options over time.

Compliance by the year 2031 was discussed. Ms. Dowd explained that the Consortium is still questioning whether to “force” this within the next five years, if so its completion would be by 2031 year.

Mr. Locey said any employers of less than 100 employees could not enroll in these programs out in the open market and the flexibility for those employers should be far less than for the largest employers in the Consortium. He suggested looking at the Indemnity plans and the PPO plans separately. He said the Indemnity plans are 40 years old and with the PPO programs are 25 years old and not sold anymore by insurance companies. He said the less variables the Consortium has, the more predictability one will have inside the program. He said the more one allows exceptions, the more volatile it will be to predict from year to year what's going to happen.

Ms. Rodrigues said looking at current enrollment, the Consortium only has four municipal members who are not offering the Metal level plan in addition to the Classic Blue or PPO plan. She said those four that are not offering metal level plans are all being outreached to this year.

Ms. Rodrigues said the Consortium has been working progressively through the last couple of years to provide outreach and comparisons to municipalities who are offering these older level plans, who haven't thought about transitioning or consolidating to one of the four plans. She said most of the larger municipalities who've offered these plans have worked on renegotiating union contracts, so new hires are going to Platinum or going to a Metal level plan, since it's more cost effective.

Ms. Dowd said this policy is looking at active employees and retirees of non-Medicare age.

Ms. Dowd said the Consortium’s goal all along is to only offer one health plan, but this is not realistic for some municipalities, especially the larger municipalities with different labor groups. She said this would be the most efficient and effective for the Consortium and eliminates adverse selection at the local level.

Ms. Dowd said the Consortium would like (within five years) to continue to narrow down plan options. She added ideally a municipality with lower than 20 employees, should be offering only one plan.

Mr. Locey suggested setting up a policy to help financially manage current membership versus setting up a policy for municipalities to join the Consortium.

Ms. Dowd mentioned the Operations Committee suggested the Consortium should consider a waiver for those who are doing minimum essential coverage under the Affordable Care Act requirements.

General consensus was for the staff to go back and eliminate the “goal” of one plan and be very specific about each grouping of municipalities by size and possibly create a section just for new members.

**Resolution: Approve Consortium Response to NYS DFS Review of the Information Technology General Controls “ITGC” as of December 31, 2021**

Ms. Dowd reported that DFS reviewed the Consortium’s information technology general controls, and there were several policies/practices that they suggested be put into place and reviewed annually. She said the Operations Committee approved these controls last year and there were no updates made to the document this year.

**RESOLUTION NO. 001-2025– ACCEPTANCE OF MANAGEMENT LETTER RESPONSE TO THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES (DFS) REVIEW OF THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GENERAL CONTROLS (ITGS) AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021**

MOVED by Mr. Steve, seconded by Ms. Drake, the amended resolution was adopted by voice vote of members present, and visibly seen members via remote locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, An Information Technology (IT) general controls audit, commonly known as an ITGC audit, is a reviewing process that organizations undergo to demonstrate how effectively their foundational controls (ITGCs that they have implemented) are functioning in their IT infrastructure, and

WHEREAS, During this audit process, various aspects of ITGCs are examined—[access controls](https://www.zluri.com/blog/what-is-access-control),[change management controls](https://www.zluri.com/blog/saas-change-management), and physical controls to ensure they are able to maintain the security, confidentiality, integrity, or availability (TSCs) of sensitive information, and

WHEREAS, DFS has completed the ITGC audit (as of December 31, 2021) and has requested that the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium (“Consortium”) review and provide a written response to their findings and recommendations, and therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Directors, has hereby reviewed and accepted the written response to the findings and recommendations letter provided by DFS, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Consortium will forward an immediate response to the DFS following this management letter acceptance.

**Committee Reports**

**Executive Committee**

Mr. Hart, Chair, was excused from today’s meeting. Ms. Hendrix, Vice-Chair, said she did not have any items to report.

**Nominations and Engagement**

Mr. Mutchler did not have any items to report, however mentioned that there are still open seats available on committees.

**Claims and Appeals**

Mr. Shattuck reported Medical Audit Commenced (Includes 2024 Claims)

**Audit and Finance**

Ms. Drake said the first Finance Committee Meeting of the year is to be held on February 25, 2025.

**Operations**

**Resolution:** Amendment to Resolution No. 034-2024 – Creation of 2025 Committee Structure and Appointments of Committee Members – Appointment of Ellen Hersey to Operations Committee

Ms. Dowd announced that Ellen Hersey, was elected by the Joint Committee to be their Chair. Ms. Hersey will be replacing Kate DeVoe.

**RESOLUTION NO. 002-2025 - AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION NO. 034-2024 – CREATION OF 2024 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS – APPOINTMENT OF ELLEN HERSEY TO OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

MOVED by Mr. Shattuck, seconded by Mr. Mutchler, the amended resolution was adopted by voice vote of members present, and visibly seen members via remote locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, a vacancy of a labor representative on the Operations Committee exists, and

WHEREAS, it is deemed to be in the best interest of Committees to continue to have a member, such as Ellen Hersey, Tompkins County Public Library who will represent the labor interests on this Committee, therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Operations Committee, That the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Directors, appoints the above committee member effective January 1, 2025 with the term expiring December 31, 2026.

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**Resolution:** Approval of Information Security Policies and Procedures for the GTCMHIC (January 2024, Version 1.0) and Approval of Annual Cyber Security Risk Assessment

**RESOLUTION NO. 003-2025 – APPROVAL OF INFORMATION SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE GREATER TOMPKINS COUNTY MUNICIPAL HEALTH INSURANCE CONSORTIUM (GTCMHIC) – JANUARY 2024 Version 1.0 AND APPROVAL OF ANNUAL CYBER SECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT**

Ms. Dowd said the Operations Committee reviewed and approved the information security policies and procedures. She said the Committee also approved the annual cyber security risk assessment.

MOVED by Mr. Scott, seconded by Ms. Hendrix, the resolution was adopted by voice vote of members present, and visibly seen members via remote locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, Per previous Resolution 042 of 2023, Tompkins County IT Department recommended that FoxPointe Solutions perform GTCMHIC management-requested assessments and reporting services as GTCMHIC’s Virtual Chief Information Security Officer (“VCISO”), cybersecurity consultant, and to manage GTCMHIC’s Information Security program, and

WHEREAS, these Information Security Programs require policies and procedures to be put in place to conduct independent audits of their cybersecurity programs and the GTCMHIC to be compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, which require approval annually and

WHEREAS, This program also includes policies and procedures required under the current versions of NYS DFS 23NYCRR500 Cybersecurity Rule (with limited exemptions), NY State SHIELD Act (§899-bb), HIPAA/HITECH Acts Security and Breach Laws (45CFR164.306-316, 45CFR164.400- 414) and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) (GLBA Title 16, Chapter 1, Part 314 of Subchapter C, Safeguards Rule, and

WHEREAS, FoxPointe Solutions has provided and reviewed in depth the said above policies and procedures with third party Tompkins County IT Department and GTCMHIC Staff Members, and

WHEREAS, FoxPointe Solutions has recently completed the annual Cyber Security Risk Assessment on behalf of the GTCMHIC, and has prepared a thorough complete report and therefore be it,

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Operations Committee, That the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Directors, approves the Information Security Policies and Procedures for the GTCMHIC and the following Cyber Security Risk Assessment performed by FoxPointe Solutions.

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**Resolution:** Amendment to the Consortium Metal Level Options, Blue Traditional Options, and PPO Options Benefit Booklets

Ms. Dowd said there were two state-mandated changes to the Consortium’s Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD). She said those changes include outpatient use of pasteurized donor human milk and the mental health care and substance use facilities and payment policy changes.

**Resolution 004 - 2025: Amendment to the Consortium Metal Level Options, Blue Traditional Options, and PPO Options Benefit Booklets**

MOVED by Mr. Scott, seconded by Ms. Drake, the resolution was adopted by voice vote of members present, and visibly seen members via remote locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium ("Consortium") is committed to providing comprehensive and up-to-date health insurance coverage to its members, and

WHEREAS, changes to New York State law are applicable to the Consortium’s benefit offerings as of January 1, 2025, requiring amendments to the Metal Level Options, Blue Traditional Options, and PPO Options Benefit Booklets ("Booklets"), note the update does not affect the Classic Blue Secure Medicare Supplement Benefit Booklets, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium wishes to amend the Booklets to reflect these required changes in order to maintain compliance with New York state law and ensure the ongoing availability of essential services for its members, particularly in relation to maternity, newborn care, and mental health care services, and

WHEREAS, the following amendments, to Maternity and Newborn Care as it pertains to Outpatient and Professional Services section, and edits to the Mental Health Care and Substance Use Services: Outpatient Services section, see subsequent pages, are being proposed to the Booklets, which will take effect on January 1, 2025,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Operations Committee recommends the approval of Amendment #1 to the Consortium’s Metal Level Options, Blue Traditional Options, and PPO Options Benefit Booklets, as outlined above, to the Executive Committee for final approval.

FURTHER RESOLVED that upon approval by the Executive Committee, the amendments will be implemented and reflected in the Consortium’s Metal Level Options, Blue Traditional Options, and PPO Options Benefit Booklets as of January 1, 2025.

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**Resolution:** Cancellation of Consortium Hosted Flu Clinics

Ms. Dowd said the Consortium has found that individuals prefer to receive their vaccinations at local pharmacy stores and participation has decreased at locations that the Consortium and municipalities have coordinated. She said it was recommended the Consortium discontinue hosting flu clinics. Ms. Rodrigues will work with municipalities that would like to continue to host clinics on their own and send resources to them.

**RESOLUTION NO. 005-2025–– CANCELLATION OF CONSORTIUM HOSTED FLU CLINICS**

MOVED by Mr. Shattuck, seconded by Mr. Mutchler, the amended resolution was adopted by voice vote of members present, and visibly seen members via remote locations due to extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, Previous Resolution Number 015 of 2017 continued the authorization for Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium (“Consortium”) to sponsor and fund flu clinics and continue pharmacy benefit coverage for flu vaccinations for all eligible employees and retirees, spouses and dependents over the age of 19, and

WHEREAS, when administered outside of a flu clinic a member is able to receive a vaccine with no co- pay or member cost, excluding the facility fee, through a medical provider as the cost is billed as a medical claim through Excellus, and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the Committee was presented with an option to recommend that a pharmacy benefit be added to allow members to receive a vaccine at a pharmacy with no co-pay or cost to the member, which continues to be the current pharmacy benefit, and

WHEREAS, over the last five years, attendance at the Consortium hosted flu clinics has significantly decreased, and

WHEREAS, the availability of flu vaccination services through in-network pharmacies, which fully cover the cost of the vaccine under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) guidelines, provides a more accessible and convenient option for members, and

WHEREAS, as an Article 47 Consortium, we are committed to ensuring efficient use of resources and aligning with the most effective healthcare delivery models available to our members, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium can continue to provide resources and connections for municipal members who want to host independent flu clinics for their employees and retirees, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the decision to host future flu clinics be canceled, as the service is already fully covered at in-network pharmacies, offering a broader and more accessible means of vaccination to our members,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will continue to encourage our members to utilize in-network pharmacy flu vaccination services, in order to promote public health while ensuring the efficient allocation of resources, be it further

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Operations Committee, that the Executive Committee, on the behalf of the Board of Directors, approves the cancelation of the Consortium hosting future flu clinics.

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**Joint**

Ms. Dowd introduced a new Joint Chair, Ellen Hersey, who has replaced Ms. DeVoe. The first Joint Committee of the year will be held May1, 2025 and include the annual Excellus medical and prescription drug utilization review.

**Financial Update**

Mr. Locey presented the 2024 (unaudited) [Fiscal Year Budget Performance Report as of December 31, 2024.](file:///F:\Consortium\Committees\Executive%20Committee\2025\Agendas\Agenda%20Backup%20Documents\1.February%2019,%202025\2024%20GTCMHIC%20Fiscal%20Year%20Budget%20Performance%20Report%20(12-31-2024)%20-%20UNAUDITED%20Report.pdf)

Mr. Locey highlighted these key facts:

1. Locey & Cahill continues to work with the Consortium’s Executive Director and Financial Team to fine tune budget allocations and improve detailed reporting of expenses. This was done to provide a more detailed and accurate summary of the internal and external professional support costs. The amended budget updated some of the budget numbers based on the addition of new members and changes in enrollment by existing members.
2. The fiscal year ended, pre-audit, with overall expenses being 7.22% over budget. Some of the impact was softened by the Rebates received. Most of the internal administrative, supply and contractual costs are at or below budget.
3. When new members are added to the Consortium, it is important to remember that their paid claims are not mature until the 3rd month or so as the “run-out” claims (claims incurred on or before December 31, 2024 for the new members) are the responsibility of their prior insurance carrier. However, during budget development, this must be considered when developing claims estimates for the subsequent year.
4. Medical Paid Claims for 2024 were 8.02% over the amended budget, including the advanced deposit, for the fiscal year. Other factors include:

a) An increase in the covered lives (↑4.60%) and in the number of contracts (↑5.32%) skews the early 2024 medical paid claims due to the “run-in lag”.

b) Increased member participation in lower cost health insurance plans, like the Platinum PPO Plan and the Medicare Supplement Plan by several employer groups.

c) The continuation of identifying the “new normal” of elective and/or minor medical procedures being performed following COVID-19 pandemic.

d) Locey & Cahill continues to monitor the impact of inflation on the medical community.

**Future Agenda Topics**

Approve 2025 Amended Budget

Approve Annual Audit

Participant Plan Option Parameters

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37pm

*Respectfully submitted by Lynne Sheldon, Clerk of the Board*