

Minutes – DRAFT
Nominations and Engagement Committee
April 10, 2023 – 3:30 p.m.
Meeting held Remotely via Zoom Video

Present by remote: Gary Mutchler (Committee Vice Chair); Kate DeVoe; Terrance Baxter
Excused: Ed Fairbrother (Committee Chair)
Vacancy: One seat
Staff/Guests via remote: Elin Dowd, Executive Director; Lynne Sheldon, Clerk of the Board, Teri Apalovich, Finance Manager; Kylie Rodrigues, Benefits Specialist

Call to Order

Mr. Fairbrother was excused from today's meeting. Mr. Mutchler called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2022

It was MOVED by Mr. Baxter, seconded by Ms. DeVoe, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present to approve the minutes of August 8, 2022, as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Dowd referenced her Executive Director report for March 2023. She encouraged the Committee to review her information on the changes that are coming about. This report covers changes to benefits in the areas of ground ambulance, COVID-19, behavioral health, and frozen formulas.

Mr. Mutchler questioned the ground ambulance changes and asked for a quick summary. Ms. Dowd explained there are no changes for the subscribers and/or their dependents or the cost of ambulance services. She said the law changed how the Consortium reimburses any ground ambulance service. Previously, there was not a law in place stating that the ambulance service had to accept 80% reimbursement; therefore, the Consortium was being billed at 100%. The Consortium can now follow the law, which lowers the Consortium's fees, and the employee pays the same.

Ms. Dowd also reported that the Consortium has received a proposal from Excellus comparing the prescription benefit manager services that the Consortium currently receives from ProAct. She said that the Operations Committee decided that they did not want to reopen another

Request for Proposal (RFP), but re-review the top two RFP proposals, which included Excellus and ProAct. The Committee will be meeting with Excellus later in the month.

Mr. Mutchler asked if the Operations Committee was leaning towards choosing one over the other and the reasons. Ms. Dowd responded that ProAct has had some technical service issues with managing the Consortium's account that they've been unable to resolve. She also noted that the Consortium has been receiving many customer service complaints with how ProAct has been paying claims and has been very slow on prior authorizations. ProAct has not been getting back to individuals, or they're getting back to them with incomplete information. There have also been some system errors that the Consortium thought were fixed and hadn't. She said that this year there were 18 claims related to accumulator issues that weren't adjudicated properly, and the Consortium is trying to find out how this happened.

Ms. Dowd announced the Consortium has entered a letter of agreement with a landlord in the Village of Cayuga Heights to lease a new building. A proposal went through the Audit and Finance Committee, and the Consortium will put that in front of the Executive Committee to move out of the Town of Ithaca. The lease will run more space than the Consortium would need day to day, however, the Consortium could hold all meetings in that space, and Committee members and Directors would have ample parking adjacent to the building at no cost.

Ms. Dowd spoke of the current audit of the Consortium by the Department of Financial Services (DFS). One item that the DFS states that the Consortium must comply with includes a portion of general municipal law regarding the Consortium's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) also serving as the Chairperson on the Audit and Finance Committee. During this audit, Steve Thayer, the Consortium's CFO, announced his retirement for the end of this coming June. Since Mr. Thayer will not be serving, the Audit and Finance Committee will need to look at the short term, until his position has a replacement. Per the Consortium's Municipal Cooperative Agreement (MCA), this replacement will automatically become the Consortium's CFO and hopefully sit on the Committee without a vote. The Consortium will need to temporarily place an individual on the Audit and Finance Committee that is familiar with the committee, finance practices, and can also vote. Due to this committee meeting held prior to the Executive Committee, Ms. Dowd made a recommendation to have this Committee recommend Judith Drake to the Executive Committee to fill in as a voting member for the Audit and Finance Committee while the Consortium sorts out regulations that DFS has been providing during the audit regarding the approved CFO roles for the Consortium's Audit and Finance Committee.

Ms. Dowd also mentioned that many committee members will be ending their long-held terms at the end of this year on various committees. The Operations Committee will need to start looking at seats to fill. Currently, the Audit and Finance Committee allows three 2-year terms. She also reported that the Operations Committee did secure a Labor representative from the City of Ithaca Firefighters. Generally, the labor seat is the Vice-Chair of the Committee of the Operations Committee, however, currently Judith Drake is holding that position as the labor individual is new at this role, but hoping next year that individual will agree to cover that. Ms. Dowd also provided other updates to Operations that Lisa Holmes asked if Ruby Pulliman could be voted in as her replacement on the Committee, and Laura Granger became the Operations Chairperson.

Ms. Dowd said that the Claims and Appeals Committee will also be needing some changes after December 31, 2023, due to individual's political terms ending and/or retirements.

Ms. Dowd reported that she has been outreaching and building relationships with the newly added members hoping to have their participation and step into some of those committees' openings.

Educational Events to Engage Members

Ms. Dowd asked the committee if they have ideas regarding collecting information from directors about what topics they would like to see in August at the Consortium's educational meeting. She suggested if the Consortium changed the prescription benefits manager (PBM) that there would be information and services pertaining to the transfer and how the contract is structured before that was voted on.

The Committee also had recommendations for escalating health care costs and what can be expected in the next one to five years. Other ideas included the current audit by Segel regarding premium equivalent rates, and a Medicare update. Ms. DeVoe also mentioned that finding mental health care provider would be a good topic. Mr. Mutchler asked regarding mental health care for individuals and how/when to seek care. Ms. Rodriguez said that Excellus BCBS has some helpful checklists asking questions and if an individual check marks 3 or more or 5 or more, then maybe it's time to seek professional help. The option of also holding a dinner the night of the Board of Directors might be a possibility.

Open Meeting Law (OML)

Ms. Dowd discussed that the Executive Committee has talked about leniency until 2024 regarding in-person attendance for sub-committee meetings. The Executive Committee will soon be discussing the need for the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors needing a quorum in person as most final votes take place on those Committees. Ms. Dowd said that DFS questioned the low attendance at the Board of Director's yearly meeting and asked the Consortium to comment why. The Consortium continues to evaluate ways to increase attendance to include members that are located at a distance.

Future Agenda Topics

- Build slate for 2024 candidates
- Follow up on OML
- Topics for Education Session
- Possible meal options for the Board of Directors Meeting

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:19p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by Lynne M. Sheldon, Clerk of the Board.

Next Meeting: June 12, 2023