

**NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING**

**Minutes of the Meeting  
March 27, 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (“MIHIA”) held in person at the EDA Board Room, 36 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 10:00 AM Eastern Standard Time.

**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE**

Shakira Abdul-Ali – Public member  
Sarah Adelman – Governor Representative  
Dr. Philip Bonaparte – Public Member  
Rosalee Boyer - Public Member  
Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji - Public Member  
Dr. Barbara George Johnson - Public Member  
Holly Low – Governor Representative  
Andrea Martinez-Mejia - Public Member  
Dr. Tamika Quick (Designee for Dr. Brian Bridges) – Governor Representative  
Maritza Raimundi-Petroski – Public Member  
Thalia Sirjue (Designee for Kaitlan Baston) – Governor Representative  
Katherine Stoehr- Governor Representative  
Tim Sullivan - Governor Representative  
Justin Zimmerman - Governor Representative

This constituted a quorum of the members of the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority.

**ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES**

Lisa Asare, President & CEO, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority

First Lady Tammy Murphy  
Roza Dabaghyan, Attorney General's Office  
Meredith Friedman, Attorney General's Office  
Laura Wilton, Office of the Governor  
Catherine Terrero, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Amanda Truppa, Treasury, Division of Administration  
LaShera Kirk, Treasury, Division of Administration

Acting Chair Sirjue presided over the meeting with Catherine Terrero and LaShera Kirk keeping the minutes.

Lisa Asare called the meeting to order at 10:18 AM and made the following statement:

*I wish to announce that adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of today's meeting was filed with the Secretary of State, distributed by email and mail to the following three newspapers for general*

*distribution: The Courier Post, the Asbury Park Press, and North Jersey.com and it is on file with the Secretary of State.*

Lisa Asare took roll call and welcomed representatives from the First Lady's Office, Governor's Office, Attorney General's Office, and Treasury.

The following Board members acknowledged their presence:

Andrea Martinez-Mejia  
Dr. Barbara George Johnson  
Dr. Tamika Quick  
Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji  
Holly Low  
Justin Zimmerman  
Thalia Sirjue  
Katherine Stoehr  
Maritza Raimundi-Petroski  
Dr. Philip Bonaparte  
Rosalee Boyer  
Sarah Adelman  
Shakira Abdul-Ali  
Tim Sullivan

Governor representative, Sarah Adelman asked for a motion to allow Governor representative, Thalia Sirjue to serve as Acting Chair for today's meeting.

A motion was made by Public member Maritza Raimundi-Petroski, and seconded by Public member Barbara George Johnson. All voting members present voted in favor.

The meeting was turned over to Acting Chair Sirjue.

## **ITEMS OF DISCUSSION**

### **I. Update from the Chair**

Acting Chair Sirjue stated that The Department of Health was excited about the establishment of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority and was looking forward to partnering and supporting the Authority's efforts in advancing maternal health equity for the state.

DOH hopes to collaborate on priorities such as:

Advancing the perinatal workforce through expansion of the Colette Lamothe-Galette Community Health Worker Institute;

Providing support to women with mood, anxiety, and substance use disorder;

Addressing Lead Prevention in children;

Training and enrolling more community-based doulas as Medicaid providers;

Improving the physical and emotional well-being of infants, children, and their families in New Jersey by providing community-based education and in-home support to parents;

Strengthening overall state collaboration and partnership.

Acting Chair Sirjue addressed the public with the following statement:

*Prior to beginning the business of the Board, I would like members of the public who are in attendance to please be advised that there will be an opportunity for the public to provide comment during the public comment portion of the meeting. You will be asked to provide your name and any organization with which you are affiliated.*

## **II. Matters Requiring Board Action**

Acting Chair Thalia Sirjue made a general note reminding the Board to identify themselves before making or seconding a motion and moved forward with the agenda.

### **a. Resolution to Adopt Bylaws**

A motion was made to adopt the Bylaws of the Board by Public Member, Dr. Barbara George Johnson and was seconded by Public Member, Dr. Philip Bonaparte and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

### **b. Resolution to Enter and Exit Executive Session**

Executive Session was not needed for this meeting.

### **c. Resolution to Appoint President and Chief Executive Officer**

A motion was made to appoint Lisa Asare as President and Chief Executive Officer by Governor Representative, Sarah Adelman and was seconded by Governor Representative, Katherine Stoehr and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

### **d. Resolution to Enter Into Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of the Treasury**

A motion was made to Enter into an MOU with the Department of Treasury by Public Member, Rosalee Boyer and was seconded by Governor Representative, Tim Sullivan and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

### **e. Resolution Authorizing the Participation in the New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan**

A motion was made to Authorize the Participation in the New Jersey State Health Benefits Plan by Governor Representative, Dr. Tamika Quick and was seconded by Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

### **f. Resolution Guaranteeing Remittance of Share of Social Security Coverage and Pension Contribution of Employees**

A motion was made to approve the Resolution Guaranteeing Remittance of Share of Social Security Coverage and Pension Contribution of Employees by Public Member, Dr. Barbara George Johnson and was seconded by Public Member, Andrea Martinez - Mejia and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

### **g. Resolution Authorizing Fiscal 2024 Plan**

A motion was made to Authorize the Fiscal 2024 Plan by Public member, Dr. Philip Bonaparte and was seconded by Governor Representative, Katherine Stoehr and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**h. Resolution Authorizing the Creation of an Audit Committee**

A motion was made to Authorize the Creation of an Audit Committee by Public Member, Shakira Abdul-Ali and was seconded by Governor Representative, Katherine Stoehr and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**i. Resolution Authorizing the Procurement of Insurance**

This item was tabled for the next Board meeting.

**j. Resolution Designating an Open Public Records Act Custodian of Record**

A motion was made to Designate an OPRA Custodian of Record by Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski and was seconded by Public Member, Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**k. Resolution Authorizing a Funding Level Agreement with the Division of Law**

A motion was made to Authorize a Funding Level Agreement with the Division of Law by Governor Representative, Dr. Tamika Quick and was seconded by Public Member, Andrea Martinez-Mejia and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**l. Resolution Adopting a Meeting Schedule of the Board for Calendar Year 2024**

A motion was made to adopt a Meeting Schedule of the Board for Calendar Year 2024 by Governor Representative, Katherine Stoehr and was seconded by Public Member, Dr. Barbara George Johnson and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**m. Resolution Regarding CEO Signing Authority**

A motion was made regarding CEO Signing Authority by Public Member, Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji and was seconded by Public Member, Rosalee Boyer and approved by the affirmative vote of the voting members present.

**III. CEO Statement**

Newly appointed President and CEO, Lisa Asare addressed the board and thanked them for their support. She noted that this momentous launch is happening in Women's History month, and that NJ was making history. She spoke about her previous work in this space during her time at the Department of Health and Department of Human Services. As a mother she mentioned that she is worried about the future and what it will be like when her children have children of their own. Ms. Asare said that the statistics are terrible for New Jersey and we must do better and we can do better. Her concern is not just for her own daughters, but for all our daughters and she wants to create a more equitable and safe place for them. The work is personal and it is important.

Ms. Asare highlighted the importance of First Lady Murphy's support in the effort to decrease maternal and infant mortality. Ms. Asare also stated that the Nurture NJ Strategic plan recommended establishing the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center. The center will focus on the following areas:

- Pre- & Post-Natal Clinical Services,

- Perinatal Workforce Education and Training,
- Social services and wrap-around supports,
- Policy, Research, and Data Collaborative
- Maternal and Infant Health Innovation incubator.

Ms. Asare also stressed the importance of community centered collaboration and engagement to tackle issues like food insecurity, housing, transportation, access to care, quality of care and services, mental health, trauma, and knowledge and information sharing.

Ms. Asare thanked First Lady Tammy Murphy for her work and support. She then addressed the Chair and yielded the rest of her time to the First Lady.

First Lady Tammy Murphy announced that Ms. Asare is now part of Governor Murphy's cabinet. First Lady Tammy Murphy stated that the critical nature of the authority will help ensure that New Jersey continues to lead the nation as a safe haven for mothers and babies, cementing its legacy. She also highlighted that when Governor Murphy took office in 2018 New Jersey was ranked 47<sup>th</sup> in the nation in maternal mortality, and that New Jersey is now ranked 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **IV. Public Comment**

No public comments were made.

#### **V. Other Business**

Comments were made by the following Board members:

Shakira Abdul-Ali stated that she was made aware of an article published that morning regarding the death of Kansas City Chiefs cheerleader Crystal Anderson, an African American woman who had just given birth. Maternal mobility is more frequent for African American women making this a very personal topic. Ms. Abdul-Ali stated her own daughters have children or are looking forward to having children. She thanked First Lady Murphy and Lisa Asare for doing this work.

Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji stated that it was an honor to be here with everyone doing this work. She recalled Ms. Asare saying to her years ago that we're poised to do something or nothing. She challenged the MIHIA Board to really lean in and think about the possibilities afforded by this new authority. She stated that the black maternal mortality rate is high even among college educated black women, showing that there still is a disparity that has to be addressed.

At this time Acting Chair Sirjue requested a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Governor Representative, Tim Sullivan, and seconded by Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski, and carried by voice vote from members present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 AM.