



## State of New Jersey

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

NEW JERSEY MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION AUTHORITY  
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TAHESHA L. WAY  
*Lt. Governor*

Lisa A. Asare  
*President & CEO*

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

#### **Minutes of the Meeting February 26, 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority ("MIHIA") held virtually on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 10:00 AM Eastern Standard Time.

#### **MEMBERS OF THE BOARD IN ATTENDANCE**

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

#### **ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES**

Lisa Asare, President & CEO, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Roza Dabaghyan, Deputy Attorney General, Department of Law and Public Safety, Division of Law  
Michael Eleneski, Associate Counsel, Office of the Governor, Authorities Unit  
Catherine Terrero, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Cindy Cortez, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Laura Wilton, Chief of Corporate Governance, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Eric Carlsson, Chief Financial Officer, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority  
Chair Barbara George Johnson presided over the meeting with Catherine Terrero and Cindy Cortez keeping the minutes.

President & CEO Asare called the meeting to order and announced that Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (MIHIA) was in compliance with the provisions of Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided in the manner prescribed by law.

President & CEO Asare took roll call and welcomed representatives from the First Lady's Office, Governor's Authorities Unit, and the Attorney General's Office.

### **Chair update**

Chair Barbara George Johnson addressed the Board and advised that the next Maternal Care Quality Collaborative (MCQC) meeting will be held on February 28, 2025.

Chair George Johnson appointed Justin Zimmerman – Governor Representative and Andrea Martinez-Mejia – Public Member to the Audit Committee. Chair George Johnson will also serve on the Audit Committee, as required per the MIHIA Bylaws. She also advised that the Audit Committee will meet quarterly to select an auditor and monitor MIHIA's financial operations.

### **President & CEO Statement**

President & CEO Asare addressed the Board and shared key highlights since the last meeting in December of 2024. After a mini-bid process through NJ Start, MIHIA retained The Setrock Group and Taft Communications as Marketing Engagement Partners in June of 2024. To date, they have crafted MIHIA's logo and have worked on developing a clear Brand Identity and plan for MIHIA's social media presence. Additionally, MIHIA has procured business consulting services from Prassas Group, LLC., who has assisted in engaging MIHIC's three lead anchor tenants to discuss key project areas.

President & CEO Asare welcomed MIHIA's newest staff members: Eric Carlsson, Chief Financial Officer; Laura Wilton, Chief of Corporate Governance; Cindy Cortez, Administrative Assistant, and Social Media Intern, Ama Antwi.

President & CEO Asare also reported on MIHIA's collaborative partnerships on a national scale. In January 2025, MIHIA virtually attended the Florida State Senate Health Policy Committee Meeting. MIHIA also presented an overview of Nurture NJ at the Nurture North Carolina Steering Committee meeting in February 2025. On February 4, 2025, MIHIA attended the HealthConnect One Community-Based Doula Winter Convening in Washington, DC. Locally, MIHIA has participated in various events such as the Maternal Health Awareness Day Roundtable at Drumthwacket, a ribbon-cutting at the Cooper-Camden Baby Cafe in Camden, NJ, the Salvation and Social Justice's Black History Month Panel on Black Maternal Health, and Princeton University's Policy Task Force.

Ballinger, the architectural firm procured for the design of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center, briefed the Board on their progress to date. They reported that they are now in phase two of the design development process.

Dr. Philip Bonaparte, Public Member, congratulated Ballinger and MIHIA on the progress of the design of the building.

Chair Barbara George Johnson complimented Ballinger's openness to embrace community feedback in the design process.

## **Matters Requiring Board Action**

### **a. Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2024**

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of December 18, 2024, by Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski and was seconded by Public Member, Shakira Abdul-Ali. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

### **b. Approval of Resolution to Approve Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Health for the Coordination of New Jersey Doula Learning Collaborative (DLC) Activities.**

A motion was made to approve the MOA, by Public Member, Shakira Abdul-Ali and was seconded by Public Member, Dr. Philip Bonaparte. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Public Member, Dr. Damali Campbell-Oparaji, inquired as to whether the DLC MOA was a continuation of supporting the DLC or if there was an aim to produce a number of new doulas. President and CEO Asare clarified that the MOA intends for MIHIA to assume the coordination role of the DLC to help build the perinatal workforce through the training of doulas.

Governor Representative, Holly Low asked if State agencies interested in providing resources and funding opportunities for the Collaborative would make arrangements through MIHIA or the Department of Health. President and CEO Asare advised that agencies may contact MIHIA.

Public Member, Shakira Abdul-Ali commented that the doula training should include instruction on how to create a sustainable doula business. President and CEO Asare advised that MIHIA is developing training that has a business component and working on establishing clear competencies to help advocate for higher payment that will allow doulas to sustain themselves.

Public Member, Maritza Raimundi-Petroski requested additional information regarding the responses received for the DLC Doula RFP awardees. President and CEO Asare advised that three awards were made by DOH to provide Doula training and one was given to do Medicaid enrollment and support. She also advised that the Department of Health issued the RFP and would get back to her regarding organization names.

**c. Resolution to Approve Eric Carlsson, CFO as an Authorized Signer on MIHIA's Bank Account.**

A motion was made to approve Eric Carlsson, CFO, as MIHIA's authorized signer by Public Member, Dr. Philip Bonaparte, and was seconded by Governor Representative, Holly Low. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

**Other Business**

Governor Representative, Tim Sullivan, provided update that on Monday, February 24, 2025, NJEDA Board approved the purchase of the MIHIC site, and the construction budget has been finalized. Funding will soon be released to begin bidding process for construction.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Executive Session**

There was no Executive Session.

**Adjournment**

Chair Barbara George Johnson requested a motion to adjourn. Public Member, Andrea Martinez-Mejia made the motion to adjourn. Governor Representative, Dr. Kaitlan Baston seconded the motion.

I hereby certify this to be a true and original copy of the February 26, 2025, New Jersey Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority Board meeting minutes.

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Lisa Asare,  
President and CEO.