

State Health Benefits Commission
Open Session Minutes
March 8, 2023

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided through the annual notice of the schedule of regular meetings of the Commission filed with and prominently posted in the offices of the Secretary of State. The 2023 annual meeting schedule was mailed to the Secretary of State on December 20, 2022, and Star Ledger and the Trenton Times on December 20, 2022. The annual meeting schedule was posted to the Division website on December 1, 2022.

The meeting of the State Health Benefits Commission of New Jersey was called to order on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 10:00 am at the Division of Taxation; 3 John Fitch Way, Trenton, NJ 08611.

The text of Resolution A (Closed Session) and Resolution B (Executive Session) were read in their entirety in the event that the Commission desires, at any point in the meeting, to approve a motion to go into Closed or Executive session.

Kelly Fields took Roll Call and established that a quorum was present.

Commissioners:

Danielle Schimmel
Philip Gennace
Allison Chris Myers
Dudley Burdge
Jennifer Higgins

Also Present:

Alison Keating, Deputy Attorney General
Sonia Rivera-Perez, State of New Jersey Division of Pension and Benefits
Nicole Ludwig, State of New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits
Kelly Fields, State of New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits
Joyce Malerba, State of New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits
Theresa Williams, State of New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits
Becky Searles, AON
Joseph Tappe, AON
Donna Ruotola, Horizon

Commissioner Myers made a motion to go into Closed Session to hear the Closed Session appeals that contain protected health information. Commissioner Higgins seconded. All voted in favor.

The following cases, due to HIPAA regulations, were heard in Closed Session:

Case #2023030801: The member is requesting the Commission grant them their earned benefits from approximately 34 years of service. The member had left state employment and was then employed by a local government employer, causing a break in service and making the member ineligible for Medicare Part B reimbursement. The member had received a letter stating this. An audit had been completed, confirming the break in service.

Commissioner Higgins made a motion to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Schimmel seconded; all voted in favor.

Upon return from Executive Session, the Commission discussed with the member to understand the situation better. Commissioner Dudley made a motion to uphold the member's appeal. Commissioner Higgins seconded the motion; the motion did not pass with a 3 to 2 vote. Commissioner Schimmel made a motion to deny the member's appeal based on the fact that he did not have continuous service with the State. Commissioner Gennace seconded; the appeal was denied with a 3 to 2 vote.

Case #2023030802: The member stated that they feel as though they should not have to be held liable for errors made on Pensions' side, as the member was terminated in 2011. The member stated their last paycheck was June of 2009 but their Health Benefits remained active. The system also lists the member as a Retiree but they were not retired. Kelly Fields stated this had been a tabled appeal and that the member is appealing their pension contributions that were withheld for their withdraw check. Ms. Fields stated the member applied for disability retirement, which the member then signed up for retiree Health Benefits, while waiting for approval the member is responsible for the monthly premiums. The member had been denied for disability retirement, therefore the member owed Health Benefits premiums. Once the member withdrew their pension contributions, the total premiums owed were taken from the withdraw check.

Commissioner Gennace made a motion to deny the appeal. Commissioner Schimmel seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Case #2023030803: This is a reconsideration appeal for a member whom had a procedure done that they believe should be considered an emergency procedure rather than fall in the Tier 2 category. The member stated their symptoms and reasoning for this belief. Donna Ruotola from Horizon stated that an emergency requires immediate care and the member's procedure did not require immediate care. Horizon stated that based upon the information, the member's operation would not be defined as emergent.

Commissioner Schimmel made a motion to reconsider and continue to deny the appeal. Commissioner Myers seconded the motion; all voted in favor. Commissioner Schimmel made a second motion to direct the secretary to draft a Final Administrative Determination. Commissioner Myers seconded; all voted in favor.

At this time, a recess was taken.

Case #2023030804: Kelly Fields presented that the member came onto Retired Health Benefits in 2012 but never signed up for the dental. The member is appealing to come onto dental coverage. The member had originally been denied because they did not apply for dental coverage within 60 days of retirement. The member had been on their spouse's dental coverage which ended, a letter had to be provided proving this.

Commissioner Burdge made a motion to deny the appeal. Commissioner Higgins seconded the motion; all voted in favor.

Commissioner Myers made a motion to move to Open Session. Commissioner Higgins seconded. All voted in favor. The Commission moved to Open Session.

Case #2023030805: This appeal refers to a Workers' Compensation Case. The Commission agreed it does not need to be discussed.

Commissioner Schimmel made a motion to permit the settlement as outlined in the memo. Commissioner Myers seconded; all voted in favor.

Case #2023030806: This appeal refers to a second Workers' Compensation Case. The Commission agreed it does not need to be discussed.

Commissioner Schimmel made a motion to permit the settlement as outlined in the memo. Commissioner Myers seconded; all voted in favor.

Aon Presentation:

Becky Searles and Joe Tappe presented on the Mid-Year look at the experience in the SHBP. Mr. Tappe stated that the Mid-Year analysis evaluates the emerging plan costs that have come through since the prior rate setting analysis for 2023. Mr. Tappe touched base on the updated view of 2023 census data based on open enrollment results provided by the State. Aon tweaked some of the assumptions that underlie the projections using historical claims data to project it forward to the plan years being reviewed. Mr. Tappe also touched base on Local Government results, prescription drug costs, medical costs and State results.

Commissioner Burdge made a motion to move to Executive session to discuss contract updates. Commissioner Myers seconded; all voted in favor.

Upon return to Open Session, Commissioner Burdge made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Schimmel seconded. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 1:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Fields
Acting Secretary
State Health Benefits Commission