

Vermont Education Health Initiative (VEHI)
Board of Directors
Teleconference Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2021

Present:

VEHI Board Members: Tracy Wrend – Chair, Joel Cook – Vice Chair, Peggy Maxfield, Lisa Grout, Zack McLaughlin and Geo Honigford

VEHI Trust Managers: Mark Hage and Bobby-Jo Salls

VSBIT Staff: Chris Roberts and Jonathan Steiner

Members of the Public: None

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m., by Chair, Tracy Wrend

Introduction of New Board Member:

Tracy Wrend introduced and welcomed the newest VSBA appointee, Geo Honigford, to the VEHI board. Introductions were done by all in attendance.

Review and Adoption of Agenda:

Tracy asked that a review of the second quarter VT-NEA report be added as an agenda item (#7). Peggy Maxfield made the motion to adopt the change to the agenda and Zach McLaughlin seconded. The motion passed.

Public Comment:

None.

Review and Discussion of Documents

a. Mission and Decision Guidelines

Tracy asked that board members spend five minutes reading the mission statement (adopted November 12, 2014) and asked members to find 3 phrases that they feel strongly about as a priority, 2 areas that the board could build further, and 1 area where they have a question. Each board member provided feedback on the mission and after discussion agreed that the mission still meets the general expectations of the board. Geo Honigford made the motion to note the mission as “reviewed and affirmed as of 1/25/2021”. Peggy seconded the motion. The motion passed.

b. Conflict of Interest Policy

Tracy reviewed the Conflict of Interest policy and reviewed the COI disclosure forms that had been signed by board members. All board members sited 'no conflict of interest'. The board agreed that this policy should be taken up again at a later time to review in greater depth.

Approval of Board Minutes: November 16, 2020

Bobby-Jo Salls asked that the phrase "by VSBIT staff" be removed from the section of the minutes that refers to requesting agenda items for the board meetings. Geo made a motion, seconded by Zach, to approve the meeting minutes of November 16, 2020 with the edit noted by Bobby-Jo. The motion passed.

Management Updates

a. VSTRS RFP Update

Mark Hage updated the board that VSTRS had asked VEHI, along with BCBSVT, to present to VSTRS in a finalist presentation on January 15th. Following the presentation VSTRS sent out a final list of questions on January 19th, to be answered by January 26 at 3:00 pm.

The questions included whether or not VEHI would offer a similar administrative package with another carrier if Vermont Blue Advantage (VBA) was not selected. The management team could not come to an agreement on this issue and the answers were due the following day.

Mark, Bobby-Jo and Jon provided their insights and concerns about the requests and the board was given an opportunity to ask follow up questions. Concerns included the tight timeline to make a change for July 1, the Memorandum of Understanding in place with VBA, and the potential of losing the entire VSTRS account. Joel asked to come back to this topic after he could prepare a motion. After the other updates (see items b and c below) Joel provided a motion, seconded by Peggy with friendly amendment:

I move that, in light of our inability to reach a satisfactory conclusion to how to respond to several of the questions asked of VEHI by VSTRS, we inform VSTRS:

1. Of that fact;
2. That we believe it is in the short- and long-term interests of retired teachers and VSTRS for it to retain the longstanding successful partnership among it, BCBSVT, and VEHI in providing high quality, cost effective, and affordable health care for Vermont's retired teachers.

3. That, if VSTRS determine nevertheless to have an insurer other than BCBSVT/Vermont Blue Advantage provide health insurance to its Medicare beneficiaries, it should do so only if within a much more realistic timeframe so we can solve a number of administrative matters through our due diligence.

Peggy called the question. The motion did not pass.

With no action by the board, the management team was asked to answer the questions based on the last direction by the board as noted below.

[On November 16th the board had approved the following options: *Peggy made a motion, seconded by Lisa, to authorize the Chair to sign bid submissions for a) VEHI's current benefit plans for both the under-65 and Medicare-eligible retirees and b) the joint collaboration with VBA/BCBSVT inclusive of MA plans for the Medicare-eligible retirees. The motion passed.*]

b. Rx Cooperative Study

Mark explained to the board that while we received some preliminary information, we have not been able to meet with the group for the full report and discussion. The management team will report out at a future meeting.

c. COVID – 19

Bobby-Jo reviewed and highlighted current COVID-19 claims numbers on a recently received COVID-19 specific claims report from BCBSVT.

d. FY 22 Health Plan Rates

Bobby-Jo reported that after receiving indication from DFR, they are expecting the FY 22 Health plan rates to be approved as filed in the coming days.

The following agenda items were not addressed:

Discuss Future Agenda Items

VT-NEA Quarterly Report

Set Date for Next Board Meeting

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Bobby-Jo Salls