

VEHI Board Meeting Minutes for January 27, 2026

Present:

VEHI Board Members: Lance Mills – Board Chair, Mike Fisher – Vice Chair, Suzanne Dirmaier, Lisa Grout, Andrew Haas, and Cheryl Scarzello,

VEHI Management Team: Mark Hage, Chris Roberts, Bobby-Jo Salls and Jon Steiner

VEHI Guests: None

Members of the Public: None

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm, by Chair Lance Mills.

Agenda

Lisa Grout made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Cheryl Scarzello. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Review Meeting Minutes from December 2, 2025

Lisa Grout made a motion to approve the meeting minutes December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mike Fisher, and it passed unanimously.

Discuss VEHI Member Forum from January 26, 2026

Lance Mills expressed his appreciation for those involved in the first VEHI Member Forum from the night before. Board members agreed that it was presented professionally and were pleased with the outcome. Lance asked if people felt that the timing (both time of year and time of day) were the best times to present the information and capture the attention of school board members that may work during the day. Timing of the meeting was discussed, and the group considered sending a survey out in the summer or early fall to receive feedback from the school districts and school board members.

Review and Approve Annual Work Plan

Mike Fisher presented the updated Annual Work Plan with only a change to the schedule for the Board Officer Elections/Reorganization to the December meeting. Mike made a

motion to approve the new amended version two of the Board Annual Work Plan. Andrew seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve the Conflict of Interest Policy and Submissions

The board reviewed the current Conflict of Interest Policy and Bobby-Jo Salls reviewed the submissions by board members. The only conflicts noted were those covered by VEHI. Mike Fisher moved to approve the policy as written, seconded by Cheryl Scarzello. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Updates

The board discussed the bills related to health care and schools. Mark Hage gave a brief overview of two bills, including a bill about Primary Care and a bill about creating a risk pool for the public sector. He also mentioned that the Green Mountain Care Board had issued an RFP for a consultant for reference-based pricing for the hospital budgets for FY27 which is being watched. Mark Hage and Bobby-Jo Salls were asked to testify to the Senate Finance Committee on Friday, February 9, 2026, for an overview of VEHI and cost drivers the pool is faced with.

Review and Accept the VT-NEA Report

Mark Hage offered to answer any questions related to his report. Lisa Grout had one question about the Silver CDHP issue, which he advised would be discussed later in the agenda.

Executive Session

Mike Fisher made the motion under 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) to go into Executive Session to discuss contracts with Blue Cross Blue Shield. Suzanne Dirmaier seconded motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mike Fisher made the motion to return from Executive Session, which was seconded by Cheryl Scarzello and passed unanimously.

Management Team Updates

Bobby-Jo Salls reviewed an issue that had arisen with the Silver CDHP which was identified as needing the deductible to increase to maintain HSA compatibility. Unfortunately, this was missed over the last couple of years. She explained that 2026 was updated with no issue. The VEHI team made a decision to impact the least amount of members by using the last month rule and testing period to change the 2025 benefits effective December 1, 2025 to avoid the plan being incompatible and also avoid reprocessing all claims for 2025.

There is still a mailing for 2024 that will need to be completed in the coming weeks. VEHI and Blue Cross will work together to review this each year as they have for the Rx portion of this benefit that has been updated annually.

Bobby-Jo also reviewed with the board the potential issue that arose with people using HRA funds (intentionally or unintentionally) to purchase GLP-1s for weight loss which were excluded beginning on January 1, 2026. While VEHI will not be covering these prescriptions, the cards can be used at the pharmacy for prescriptions and there is no way for the HRA/FSA card to identify that it is a non-covered prescription vs a prescription that is simply applying to deductible. Bobby-Jo and Mark are notifying stakeholders to be sure covered employees understand that if HRA dollars are used for non-covered benefits they will be asked to repay the money and/or money will not be available when needed for other covered benefits. Bobby-Jo will work with the districts and their TPAs to find ways to identify these claims.

Benefit Design Team Update

The team made up of Suzanne Dirmaier, Cheryl Scarzello, Mark Hage and Bobby-Jo Salls reported that they will be interviewing the four candidates for consultants on February 27, 2026. The board expects to potentially discuss this at the retreat, depending on the timing and will discuss it at a future meeting.

Strategic Discussion

Mark Hage reviewed his proposal to merge public sector employees and request to release the service contract with Blue Cross in order to understand the difference between the different pools' contracts. The board discussed the duty of loyalty in the VEHI code of ethics and the impact to VEHI this proposal could present. They also suggested that this direction should come from Vermont School Boards Association and VT-National Education Association, not VEHI. No action was taken.

The group discussed the interest in a retreat, similar to the one done in 2024 when many of the board members were new to the board. The consensus was that it would be beneficial to have a retreat, but held off on scheduling until more was known about the timeline for the benefit redesign.

Adjournment

Lisa Grout made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Cheryl Scarzello. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Bobby-Jo Salls