

Vermont Education Health Initiative (VEHI)
Board of Directors
Teleconference Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2023

Present:

VEHI Board Members: Joel Cook, Tracy Wrend,, Lisa Grout, Suzanne Dirmaier, Mike Fisher and Geo Honigford

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

Members of the Public: Chad Hewitt

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m., by Joel Cook.

Welcome to Board Member

Joel Cook introduced the new VT-NEA appointee, Suzanne Dirmaier, a long-time UniServ director. The board members and management team introduced themselves to Suzanne.

Review of Agenda:

No changes suggested.

Public Comment:

None.

Approval of Board Minutes: October 17, 2022

Lisa Grout made a motion, seconded by Mike Fisher, to approve the meeting minutes of October 17, 2022, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Reorganization of the Board

Following the VEHI Board Election of Board Officers Protocol, the chair seat was due to transition to a VSBA appointee, and the vice chair to a VT-NEA appointee. Geo Honigford nominated Tracy Wrend for the chair position and Mike Fisher seconded the motion. The motion passed. Lisa Grout then nominated Joel Cook as the vice chair, seconded by Suzanne Dirmaier. The motion passed.

Sullivan and Powers Audit Report

Chad Hewitt of Sullivan and Powers reviewed the VEHI Audit Report, completed for FY 22 on September 28, 2022. Mr. Hewitt noted that once again the VEHI finance manager, Chris Roberts, and the management team received a clean management letter, and had a successful year. There was a question by Joel Cook about the success and profitability of the program, and if it fit within the Net Position Policy. Mr. Hewitt noted that reserves are an important piece of a pool and that it should be considered during the rating cycle. Tracy asked him if the lack of president for VEHI played a role in the audit, and he said that he continued to receive everything he needs from the management team and that it has not been an issue.

The board thanked Mr. Hewitt for the report, and thanked Chris Roberts for her efforts.

Mike Fisher made a motion to accept the VEHI Audit Report as presented. Joel Cook seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Annual Review of the VEHI Board Policies

Chair, Tracy Wrend, walked the board through the policies; Legal Duties of the Board, Code of Ethics, Framework for Positions on Legislation, Whistleblower Policy and the Net position Policy. During the discussion of the Net Position Policy, Jon Steiner reviewed the steps the management team was taking to have another outside actuarial firm look at our policy to be sure we have clear guidance. Jon and Bobby-Jo are obtaining proposals and will review with Mark Hage before bringing to the board for consideration.

Mike Fisher asked to loop back to the Reorganization Policy and confirmed the ability to review the policy and make suggestions to update at the next meeting.

Annual Review of the Conflict of Interest Policy

The board reviewed the Conflict of Interest Policy, noting the difference of opinion between the VSBA appointees and the VT-NEA appointees. After discussing, the group determined that no decision would be made that night at the meeting. Tracy thanked the board members for the conversation.

Appoint VEHI Secretary

The VEHI secretary position has been vacant since Zach McLaughlin left the board, however the work of the secretary has been mainly completed by Bobby-Jo Salls. Mike Fisher asked if it was appropriate/allowed to have Bobby-Jo be the secretary. Given the issue that was raised of the president role, Tracy offered to be the secretary since she was in the VSBIT building once a month for other commitments. Geo Honigford nominated Tracy Wrend as secretary and Suzanne Dirmaier seconded the nomination. The motion passed, with Mike Fisher voting against.

VEHI Q1 FY23 Financials – C. Roberts

Chris Roberts reviewed the first quarter of FY23 financials, including the Budget to Actual, the Combined Statement of Revenue and Expense and the Net Position Summary. Through 9/30/22 VEHI has a small gain of \$116 thousand for health, and a loss of \$344 thousand for dental, so a small overall loss of \$228 thousand overall for VEHI. The loss for dental is expected in an effort to spend down some of the dental reserves.

Management Updates

Mark Hage discussed “Hinge Health” which is a new physical therapy (PT) option being negotiated by Blue Cross of Vermont to offer virtual PT option. The VEHI management team is awaiting final go-live with Blue Cross before offering.

Mark also reviewed the status of the Express Scripts (ESI) Audit, which was reconciled by Remedy Analytics against the discount guarantees in place between Blue Cross VT and ESI. Remedy and Blue Cross believe that there are additional dollars available (about \$400 thousand) however, to conclude the audit they were ready to accept ESI’s offer of just over one million dollars (VEHI’s portion). The VEHI management team agreed with Remedy and Blue Cross. Chris Roberts noted that the payment was received.

Bobby-Jo Salls updated the board on the status of the health plan filing. Blue Cross VT had received two rounds of objections (questions) about the filing. Blue Cross (with VEHI’s input where needed) responded to DFR and we are awaiting the approval of the rates.

Bobby-Jo also updated the board on the status of the PATH website rebuild. The team has chosen to move forward with the current vendor (Bluehouse Group) to rebuild the website one module at a time, over a two-year period, with an estimated timeframe of two years to complete. They are in final contract negotiations which include a project timeline and performance guarantees.

Running over the allotted time for the meeting, Mark Hage gave a compressed update of his progress with the Reference Based Pricing initiative asking that the management team meet with Marilyn Bartlett and Christin Deacon to hear their thoughts on bringing RBP to Vermont/VEHI. Bobby-Jo and Jon agreed to meet with them to hear their thoughts on the viability to make this work in Vermont considering the geographic and population differences.

Discuss Future Agenda Items

VT-NEA Quarterly Report, VSTRS Renewal, Contracts

Set Date for Next Board Meeting

A date was not set. However, Bobby-Jo Salls would send out a “Doodle Poll” to find dates in March and June.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the board adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Bobby-Jo Salls