

**SOMERSET COUNTY JOINT INSURANCE FUND
FUND COMMISSIONER'S MEETING MINUTES
March 24, 2021**

STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE READ BY COMMISSIONER TROJAN: Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the SCJIF held on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 9:03 a.m. via telephone conference, has been provided through posting of said notice to the Courier News, and the Hunterdon County Democrat in accordance with Section 13 of the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

SHANEL Y ROBINSON	County of Somerset	Present
GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	Somerset County Park Commission	Present
JOHN TROJAN	Raritan Valley Community College	Present
RAELENE SIPPLE	Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools	Absent
GREGORY J. BONIN	Township of Branchburg	Present
BRIAN K. AUGER	Somerset County Library Commission	Present
KELLY G. CUPIT	Township of Green Brook	Present
KAREN GILBERT	Township of Raritan	Present
MICHAEL PAPPAS	Township of Bridgewater	Present
VITA MEKOVETZ	Township of Clinton	Absent
DIANE MC DANIEL	Township of Delaware	Present

ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS

YVONNE CHILDRESS	County of Somerset	Present
DONNA UMGELTER	Somerset County Park Commission	Present
CHERYL WALLACE	Raritan Valley Community College	Absent
WILLIAM G. HYNICK, JR.	Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools	Absent
MARGUERITE SCHMITT	Township of Branchburg	Absent
BRIAN MORGAN	Somerset County Library Commission	Absent
RAYMOND S. MURRAY	Township of Green Brook	Present
CAROL BARBATI	Township of Raritan	Absent
THOMAS GENOVA	Township of Bridgewater	Absent
CARLA CONNER	Township of Clinton	Absent
JAMES WALTMAN	Township of Delaware	Absent

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS

EXECUTIVE DIR/ADMIN:

NEW JERSEY RISK MANAGERS & CONSULTANTS, INC.

♦ Raymond L. Hughes II ♦ Maryjane Hydro ♦ Javier B. Esparra
♦ Kenneth Spiller ♦ Cindy Villagran ♦ Lucy Martins

FUND ATTY/CLAIMS MANAGEMENT/LITIGATION:

DiFRANCESCO, BATEMAN, KUNZMAN, DAVIS, LEHRER & FLAUM, P.C.
♦ Stephen O. Davis, Esq.

FUND ATTY/REGULATORY COMPLIANCE/LEGISLATION:

SAUL EWING ARNSTEIN & LEHR
♦ M. Paige Berry, Esq.

ADDITIONAL RISK MANAGERS:

ACRISURE, David Balken
♦ Township of Clinton

ACRISURE, Louis Beckerman
♦ Township of Green Brook

ACRISURE, Amy Pieroni
♦ Township of Bridgewater

LAFONTAINE & BUDD, James T. Rick, Jr.
♦ Township of Branchburg

RICHLAND KNOWLES AGENCY
♦ Township of Delaware

CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR:

GUARDIAN PUBLIC ENTITY CLAIMS SERVICES
♦ Jacquelyn Fresco

GUESTS/PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS: Patti Fahy from Acrisure North American Insurance Management participated, as well as Mark Worthington, Group Manager from T&M Associates who would be making a presentation to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 27, 2021 MEETING:

MOTION: Commissioner Auger
SECOND: Commissioner McDaniel
VOTE: Unanimous

SERVICE PROVIDER REPORTS

Executive Director/Administrator: No additions to the report submitted, however, Raymond L. Hughes II welcomed any questions or comments.

Fund Attorney - Claims Management / Litigation: No additions to the report submitted.

Fund Attorney – Regulatory Compliance / Legislation: In addition to the report submitted, Fund Attorney Berry elaborated on recent case law regarding New Jersey's Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA) as well other cases pending before the New Jersey Supreme Court and Appellate Division.

Attorney Berry also provided an extensive review of pending legislation S3375, A2617/S2998, S2607, A-21, S2535 and Daniel's Law. She explained how each of these Bills, if passed, would have an impact on public entities.

Third Party Administrator: In addition to the report submitted, Mr. Javier Esparra welcomed questions from the Fund Members.

Custodian of Funds: No additions to the report submitted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Safety Committee: In addition to the reports submitted on behalf of Committee Chair Sipple, Maryjane Hydro of NJRM, advised that the SCJIF Safety Committee met telephonically on February 2, 2021 and March 2, 2021 and the respective Meeting Minutes were included in the Package.

As previously informed, the Fund will be conducting a Training Seminar on Tuesday, March 30th, 2021 entitled "*Accident & Incident Investigations and FROI Reporting*" for Supervisors and Department Heads to receive proper training for completion of Workers' Compensation First Report of Injury (FROI) forms and the process of investigating and reporting work-related injuries. This Seminar will be conducted via Microsoft Teams and presented by the Fund's Safety Consultant, Mark Worthington and Javier Esparra from NJRM. NJRM encourages distribution of the Invitation and participation in this very important training.

Also included in the Package is the April JIFNEWS Quarterly Newsletter which focuses on mental health and provides information to the various resources for mental health in the State of New Jersey as well as Somerset and Hunterdon Counties. Circulation, printing and posting of the JIFNEWS is strongly encouraged as the information contained therein is vitally important for families during the continued Governor's public health emergency.

The 2020 Workers' Compensation Year-End Trend Analysis and Evaluation for the overall Fund has been provided to all Entity Members. Individual Fund Members can access their information thru the Fund's website (<http://scjif.org>). Safety Consultant, Mark Worthington of T&M Associates also commended the Fund Members for the extraordinary work as the Total Claims Costs are significantly down from previous years despite the frequency of claims and the challenges we are all facing due to the pandemic. He contributed the positive results to the hard work of all Safety Committee Representatives by sustaining the safety culture in each of their individual entities, as well as the support and assistance of New Jersey Risk Managers. Questions were welcomed.

The next scheduled safety meeting will be held telephonically on Tuesday, April 6th at 9:00 a.m.

Claim PAR Committee: In addition to the reports submitted, on behalf of Committee Chair Soriano, Ms. Hydro advised that the results of the Claim PAR Committee Meetings will be ratified during the Old Business portion of the Agenda.

Legislative Committee: Fund Attorney Berry advised that the Legislative Committee met telephonically on March 3, 2021. After detailing the particulars regarding the pending legislation, is it the recommendation of the Legislative Committee to oppose pending legislation S3375 and A2617 which, if enacted, would radically alter the practice of Workers' Compensation with respect to medical control and communications regarding medical issues. The Committee recommends the Fund Attorney and Executive Director to forward opposition letters and, if necessary, to present written and oral testimony in further opposition of S3375 and A2617. Attorney Berry advised that she will continue to monitor and report to the Fund of any Bills that would impact the Fund.

Additionally, Ms. Hydro offered comments that NJRM has joined a collaborative coalition of public and private self-insured entities, attorneys and service providers in the Workers' Compensation industry who are like-minded in their concerns regarding the opposition of S3375 and A2617.

#21-017 RESOLUTION APPROVING SERVICE PROVIDER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

MOTION: Commissioner Auger
SECOND: Commissioner Soriano
VOTE: Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	SHANEL ROBINSON	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

OLD BUSINESS

#21-015 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS & APPROVAL OF EXPENSES PAID IN FEBRUARY 2021:

MOTION: Commissioner Auger
SECOND: Commissioner Soriano
VOTE: Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	SHANEL ROBINSON	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			

SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

**#20-016 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS & APPROVAL OF EXPENSES PAID
IN MARCH 2021:**

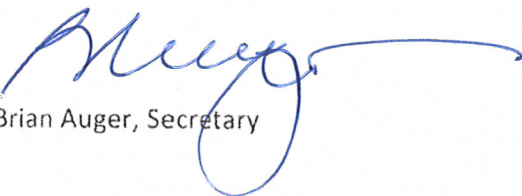
MOTION: Commissioner Auger
SECOND: Commissioner Soriano
VOTE: Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	SHANEL ROBINSON	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 9:41 A.M.:

MOTION: Commissioner Auger
SECOND: Commissioner Soriano
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,


Brian Auger, Secretary