

**SOMERSET COUNTY JOINT INSURANCE FUND**  
**FUND COMMISSIONER'S MEETING MINUTES**  
**July 28, 2021**

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**STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE READ BY JOHN TROJAN:** Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the SCJIF held on Wednesday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 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	Present
GREGORY J. BONIN	Township of Branchburg	Absent
BRIAN K. AUGER	Somerset County Library Commission	Absent
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	Present
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	Present
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  
♦ H. James Griffith ♦ 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, Paul Joyce

- ◆ Township of Delaware

CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR:

GUARDIAN PUBLIC ENTITY CLAIMS SERVICES

- ◆ Jacquelyn Fresco

**GUESTS/PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS:** None identified.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 26, 2021 MEETING:**

<b>MOTION:</b>	Commissioner McDaniel	<b>SECOND:</b>	Commissioner Soriano
<b>VOTE:</b>	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 advised that the rulings in each of the cases referenced in her report will have a direct impact on public entities in the State of New Jersey and ultimately the Fund. In light of this, she provided a brief overview of the circumstances surrounding each case.

Attorney Berry also advised that new Legislation, which if signed into Law, would require both public and private employers to provide hiring preferences to injured employees who have reached Maximum Medical Improvement and cannot return to their former position but are able to perform the duties of an existing, unfilled position. Additionally, details regarding the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which provides funding for COVID-19 response and recovery were also discussed.

**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. However, Ms. Childress welcomed questions.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Safety Committee:** Ms. Maryjane Hydro, NJRM, advised that the Safety Committee met telephonically on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and the Minutes were included in the Package. Also, included was the entire Summer Safety Package which focused on FEMA's Emergency Preparations. It was comprised of the following articles:

- Make a Plan
- Create Your Family Emergency Communication Plan
- Emergency Supply List
- Prepare Your Pets for Disasters
- Plan to Evacuate
- Get Involved

The package also included the quarterly JIFNEWS which featured an article on the once every 17 years emergence of the BroodX cicadas and a piece featuring 13 home remedies for mosquito bites.

The Fund's Safety Consultant, Mark Worthington of T & M Associates conducted a safety training seminar entitled "*Tractor, Mower, Groundskeeping, Hand & Portable Power Tool Safety*" on July 13, 2021. Approximately 60 employees attended this in-person training seminar.

Furthermore, Ms. Hydro announced that "*Chainsaw Safety Training*" is scheduled for September 21, 2021 to be held at the Somerset County North Garage/Camp Cromwell in Bridgewater. This training seminar will be presented by Mr. Warren Hippeli from NJ Crane Experts of Flemington. A safety grant has been secured and additional classes will be held at the Township of Raritan October 7 and the Somerset County Park Commission October 26.

The next scheduled Safety Committee Meeting after the summer hiatus will be Tuesday, September 14 at 9:00 a.m. at the Somerset County Park Commission Second Floor Training Room.

**Claim PAR Committee:** In addition to the reports submitted, Committee Chair Soriano advised that the results of the Claim PAR Committee Meetings held on June 23, 2021 and July 19, 2021 will be ratified during the Old Business portion of the Agenda.

**#21-026 RESOLUTION APPROVING SERVICE PROVIDER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Soriano  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Robinson  
**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 MORGAN	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**

**#21-024 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS & APPROVAL OF EXPENSES PAID IN JUNE 2021:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gilbert  
**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 MORGAN	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

**#21-025 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS & APPROVAL OF EXPENSES PAID IN JULY 2021:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Soriano  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Mekovetz  
**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 MORGAN	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION TO OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AMENDED BUDGET AT 9:33 A.M.:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Robinson  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Soriano  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION TO RETURN TO REGULAR MEETING AT 9:34 A.M.:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Robinson  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Soriano  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**#21-027 RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDED BUDGET FOR THE 2021 FUND YEAR:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McDaniel  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Mekovetz  
**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 MORGAN	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	KAREN GILBERT	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			

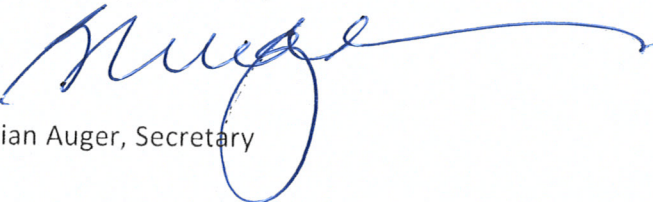
At this time, Mr. Raymond Hughes II, NJRM, commented that the Fund will begin its renewal process for the 2022 term. To that end, the Fund recommends that professional appraisals be obtained by the Member Entities to ensure that proper limits are established and appropriately noted on the Statement of Values and Schedule of Insured Locations which are part of the annual renewal process. Member Entities are encouraged to communicate with their individual Risk Management Consultant for assistance.

Commissioner Trojan raised questions regarding possible State mandated COVID-19 vaccination requirements for public employees. Discussion followed.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 9:46 A.M.:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pappas  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Soriano  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Auger, Secretary