

**SOMERSET COUNTY JOINT INSURANCE FUND**  
**FUND COMMISSIONER'S MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 28, 2022**

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**STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE READ BY COMMISSIONER BONIN:** Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the SCJIF held on Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. and 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	Absent
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	Present
BRIAN K. AUGER	Somerset County Library Commission	Present
KELLY G. CUPIT	Township of Green Brook	Absent
KAREN GILBERT	Township of Raritan	Absent
MICHAEL PAPPAS	Township of Bridgewater	Present
VITA MEKOVETZ	Township of Clinton	Absent
DIANE MC DANIEL	Township of Delaware	Present
GLENN CULLEN	Borough of South Plainfield	Present

**ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS**

YVONNE CHILDRESS	County of Somerset	Present
DONNA UMGELTER	Somerset County Park Commission	Absent
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	Present
THOMAS GENOVA	Township of Bridgewater	Absent
CARLA CONNER	Township of Clinton	Absent
JAMES WALTMAN	Township of Delaware	Absent
AMY ANTONIDES	Borough of South Plainfield	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 & Borough of South Plainfield

LAFONTAINE & BUDD, James T. Rick, Jr.

- ◆ Township of Branchburg

RICHLAND KNOWLES AGENCY, Diane Bellinger

- ◆ Township of Delaware

CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR:

GUARDIAN PUBLIC ENTITY CLAIMS SERVICES

- ◆ Jacquelyn Fresco

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Participating in the meeting were, Mark Worthington, Group Manager from T&M Associates and Normand Vermette, Managing Director from Alan Gray.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 27, 2022, MEETING:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Auger  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**SERVICE PROVIDER REPORTS**

**Executive Director/Administrator:** In addition to the report submitted, Mr. Raymond L. Hughes added that New Jersey Risk Managers & Consultants, Inc. has begun preparations for introduction of the 2023 Budget. To that end, historically annual increases have ranged between 2-3%; however, because the insurance market remains in what is known as a "hard market", Mr. Hughes advised Members that Entities should prepare for annual increases to range between mid to high single-digit increases for Fund Year 2023. New Jersey Risk

Managers & Consultants, Inc. will continue to work diligently with our insurance carriers to produce the finest Budget for 2023.

Mr. Hughes also reminded Fund Members that it is imperative for 2023 Renewal Applications to be submitted by no later than September 30, 2022. It takes a tremendous amount of work to compile the data and underwriting to submit to insurance carriers, and therefore, it is very important that New Jersey Risk Managers is in receipt of the information. Additionally, Cyber Security Insurance Carriers, in general, are requiring the use of Multi Factor Authentication (MFAs) to be implemented by insureds at their facilities. It is recommended that Fund Members ensure their individual Entity is in compliance with this requirement prior to January 1, 2023. As burdensome as it may seem, insurance carriers are placing these requirements for the protection of the insureds from any cyber-attacks. Commissioner Auger raised questions. Discussion followed.

Ms. Maryjane Hydro, NJRM advised that the information contained in "What To Do If You Get Hurt On The Job?" brochures has been updated. Each Fund Member received copies of the update brochures to be distributed to all employees receiving Workers' Compensation coverage within their Entities.

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

**Fund Attorney – Regulatory Compliance / Legislation:** In addition to the Report submitted, Attorney Berry advised that the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission issued guidance to employers on Workplace Impairment Recognition Expert (WIRE) for detecting and identifying an employee's usage of, or impairment from, a cannabis substance. Information in this regard was also distributed to all Fund Members as part of the Meeting Package and distributed at the SCJIF Safety Committee Meeting. Discussion followed.

**Third Party Administrator:** No additions to the report submitted.

**Custodian of Funds:** No additions to the report submitted.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Safety Committee:** In addition to the Report submitted and on behalf of Committee Chair Sipple, Ms. Maryjane Hydro of NJRM advised that the Safety Committee met on September 13, 2022 at the Somerset County Park Commission. Cancellation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter Safety Seminar entitled "*Preparations for Fall Clean Up*" was due to low registration numbers. Therefore, a Training Seminar entitled "*Workzone Safety*" will be held in October and invitations with details will be distributed as preparations are finalized. Safety Committee Members were also reminded that on-line safety training is available on the SCJIF Website, which contain approximately 800 courses. Also, the 2022 Training Catalog-Fall Edition courtesy of the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners has been uploaded to the Fund's website.

Mr. Mark Worthington, the Fund's Safety Consultant from T & M Associates has completed the Loss Control/Loss Prevention Safety Inspections for 2022. Safety Committee Representatives were reminded to respond to any findings or recommendations noted in the Reports within sixty (60) days. However, it is important to note that this year many Entities had "clear" reports and no significant issues were found.

During the Safety Meeting, all Safety Committee Members received their individual 2022 Safety Incentive Program progress update. Everyone was encouraged to make every effort to accumulate points before the end of the year. Additionally, Safety Committee Representatives were reminded to share the information obtained

during the Safety Meetings with not only Administrators, Supervisors and Managers but also filter the information down to staff and other employees that may benefit from the resources distributed.

Furthermore, the 2022 Mid-Year Workers' Compensation Trend Analysis and Evaluation for the Fund and for each individual Member were distributed and are also available on the proprietary section of the SCJIF website. Mark Worthington of T&M Associates discussed the positive trends for the Fund. He welcomed questions from the Members.

Commissioner Trojan raised a question regarding laws, regulations, and policies regarding concealed carry permits on school grounds. Discussion followed.

**Claim PAR Committee:** In addition to the Report submitted, Committee Chair Soriano, advised that the Committee met on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and the Meeting Minutes were submitted in the Commissioners' Package. Actions will be ratified during the Old Business portion of the Agenda.

**Claim Audit Committee:** Committee Chair Brian Auger informed the Board that a complete report and summary of the September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, TEAMS Meeting is included in the Commissioners' Meeting Package.

Mr. Normand Vermette of Alan Gray, LLC addressed the Board Members to further discuss the findings. An annual independent audit was conducted of both Guardian Public Entity Claims Services (GPECS) and First MCO claim systems between June 27<sup>th</sup>, and July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 via remote access to the Claim Pilot system as well as First MCO's computer system based on the Industry's Best Practices. Mr. Vermette noted that with the exception of a few issues, overall, the claim handling and management is in compliance with the Industry's Best Practices.

**#22-034 RESOLUTION APPROVING SERVICE PROVIDER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

**OLD BUSINESS**

**#22-032 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF EXPENSES & CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS PAID IN AUGUST 2022:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

**#22-033 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CURRENT EXPENSES & CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Cullen  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

### **NEW BUSINESS**

For the benefit of the Fund Members, Attorney Berry explained the procedures required by the Department of Banking and Insurance when filing to return surplus and why the transfer of funds is necessary.

#### **#21-035 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING INTER TRUST FUND TRANSFER:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

#### **#21-036 RESOLUTION DECLARING A DIVIDEND:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

**#22-037 RESOLUTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION AT 9:30 A.M. TO DISCUSS:**

Workers' Compensation Claims:

- 4.15797
- 4.17108
- 4.17468
- 4.19169

General Liability Claims:

- 4.15944
- 4.15989
- 4.16865

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**MOTION TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION AT 9:44 A.M.:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**#22-038 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Roll Call

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	YVONNE CHILDRESS	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE	X			
TOB	GREGORY J. BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	RRAYMOND MURRAY	X			
TOR	CAROL BARBATI	X			
TOBW	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			
TOC	VITA MEKOVETZ			X	
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BSP	GLENN CULLEN	X			

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 CLOSED SESSION:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Auger  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 9:45 A.M.:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Murray  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Cupit, Secretary