

**SOMERSET COUNTY JOINT INSURANCE FUND  
FUND COMMISSIONER'S MEETING MINUTES  
July 24, 2019**

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**STATEMENT OF PROPER NOTICE READ BY COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY D. SORIANO:**  
Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the SCJIF held on Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 8:40 a.m. at the Somerset County Park Commission Headquarters located in Bridgewater, New Jersey, 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.

**FLAG SALUTE/MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS**

BRIAN D. LEVINE	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	Absent
GREGORY J. BONIN	Township of Branchburg	Present
BRIAN K. AUGER	Somerset County Library Commission	Present
KELLY G. CUPIT	Township of Green Brook	Present
DONALD HUTCHINS	Township of Raritan	Present
JAMES T. NAPLES	Township of Bridgewater	Absent
CARLA CONNER	Township of Clinton	Present
DIANE McDANIEL	Township of Delaware	Present
DANIEL JAXEL	Borough of Raritan	Present
MICHAEL PAPPAS	Borough of High Bridge	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	Absent
CAROL BARBATI	Township of Raritan	Absent
LISA CARAVELA	Township of Bridgewater	Absent
TOM SILVIA	Township of Clinton	Absent
JOSEPH VOCKE	Township of Delaware	Absent
ERIC COLVIN	Borough of Raritan	Absent
BONNIE ANN FLEMING	Borough of High Bridge	Absent

**ALSO PRESENT**

**EXECUTIVE DIR/ADMIN:**

NEW JERSEY RISK MANAGERS & CONSULTANTS, INC.

♦ Maryjane Hydro ♦ Javier B. Esparra  
♦ H. James Griffith ♦ Cindy Villagran ♦ Lucy Martins ♦ Lynn Potts

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 LLP

- ◆ M. Paige Berry, Esq.

RISK MANAGERS:

ACRISURE, David Balken

- ◆ Township of Clinton & Borough of High Bridge

ACRISURE, Louis Beckerman

- ◆ Township of Green Brook

LAFONTAINE & BUDD, James T. Rick, Jr.

- ◆ Townships of Branchburg & Bridgewater

RICHLAND KNOWLES AGENCY, Michael Sabbagh

- ◆ Township of Delaware

WILLIS TOWERS WATSON, John Moore

- ◆ Borough of Raritan

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** In attendance were: Representatives from the County of Somerset, Donna Mozet, Faith Sacino, Paul Malarcher and Christine Zmurek, Esq. as well as Kathleen Hart, Esq., from Morgan Melhuish Abrutyn. Representatives from First Managed Care Option were Kelly Royce, Alyson Cronk and Mary Bresadola. Representing Concentra was Jehan Nisar and Patricia Gurczeski. Representing Guardian Public Entity Claims Services was Erol Kantar and Jacquelyn Fresco. Normand Vermette from Alan Gray LLC was in attendance to make a presentation to the Board. Dave Balken- Risk Manager for the Borough of High Bridge and Township of Clinton, Jamie Rick- Risk Manager for the Townships of Branchburg and Bridgewater, and Mike Sabbagh- Risk Manager for the Township of Delaware were also in attendance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

Alternate Commissioner Caravela arrived at this time.

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 MEETING:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Trojan

**SECOND:** Commissioner Cupit

**VOTE:** Unanimous

Commissioner Brian Levine arrived at this time.

## **SERVICE PROVIDER REPORTS**

**Executive Director/Administrator:** In addition to the report submitted, Maryjane Hydro was pleased to announce that after diligent planning and strategizing New Jersey Risk Managers (NJRM) will be moving to a new Network and has contracted the services of First Managed Care Option (FMCO) for Workers' Compensation Medical/Nurse Case Management. Additionally, NJRM has also contracted with Guardian Public Entity Claims Services (GPECS) for Claims Administration Services for Property, General & Auto Liability and Workers' Compensation claim handling. Effective August 1, 2019 NJRM will no longer be utilizing the services of QualCare or Qual-Lynx.

Javier B. Esparra of NJRM introduced Kelly Royce, RN-Senior Vice President of Operations, Alyson Cronk-Account Manager, and Mary Bresadola, RN-Manager Case Management Operations of First MCO and provided an overview of what to expect during the next few weeks while the transition takes place.

Javier explained that employees will also have the ability to access a new additional feature "Telemedicine" offered through Concentra allowing injured employees to be treated via smartphone or computers with webcams & microphones. Jehan Nisar, Regional Director Payer Sales and Patricia Gurczeski, Key Account Manager of Concentra also provided additional comments and elaborated on the new advances. Discussion followed.

Finally, Javier introduced another new partner, Guardian Public Entity Claims Services (GPECS), a subsidiary of Raphael & Associates. GPECS will be delivering claims handling and investigation services for General Liability, Auto Liability and Workers' Compensation. Erol Kantar, Executive Vice President provided a brief background of the company and informed the Board that Jacqueline Fresco formerly of Qual-Lynx has joined GPECS and will continue to oversee the SCJIF Workers' Compensation claims.

In addition to the Telemedicine Option available upon Intake, NJRM advised the Board of other enhancements to the Somerset County Joint Insurance Fund Program which are the first Joint Insurance Fund in the State of New Jersey to offer such benefit to its employees.

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

**Fund Attorney – Regulatory Compliance / Legislation:** In addition to the report submitted, Attorney Berry highlighted a case that has been in the media recently relating to a very costly verdict in a "whistleblower" lawsuit wherein the local municipality will be responsible to cover the settlement award for failing to adhere to the insurance carrier's advice. She reminded the Fund of the importance of cooperating with the insurance carriers to avoid these types of situations which ultimately affect tax payer dollars. Next, she discussed a case relating to medical marijuana in the workplace and the implications it can have on the municipalities and employers. Attorney Berry also elaborated on new legislation that would extend funding to cover claims by first responders and volunteers that worked near the site of the 9/11 attacks. She welcomed any questions or comments following her presentation.

**Third Party Administrator:** In addition to the report submitted, Javier Esparra noted that NJRM will continue to monitor the figures and will work with Guardian Public Entity Claims Services to ensure the accuracy of these reports during the transition.

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

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Safety Committee:** Maryjane Hydro, NJRM, informed all present that the Safety Recognition Breakfast was held at the B.P.O. Elks on Tuesday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Approximately 100 employees & guests were in attendance. The featured speakers from the Somerset County Emergency Services, Steven Weinman, EMS Bureau Chief and Brielle Schulz, Academy Administrative & Safety Supervisor provided a presentation entitled “Stop the Bleed: Everything You Need to Know to Control Bleeding” which also included a video presentation. Following their presentation, the Fund presented each Entity with two (2) Stop the Bleed Trauma kits. These kits should be placed near the defibrillators so that they can be easily accessed in case of an emergency. A copy of the presentation was also distributed to all Members as part of the Summer Safety Package.

Worthy of note, is that during the Safety Recognition Breakfast, the Fund was able to present more awards this year than in previous years for the 2018 SCJIF Safety Incentive Program. Congratulations were extended as follows:

### **First Place - \$1,000 and Plaque/Plate**

Somerset County Park Commission  
Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools

### **Third Place - \$500 and Plaque/Plate**

County of Somerset  
Township of Green Brook  
Raritan Valley Community College  
Township of Raritan  
Township of Bridgewater  
Township of Delaware

A Safety Seminar entitled “*Preparations for Fall Clean Up*” will be held on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Somerset County Park Commission from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. which will be presented by Mark Worthington, the Fund’s Safety Consultant from T&M Associates. Some of the topics that will be covered are: tree trimming, leave pick-up, aerial truck and wood chipper safety.

The SCJIF Safety Committee will reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on September 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Township of Green Brook. At that time, Commissioner Raelene Sipple will be introduced as the new Chair of the Safety Committee. The Fund appreciates Raymond Murray’s eight (8) years of service to the Safety Committee as Chairman.

The Summer Safety Package previously distributed also included the following informative articles:

- July 2019 JIFNEWS- A Quarterly Newsletter featuring Safety, Health & Wellness
- Grilling Safety-National Fire Protection Association [nfpa.org/education/NFPA2019](http://nfpa.org/education/NFPA2019)
- Don’t Fire Up the Grill Just Yet-Barbeque Fire Safety Tips; 411 Information Please-Puro Clean, Vol. 18 No. 4
- Railroad Crossing Safety Campaign. “STOP: Trains Can’t”- NHTSA
- Dept. of Transportation Agencies Relaunch Grade Crossing Campaign-Occupational Health & Safety, 4/22/19

Distribution of these articles was encouraged within each individual Entity to continue the safety culture.

**Claim PAR Committee:** In addition to the report submitted, Committee Chairman Trojan reported that the Committee met telephonically on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and details of the telephone meeting will be discussed during Closed Session.

**Claim Audit Committee:** Committee Chairman Brian Auger indicated that a report and summary of the July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting is included in the package.

To further elaborate on the findings, Normand Vermette of Alan Gray, LLC addressed the Fund Members. He explained that random samples of the four lines of coverage were taken to determine if the claims were being handled pursuant to the Industry Standard Best Practices. Mr. Vermette was pleased to inform that the claims reviewed fell within the Industry Standard Best Practices and he attributed these positive findings to the cooperation between the Claims Administrator, the Fund and NJRM. He is positive that the new changes and new vendors will definitely continue the positive trend and excellent results in keeping the number of exposures down.

**#19-032 RESOLUTION APPROVING SERVICE PROVIDER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

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

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	BRIAN D. LEVINE	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	DONALD HUTCHINS	X			
TOBW	LISA CARAVELA	X			
TOC	CARLA CONNER	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BOR	DANIEL JAXEL	X			
BHB	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			

**OLD BUSINESS**

**#19-031 RESOLUTION RATIFYING PAYMENT OF EXPENSES & CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS PAID IN JUNE 2019:**

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

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	BRIAN D. LEVINE	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	DONALD HUTCHINS	X			
TOBW	LISA CARAVELA	X			
TOC	CARLA CONNER	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BOR	DANIEL JAXEL	X			
BHB	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			

**#19-033 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CURRENT EXPENSES & CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENTS:**

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

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	BRIAN D. LEVINE	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	DONALD HUTCHINS	X			
TOBW	LISA CARAVELA	X			
TOC	CARLA CONNER	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BOR	DANIEL JAXEL	X			
BHB	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			

**NEW BUSINESS**

**#19-034 RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE AMENDED BUDGET FOR THE 2019 FUND YEAR:**

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

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	BRIAN D. LEVINE	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	DONALD HUTCHINS	X			
TOBW	LISA CARAVELA	X			
TOC	CARLA CONNER	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BOR	DANIEL JAXEL	X			
BHB	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			

**#19-035 RESOLUTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION AT 9:23 A.M. TO DISCUSS:**

Workers' Compensation Claim:

- X84850
- Z07657
- Z23844
- 2017092802
- 2018129687
- 2019150003
- 2019168436
- 2019174748

General Liability Claim:

- Z12790

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

**MOTION TO RETURN TO REGULAR MEETING AT 9:40 A.M.:**

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

**#19-036 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:**

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

ROLL CALL VOTE					
COMMISSIONER		YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
COS	BRIAN D LEVINE	X			
SCPC	GEOFFREY D. SORIANO	X			
RVCC	JOHN TROJAN	X			
SCVT	RAELENE SIPPLE			X	
TOB	GREGORY BONIN	X			
SCLC	BRIAN AUGER	X			
TOGB	KELLY G. CUPIT	X			
TOR	DONALD HUTCHINS	X			
TOBW	LISA CARAVELA	X			
TOC	CARLA CONNER	X			
TOD	DIANE Mc DANIEL	X			
BOR	DANIEL JAXEL	X			
BHB	MICHAEL PAPPAS	X			

**MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 CLOSED SESSION:**

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

Maryjane Hydro, NRM reminded all Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners that at the conclusion of the Meeting, all the new WC forms will be distributed electronically. Packages containing hard copy samples, along with quantities of the posters in English and Spanish will be sent to the Workers' Compensation (designated) Representative at each Entity. These forms will also be posted on the SCJIF website as of 8/1/19.

Furthermore, all 2020 renewal applications have been distributed electronically. The submission deadline is August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Contact NJRM with any additional questions, comments or concerns.

NJRM is committed to making the upcoming transition as seamless as possible and if any Fund Member would like a visit to their office to explain the new SCJIF enhancements and work with their employees, please contact NJRM to arrange a mutually convenient time.

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

John Trojan, Secretary

