

GROUP INSURANCE COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, March 2, 2023
8:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

Meeting held remotely through online audio-video platform (ZOOM), accessible
through YouTube

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

NUMBER: Six hundred seventy-three
DATE: March 2, 2023
TIME: 8:30 a.m.
PLACE: The Meeting was held virtually

Commissioners Present:

VALERIE SULLIVAN (Chair, Public Member)

BOBBI KAPLAN (Vice Chair, NAGE)

MATTHEW GORZKOWICZ (Secretary of Administration and Finance) Designee: Undersecretary
Catharine Hornby

GARY ANDERSON (Commissioner of Insurance) Designee: Rebecca Butler

ELIZABETH CHABOT (NAGE)

ADAM CHAPDELAIN (Massachusetts Municipal Association)

EDWARD T. CHOATE (Public Member)

TAMARA P. DAVIS (Public Member)

JANE EDMONDS (Retiree)

JOSEPH GENTILE (AFL-CIO, Public Safety Member)

GERZINO GUIRAND (Council 93, AFSCME, AFL-CIO)

PATRICIA JENNINGS (Public Member)

EILEEN P. MCANNENY (Public Member)

MELISSA MURPHY-RODRIGUES (Massachusetts Municipal Association)

ANNA SINAICO, Ph.D. (Health Economist)

TIMOTHY D. SULLIVAN (Massachusetts Teachers Association)

Commissioners Absent:

CHRISTINE HAYES CLINARD, ESQ. (Public Member)

Call to Order

Chair Valerie Sullivan called the Meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The Chair recognized the commissioners in attendance and turned the meeting over to Executive Director Matthew Veno who reviewed the agenda. After doing this, the Executive Director turned the meeting back to the Chair who called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

I. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Kaplan moved to approve the February 16, 2023 meeting minutes, as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Chabot. A roll call vote was taken by GIC General Counsel Andrew Stern and passed unanimously by the members voting.

II. Executive Director's Report

The Chair turned the meeting over to the Executive Director to discuss the Executive Director's Report. The Executive Director touched on a few items contained in the written report such as an HR update on the hybrid work model still being employed by the GIC as well as the summary of the communications efforts leading up to annual enrollment. He then opened the floor to questions.

The Chair asked for a brief overview of the training that the Operations team has been engaged in. The Executive Director described customer-service skills training for the operations staff as well as upcoming trainings on new tools the GIC has developed to assist members.

The Executive Director then reviewed the remainder of the projected 2023 calendar. The Vice Chair asked how the annual enrollment sessions would be messaged to members as well as whether the sessions would be recorded and viewable by anyone who missed the sessions. Chief of Staff Emily Williams replied that emails would be going out within the week and that the GIC was partnering with HRD and Mass Retirees to make sure that the communication reached both of their populations effectively. Additionally, any members already enrolled in the MyGICLink portal could find more information about the sessions there, as well as on the GIC website. She noted that a complete summary of these efforts could be found in the

Executive Director's written report and that the recordings and materials from the sessions will be available on the GIC YouTube and website, respectively.

III. FY24 Subsidies and Rates (INFORM & VOTE)

After the Executive Director made some opening remarks, he turned the meeting over to the CFO, Jim Rust and Margaret Anshutz, Director of Health Policy and Analytics. The CFO began by outlining the topics of presentation: Dental/Vision Rates (which had been previously approved), Rates for the GIC Health Plans (required a vote), Proposed Subsidies for Elderly Government Employees (required a vote), and a vote to approve the Municipal Administration Fee.

The CFO presented the slides of FY24 rates for the MetLife Dental and Davis Vision plans. This is the third year of the contract and there are no changes to the benefits. He then opened the floor to questions. There being none, the CFO moved on to review the rate stabilization reserve allocation for Elderly Government Retirees (EGRs) and their survivors. He noted that historically the GIC has used funds previously contributed by EGR members through the EGR program to reduce the premiums for these members. There are sufficient funds in the reserve program to achieve no premium changes for the EGRs in FY24. He reviewed the expected net monthly premium for EGRs for FY24 and opened the floor to questions. Commissioner McAnney asked the size of the EGR population. The CFO confirmed that there are five such members. There being no other questions, the Chair called for a motion to approve spending from The Elderly Government Retirees (EGRs) rate stabilization and CIC reserves to reduce the Fiscal Year 2024 premiums as presented. The motion was made by Vice Chair Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Chabot. A roll call vote was taken by GIC General Counsel Andrew Stern and passed unanimously by the members present.

The Chair turned the meeting back to the CFO to introduce the FY24 Health Plan Rates review. The CFO then turned the meeting over to Ms. Anshutz. She reviewed what would be presented during the meeting and went over the timeline of the actions that brought the GIC to this point. There was discussion around premium contribution levels for the different segments of the GIC population. Ms. Anshutz reviewed the definitions of terms that would be used during the presentation as well as providing background of what was driving the rate increases and noted that the individual plans were variably. Ms. Anshutz advised that it was very important that members take the time to shop around the plans this year to make sure they are signing up with a plan that best serves their financial needs. Discussion continued around the range of plan pricing and Ms. Anshutz expanded on the wide variety of factors that were driving the rate changes for the different plans. She then went on to reviewing the

rates by carrier for both individual and family plans. The Chair clarified with Director of Operations Paul Murphy that COBRA members can adjust their plans during Annual Enrollment to potentially reduce their premiums.

Ms. Anshutz presented a slide showing the complete Non-Medicare Full Cost Premiums for the Commissioners prior to their vote on the same. She also reviewed the Non-Medicare Member Contributions. The floor was opened to questions or comments on the data presented. It was suggested that in future, rates could be shown bi-weekly rather than monthly, as well as shown in comparison to the previous year's rate. Several Commissioners expressed concern about the rise of premiums and the financial burden it places on members. The Chair and several Commissioners thanked the GIC staff for their work on the procurement process. Ms. Anshutz then reviewed the Medicare costs and contributions.

There being no other questions, the Chair called for a motion to approve the recommended Fiscal Year 2024 full cost premiums as presented. The motion was made by Commissioner Choate and seconded by Commissioner McAnneny. A roll call vote was taken by GIC General Counsel and passed with 9 Ayes and 6 Nays, with two Commissioners absent for the vote.

At this time, the Executive Director turned the meeting back over to the CFO to review the final item of the Municipal Administrative Fee presentation and approval. The CFO explained that this is the fee set by the GIC for the municipalities to support the cost incurred by the GIC to administer this benefits program. The fee during FY23 was 0.3% of the full cost premium and the request for FY24 was that the fee remain unchanged. By statute, the GIC is authorized to charge up to 1% of premium as an administrative fee. The CFO was asked what the GIC was doing to increase the number of municipalities that enroll with the GIC. He noted that there was a concerted effort by various staff at the GIC to increase municipal enrollment but that ultimately the municipalities had to make the decision.

The Chair called for a motion to authorize the GIC to set the Fiscal Year 2024 Municipal Administrative fee at 0.3% of the full cost premiums as presented. The motion was made by Vice Chair Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Davis. A roll call vote was taken by GIC General Counsel and passed unanimously by the members present.

IV. Other Business and Adjournment

The Executive Director thanked the Commission for their attention during the extensive presentation. The Chair thanked the Commissioners, the GIC staff, and those at Willis Towers Watson for all the work done on the procurement process. She also encouraged

everyone to become involved in the Annual Enrollment process this year, both in communicating with members and in learning more about the health plans being offered. The Executive Director then acknowledged and thanked Administration and Finance Undersecretary Catharine Hornby for her many years of public service, prior to her final day with the Commonwealth on March 3, 2023.

There being no other business, the Chair concluded the agenda and noted as there was no further business, she adjourned the Meeting at 10:10 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew A. Veno
Executive Director