

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority Thursday, May 13, 2021

Participating Voting Members: Easha Canada, Daryle Dudzinski, Fran Pastore, Paul Potamianos, John Scott, Michael Soltis, Glendowlyn Thames, Henry Zaccardi, Justin Zartman

Participating Nonvoting Members: Eva Bermudez Zimmerman, Alex Marcellino

Absent: Adrienne Cochrane, Josh Geballe, Sal Luciano, Molly Weston Williamson

CT Paid Leave Staff: Andrea Barton Reeves, Erin Choquette, Michael Cisar, Andrea Comer, Laure Dickson, Kris Floyd, Amber Forrest, Walter Hay, Dave Marcone, Loc Pho

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Fran Pastore, Board Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

Amber Forrest took attendance of the Board members by roll call and verified the existence of a quorum.

Fran Pastore acknowledged the members of the public attending the meeting.

2. Review and approval of the [April 8, 2021 Board meeting minutes](#)

Fran Pastore asked the members of the Board to consider adopting the drafted [April 8, 2021 Board meeting minutes](#).

John Scott motioned the adoption and Daryle Dudzinski seconded that motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Review and approval of the [April 28, 2021 Board special meeting minutes](#)

Fran Pastore asked the members of the Board to consider adopting the drafted [April 28, 2021 Board special meeting minutes](#).

John Scott motioned the adoption and Paul Potamianos seconded that motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Review of the draft RFP for actuarial services to monitor the solvency of the Paid Leave Trust Fund

Andrea Barton Reeves summarized the draft RFP for actuarial services, noting that she had not received any edits or suggestions after sharing the draft with each of the individual board members. Andrea Barton Reeves reported that the Authority is seeking actuarial services to monitor the solvency of the trust fund, and sufficient reserves, so the contribution rate can be lowered when possible.

5. Vote to approve the draft RFP for actuarial services to be posted for response

Fran Pastore asked the Board to make a motion to approve the Draft RFP for actuarial services to monitor the Authority's solvency of the trust fund, to be posted for response on the State's procurement website.

Paul Potamianos motioned, and John Scott seconded that motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Contribution Portal Project / Outreach & Engagement Updates

Kris Floyd provided a report on the registration and contribution portal project. Key highlights included:

- 109,722 businesses registered
- \$101,087,806 Contributions received as of 5/10/21
- 1,271/1,212 are TPA/Tax accountants registered
- Private plan applications received as of 5/12/21: 309
 - Approved 284
 - Denied 8
 - Submitted 4
 - Under Review 7
 - Withdrawn 6

Kris Floyd also reported on the ChatBot functionality and current planning for implementation, noting the chatbot will provide self-service for users. Additionally, the Authority's internal team is actively engaged in kickoff and discovery work with the selected Third-Party Administrator for Claims Administration.

Andrea Comer provided an update on outreach and engagement efforts to date. Highlights included:

- Uptick in April of returning visitors to the paid leave website
- Events
 - May 3rd CT Paid Leave Milestone Press Conference, celebrating 104,000 registrants and contributions exceeding expectations per the actuarial analysis.
 - Andrea Barton Reeves' participation in a webinar with Fairfield County Community Foundation on the 'Myths and Facts of Paid Leave,' which was well received.
 - Webinar partnership with SCORE Southeastern Connecticut.

Andrea Comer also noted that soon a mailer will be going out to unregistered business to let them know the Authority is here to help and can provide the tools they will need to help them succeed.

7. Committee Reports

- **Policy & Personnel**

Henry Zaccardi reported that the Policy and Personnel Committee did not meet this month because no comments had been received to date on the proposed changes to the Plan of Operations and there were no other major policy or personnel matters to discuss.

- **Outreach & Engagement Committee**

Andrea Barton Reeves stated that the Outreach and Engagement Committee did not have anything to report other than the information that Andrea Comer had provided and asked the board if anyone had any additional questions on the outreach and engagement update.

- **Finance & Audit Committee**

Paul Potamianos reported that the Finance and Audit Committee met in April to review the budget review of spending to date, a review of the updated draft budgets for fiscal year June 30, 2022 and received an update on the RFP for Audit Services.



Dave Marcone introduced two new Finance members of the Authority, Assistant Controller, Loc Pho, and Contribution Accountant, Walter Hay, both who joined the CT Paid Leave team last week. Paul Potamianos noted that the board is appreciative of the added staff.

Dave Marcone reported on the Authority's financials, highlighting on the \$102,207,904 received in contributions through the end of April. The Authority is projected to be ahead of budget for fiscal year-end June 30, 2021 by \$8M, noting the main reason is due to the use of bond funds which has been less than budgeted. He also provided an update on the use of bond funds noting that the Authority was approved for an additional \$5,250,001. The allocations are as follows:

- \$1.8M to complete needed work to move the employee contribution system to final product.
- \$3.3M for the benefits claims system.
- \$150,000 In partnership with Business One Stop, to add ChatBot features to the website.

Dave Marcone provided the board with an Audit RFP update, noting that the Authority selected a vendor, and that selected vendor has accepted. The Authority is currently in contract negotiations with them and is planning the timeline and expectations for the audit of fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

In response to a question from Eva Bermudez Zimmerman about the estimated costs associated with the Chatbot, Andrea Barton Reeves stated that the \$150,000 is an initial fee, which may be less as the \$150K was only an estimate and also noted that a portion of the ChatBot was purchased by the state which plans to use it for multiple agencies. Andrea Barton Reeves also acknowledged that the Authority would continue to monitor the costs but does not foresee the ChatBot as being a significant IT cost.

In response to a question from Paul Potamianos, Dave Marcone stated that the books for fiscal year-end June 30, 2021 are expected to be closed between the end of July and early August, noting that the goal is to have the audited financials completed by September 30, 2021.

8. CEO Report

Andrea Barton Reeves asked Erin Choquette to introduce the new Associate General Counsel, Michael Cisar.

Andrea Barton Reeves thanked Justin Zartman and Daryle Dudzinski for their attendance at the May 3, 2021 press conference as well as all the board members who joined virtually.

She commented on small business outreach, reporting that the Authority will be launching a campaign to focus on the needs of small businesses which will provide education and support as well as a general landscape of their legal obligations. The Authority has undertaken several successful outreach efforts with HR professionals, including a core group of these professionals the Authority is actively working with which are providing feedback.

She also thanked the Office of Policy and Management, and Department of Labor for the great work they have done aiding the Authority with the grievance and appeals process, noting that through their extensive partnership, all are working together to create a process that is fair and equitable.

Andrea Barton Reeves also commented on hiring, noting that as the Authority's team will continue to grow, through the transition of working with Slalom, contribution reconciliations, and private plan oversight. On the category of non-compliant employers, the Authority knows that at some point they will have to begin collections of contributions and that they have been working on a process with DAS.

In response to a question from Mike Soltis, Andrea Barton Reeves reported that the updated actuarial report will be done within the next 2-3 weeks.

Mike Soltis asked if the Authority has been following the progress of Federal PFML and asked if it would be at the program's advantage to monitor closely and do a preliminary analysis.

Andrea Barton Reeves shared a comparison chart that she drafted (attached) noting that the Authority is monitoring the bill but there is little known at this time.

Eva Bermudez Zimmerman asked if the Authority has a breakdown of employers that have not registered by geography and demographics, with a particular question about Spanish and Arabic speaking employers.

Andrea Barton Reeves noted that the Authority is capturing employer's geography, size, and industry but not language, adding that when employees begin applying for leave, they plan to ask for information about languages. The Authority is comparing data received from DOL with the employers that have registered for PFML so the Authority may identify the geography of businesses that need to be contacted for assistance.

Andrea Comer added that the Authority has partnered with several grass-roots groups including SAMA, BBA, SCBC and other community-based organizations but is also looking to connect with those organizations not associated with chambers and community groups.

9. Old Business

None

10. New Business

Fran Pastore recognized the entire team, stating she is "Impressed with the work and cohesion of the team."

11. Adjournment

Fran Pastore asked the board for a motion to adjourn. John Scott motioned, and Justin Zartman seconded that motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:56 am.