

# MINUTES

## METROPOLITAN EMPLOYEE BENEFIT BOARD

### STUDY & FORMULATING COMMITTEE

**December 14, 2020**

The Study & Formulating Committee met on Monday, December 14, 2020 at approximately 9:03 a.m. This meeting took place via teleconference.

Committee Members present: Chair: Cleophis D. Rucker; Vice-Chair Richard Chapman; Committee Members: Nick Brassell, and Kim Stagg.

Benefit Board Members present: Shannon B. Hall

Other(s) present: Christina Hickey, Metro Human Resources, and Nicki Eke and Macy Amos, Metro Legal Department.

**Christina Hickey called the meeting to order and stated that the first order of business will be to have roll call for the Committee to establish a quorum.**

**Christina Hickey stated that under the Governor's Executive Order #65 each time a Committee member, staff or other participant who is using audio only participation wishes to speak he or she shall identify themselves in a manner reasonably calculated to permit the public to ascertain the identity of the person speaking. She also stated that all votes during the meeting shall be conducted by roll call.**

**Christina Hickey stated that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the Governor issued Executive Order #16 extended by Executive Orders #34, #51, #60 and #65 authorizing Committee's to meet and conduct their essential business by electronic means if the Committee determines that meeting electronically is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of Tennesseans in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. She also stated that before considering items on the agenda the Committee needs to determine by a roll call vote that the meeting agenda constitutes essential business of the Committee and meeting electronically is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of Tennesseans in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.**

**The Committee members were in agreement to have the meeting electronically.**

Nicki Eke, Legal Department, stated that she will be leaving the meeting early due to another Board meeting and Macy Amos, Legal Department, will be in attendance for the whole meeting.

Macy Amos reminded the Committee members that if any Committee members have any materials they would like to provide to the other members of the Committee to provide it to Christina Hickey and she will then distribute the materials to the other Committee members for future discussion at a publicly noticed open meeting.

1. Presentation by Councilmember Sharon Hurt to include ECC 911 in Police/Fire pension plan.

Councilmember Sharon Hurt and Stephen Martini, Department of Emergency Communications, (DEC), were present and addressed the Committee regarding inclusion of ECC/911 in the Police & Fire pension plan. Ms. Hurt discussed turnover in the department, the fact that they are front line workers, the extensive call taking training they receive in addition to dispatch and CPR.

Stephen Martini, (DEC), reviewed some national stats regarding 911 workers as a part of public safety.

Brad Rayson, Service Employees International Union, (SEIU), stated that the union has been in support of these workers being included in the police & fire pension plan.

There was some discussion that this has been considered by a prior Study & Formulating Committee before but did not advance.

1. Presentation by Councilmember Sharon Hurt to include ECC 911 in Police/Fire pension plan. (continued)

There was some discussion regarding the cost to the plan, having this costed, the turnover rate and the work environment.

There was some discussion regarding the studies done that supported the correctional officers being added to the police & fire pension plan.

There was also some discussion of the physical impact and long term effects of this job.

After some discussion of getting additional information and having this item costed, Nick Brassell moved to study the impact of having the ECC/911 employees included in the police & fire pension plan. Richard Chapman seconded and the Committee approved without objection.

Kim Stagg moved that additional information be provided by Councilmember Hurt and Mr. Martini related to the effects of 911 calls. Richard Chapman seconded and the Committee approved without objection.

There was some discussion regarding the process after this Committee makes its final report and that the Benefit Board can accept, reject or modify recommendations from the Committee.

2. BCBS PPO out of pocket discussion.

Kelley Lewis, Deloitte, stated that this is a follow up discussion from the last meeting regarding the out of pocket maximum. She stated that in regards to the questions concerning member impact and possibly adding a deductible instead of amending the Code 26% in single coverage met or exceeded the out of pocket maximum and 15% in family coverage met or exceeded the out of pocket maximum. She also stated that the intent for a Code change is to remove the specific amount of the out of pocket maximum from the Code which would allow the Benefit Board more flexibility and control of the PPO plan. Ms. Lewis stated that PPO plans with zero deductibles are almost non-existent and are not common among Metro's peer cities who still offer a PPO. She reviewed ways that employers are managing plan costs and Metro's medical plans costs to other cities.

Angela Watts, Deloitte, reviewed the projected contributions if no change is made now and stated that the cost of health coverage will continue to erode employees wages. She also discussed the workforce insights survey results that showed interest in a lower cost plan and average gross compensation for employees under certain thresholds. Ms. Watts reviewed the recommendation again which is to remove/amend the Code language regarding the out of pocket maximum for the PPO coverage. She also stated that without a recommendation from this current Committee it will be another 5 years before the next Study and Formulating Committee is convened before the Benefit Board may have the ability to make changes to ensure the PPO plan remains affordable for all member.

There was some discussion regarding if co-pays count towards the out of pocket maximum, cost of living adjustments, step increases and having different employee contribution rates and co-pays based on salary.

The Committee discussed this Code language and concluded that this Committee can make a recommendation to the Benefit Board regarding it as it is outdated and needs to be changed/amended to give the Benefit Board flexibility regarding changes.

3. PTSD update as requested by the Committee.

Steve Cain, Human Resources, reviewed a few of the mental health support options available to all Metro employees, which includes the departments that were mentioned in the questions regarding PTSD and the services provided to those employees. He stated there is the Employee Assistance Program, (EAP), which is Metro wide and available to all Metro employees and immediate family members at no cost to the employee. He also stated that services are provided by the medical plans as well on an inpatient or outpatient basis. He stated that in addition to these services some are also offered by certain departments. He stated that the Fire Department has a peer support program which helps to assist in

3. PTSD update as requested by the Committee. (continued)

providing support in navigating resources. He stated that the Police Department has the Police Advocacy Support Services, (PASS), now referred to as the Police Department Professional Wellness Section and the Sheriff's Office utilizes the EAP program and the Police Departments wellness division in addition to them ramping up their own retention and wellness program. He also stated the Department of Emergency Communications, (DEC), also use the Police Departments wellness division and EAP.

Mark Young brought up the issue of injury on duty leave being granted to employees while seeking treatment or counseling.

Shannon Hall reiterated that injury on duty time off is governed by Civil Service and the Civil Service rules give that authority to the departments and this is not under the jurisdiction of this Committee or the Benefit Board. She also stated that there is a legal standard when it comes to psychological job related injury claims that was not created by the Benefit Board or Human Resources. It was noted that staff is willing to work with Mr. Young to evaluate this for potential options.

There was discussion regarding employees that are seeking treatment and using their time, and the departments waiting on a determination regarding whether or not it is considered injury on duty.

4. Overview of items presented at Study & Formulating Committee.

Christina Hickey reviewed the items studied by the Committee thus far. She informed the Committee that the goal is to have two meetings in January and one in February in order to gather recommendations for the Committee's final report, which has to be issued and required no later than February 18th. She stated that final report will contain the recommendations made by the Committee on the items reviewed or no recommendations. She also suggested that the Committee request any costs related to the items studied thus far.

The Committee discussed a possible cost of living adjustment inclusion on the PPO out of pocket maximum, expanding the pharmacy benefit structure and financial wellness.

Cleophis Rucker moved to request costing on items 1-4; 1) removing language in the Code specifying the PPO plans out of pocket maximum; 2) offering Metro pensioners a group Medicare Advantage plan as their only option and remove the employer group waiver plan language from the Code; 3) central safety office within Human Resources; 4) review current pension practices and costing expanding the pharmacy benefit structure.

There was some discussion regarding costing item 1 – removing the Code language specifying the PPO plans out of pocket maximum, a structured approach/other options besides removing it and cost shifting.

Richard Chapman seconded the motion and the Committee approved without objection. It was noted that Kim Stagg was in support of a more structured approach to the PPO plan out of pocket maximum.

There was some discussion on the topic of offering a lower cost plan and adverse selection. It was also noted that this is currently being discussed with the Benefit Board.

There was some discussion regarding the costing on removal of the Code language as that can be challenging and that a prior Study and Formulating Committee did consider other plan design structures and does not necessarily need a recommendation on that issue.

After deliberation on the recommended costings from the Committee, the motion was amended to have costing done for planned adjustments to the out of pocket maximum through 2027 in addition to the cost shifting. Richard Chapman was in agreement with the amendment. After it was clarified that this costing would be for going forward the Committee approved the amended motion without objection.

With nothing further presented, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

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***Ms. Shannon B. Hall, Director  
Human Resources***

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***Cleophis D. Rucker, Chair  
Study & Formulating Committee***