

**Operations Committee  
Minutes – Approved  
November 30, 2020 – 1:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom Conference Call**

Present: Lisa Holmes, Tompkins County; Judy Drake, Town of Ithaca; Sunday Earle, TC3; Chris Wagner, Seneca County; Mark Emerson, Town of Mentz; Gary Mutchler, Town of Scipio; Schelley Michell-Nunn (arrived at 1:07 p.m.), City of Ithaca; Ed Fairbrother, Town of Big Flats; Doug Perine, Tompkins County White Collar President  
Excused: Mike Catalano, City of Cortland; Luann King, Town of Cincinnatus  
Staff: Elin Dowd, Executive Director; Andrew Braman, Jessica Hobart, Tompkins County Finance Department; Michelle Cocco, Clerk of the Board

**Call to Order**

Ms. Holmes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

**Changes to the Agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes of October 26, 2020**

It was MOVED by Mr. Mutchler, seconded by Mr. Fairbrother, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of October 26, 2020 as corrected. MINUTES APPROVED.

**Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Dowd said at the last meeting the Committee had a discussion and recommended approval of a policy committing the Consortium to equity and anti-racism. Since that time, she has attended webinars and has become better-educated on this and wanted to raise it again with this Committee to ensure the Consortium's commitment which includes this being an ongoing agenda item. She said the conversations can include what individuals should be doing as members of the Consortium to support this through things such as hiring and membership on committees. It could also be as large as knowing that structural racism exists in the insurance industry and what should the Consortium be doing to eliminate that, including providing equitable opportunities.

Ms. Holmes agreed it is a call to action which could be very global or very local. She supports and appreciates Ms. Dowd's willingness to move this forward and bring it before the Committee on a regular basis.

Ms. Michell-Nunn arrived at this time.

Ms. Dowd provided an update on the proposed committee structure for 2021. She highlighted the following:

- The Executive Committee membership has increased and will have broad representation from Tompkins, Seneca, Chemung, Cayuga, and Cortland Counties.
- The size of the Operations Committee will be reduced.

- The Nominations and Engagement Committee will include a labor representative and will have more responsibilities than in the past to engage Directors. They will also assist in developing subject matter for the Annual Board of Directors meeting.
- The Claims and Appeals Committee will meet more often and will assume the responsibility of claims audits from the Audit and Finance Committee.
- There will be no changes to the Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design.

Mr. Fairbrother spoke of the importance of getting committees diversified and making sure new counties are represented.

#### Consortium Staffing Plan

Ms. Dowd provided the Committee with a presentation on a proposed 2021 Consortium staffing plan. She noted the growth since the Consortium began in 2011 from 13 to 49 Participants, an increase in contracts from 2,000 to 2,943, and increase in subscribers from 4,400 to 6,400, and an increase in revenue from \$20 million to \$55 million. She said what started as a shared service to give a break on health insurance is now a complex, self-funded health insurance organization. She provided examples of complex reporting requirements by the Department of Financial Services.

Mr. Mutchler called attention to the disproportionate increase in the revenue compared to the increase in subscribers and asked for an explanation. Ms. Dowd said not only does the revenue increase with the number of subscribers and contracts, it also increases as a result of premium increases to keep up with the cost of claims expense which is related to the rising cost of health care.

Ms. Dowd reported on the proposed staffing plan that would include: Executive Director, Clerk of the Board, Finance Manager, and a Benefits Specialist. She informed the Committee that Debra Meeker who was in the position of Administrative/Computer Assistant, is no longer with the organization. Also, Michelle Cocco will be transitioning from Tompkins County to work for the Consortium full-time. There are no plans at this time to fill the Administrative/Computer Assistant position.

Ms. Dowd asked for support from the Committee to approve the positions of Finance Manager and Benefits Specialist; the Audit and Finance Committee will be asked to support funding for these positions with Board of Directors action requested on December 17<sup>th</sup>. She stated Tompkins County would remain involved with the Finance Manager; however, in the first year the accounting responsibilities would begin to be transferred to the Consortium. The cash management, investment management, annual audits and DFS reporting would remain with the County for at least the first two years while the transition is evaluated. Locey and Cahill would continue to perform more of the consultant role instead of staff member type work. She provided an overview of the responsibilities of each of the positions and noted the total staffing cost would be less than \$400,000 annually. The cost comparison from 2020 to 2021 results in an increase in staffing from .55% of the budget to .68% of the budget.

In response to Mr. Mutchler as to whether there would be a decrease in the Locey and Cahill contract, Ms. Dowd said she does not expect there to be a change as it is expected they would return to working on more high value work and projects. Examples include going to the market and exploring new providers, looking at problems and focusing attention on specific issues, technical issues that arise during claims audits, working directly with Excellus, Article 47 compliance and complex questions that arise, as well looking at ways new members can change the cost composition of their premium to make it less expensive to a municipality.

There were no questions on the job descriptions as presented. Ms. Dowd noted they are Civil Service positions that have been supported by the Deputy Commissioner of the Human Resources at Tompkins County.

In response to Ms. Earle, Ms. Drake said there will be open recruitment for these positions and appointments made on a provisional basis. The intent is to start with the Finance Manager position; the Benefits Specialist position will follow later in the year.

**RESOLUTION NO. - 2020 – CREATION OF POSITIONS – FINANCE MANAGER AND BENEFITS SPECIALIST**

MOVED by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Fairbrother, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee has discussed the current and future staffing needs of the Consortium and supports the need to expand staff to be able to meet the needs of the organization, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium will grow to having 49 Participating members in 2021 from its original 13 when granted its Certificate of Authority in 2010, and

WHEREAS, in conjunction with consultants, Tompkins County has administered the Consortium's financial responsibilities, including accounting, billing, and financial reporting to the Department of Financial Services, since the Consortium began operations, and

WHEREAS, after an evaluation of the present and future needs of the Consortium, it is recommended that the Consortium create a position of Finance Manager and transition responsibilities from Tompkins County Finance to the Consortium, and

WHEREAS, as members are relying on the Consortium to provide more benefit information, plan comparisons, enrollment changes, assistance with claims, participant issues, negotiations material and COBRA information that previously was provided by their insurance agency, it is recommended that the Consortium create a position of Benefits Specialist, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Operations and Audit and Finance Committees, That the Board of Directors of GTCMHIC hereby creates the following positions in accordance with the applicable New York State and Tompkins County Civil Service rules:

The following position is established and is a position in the competitive class pursuant to Section 44 of the Civil Service Law:

- 1-(One) –Finance Manager
- 1-(One) –Benefits Specialist

RESOLVED, further, That the Board of Directors does hereby approve the job descriptions for the said positions as created and monitored by Tompkins County Civil Service.

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**RESOLUTION NO. - 2020 – AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SIGN ON  
BEHALF OF THE CONSORTIUM**

MOVED by Mr. Mutchler, seconded by Mr. Mutchler.

Ms. Dowd explained that upon reviewing current practices and the various approval processes that are in place, as well as there now being an Executive Director who can sign documents on behalf of the organization, she and the Clerk of the Board believe the proposed resolution will allow for a more streamlined and less cumbersome process. There were no questions or concerns raised. The resolution was unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present.

WHEREAS, the Chair of the Board has traditionally signed all contracts on behalf of the Consortium, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium has a Procurement Policy in place with a formal review process of recommending all contracts for approval prior to signing, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium has an Executive Director to act on behalf of the Consortium as its Administrator, and in the interests of expediency and efficiency, should also have authority to sign documents on behalf of the Consortium, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, on recommendation of the Operations Committee, That the Executive Director will be authorized to sign contract renewals excluding contracts related to the Consortium's Third Party Administrators or initial contracts following an RFP (Request for Proposals) process.

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**Meeting Schedule**

The Committee scheduled its regular meeting date and time to be the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every other month at 1 p.m.

**Future Discussion Topics**

The following items will be included in the next agenda:

- Contract Renewals – looking at the practice of establishing contract terms and also at which contracts and when to issue a Request for Proposals; and
- Business Continuity Plan Update

**Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was set for January 25<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:47 p.m.