

**Public Employees Benefits Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**

March 9, 2023  
Health Care Authority  
Sue Crystal Rooms A & B  
Olympia, Washington  
9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

The Briefing Book with the complete presentations and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at:

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program/meetings-and-materials>.

**Members Present in Olympia**

Sue Birch, Chair  
Michaela Doelman

**Members Present via Zoom**

Kurt Spiegel  
Elyette Weinstein  
Tom MacRobert  
Monica McLemore  
John Comerford  
Harry Bossi

**Members Absent**

None

**SEB Board Counsel**

Michael Tunick, AAG

**Call to Order**

**Sue Birch, Chair**, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Sufficient members were present for a quorum. Board members and the public were able to attend either in person or virtually via Zoom.

**Meeting Overview**

**David Iseminger**, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided an overview of the agenda.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes for 2022 Season**

Tom MacRobert moved, and Harry Bossi seconded a motion to approve the March 10, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Monica McLemore, Kurt Spiegel, and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Elyette Weinstein moved, and Tom MacRobert seconded a motion to approve the April 14, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Monica McLemore, Kurt Spiegel, and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Harry Bossi moved, and Elyette Weinstein seconded a motion to approve the May 12, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Monica McLemore, Kurt Spiegel, and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Tom MacRobert moved, and Monica McLemore seconded a motion to approve the June 9, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Kurt Spiegel and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Elyette Weinstein moved, and Tom MacRobert seconded a motion to approve the June 30, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Kurt Spiegel and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Harry Bossi moved, and Monica McLemore seconded a motion to approve the July 14, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Kurt Spiegel and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

Elyette Weinstein moved, and Tom MacRobert seconded a motion to approve the July 20, 2022 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved as written by unanimous vote. Kurt Spiegel and Michaela Doelman abstained from voting.

### **February Retreat Follow Up**

**David Iseminger**, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided some follow up items in response to inquiries brought forth during the February PEB Board Retreat. Responses included clarifying the term “action” under the Open Public Meetings Act as it relates to Board member communications, and insights on how preferred provider networks are established for plans.

### **By-laws Amendment**

**David Iseminger**, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, presented for final Board action a proposed amendment to the PEB Board by-laws memorializing historic practices related to opportunities for public testimony during Board. Elyette Weinstein moved, and Michaela Doelman seconded a motion to approve. The following members of the public provided comments related to the by-laws amendment: Amy Fortier, Fred Yancey, and Aruna Bhuta; their testimonies in support of the amendment can be found in the audio recording for the March 9, 2023 PEB Board meeting at the link provided on page 1 of these minutes. Seven members voted to approve, and no members opposed. The PEB Board by-laws amendment passed.

### **Legislative Update**

**Cade Walker**, Policy, Rules, and Compliance Section Manager, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided an update on relevant bills moving in legislative session. Requested legislation and topical bills were discussed.

### **PEBB Program Financial Insights**

**Molly Christie**, Fiscal Analyst, Financial Services Division (FSD), shared information regarding financial aspects of the PEBB Program. Updates included annual total costs, monthly medical contribution breakdown, cost drivers, and notable service trends for Medicare and non-Medicare populations. Also included in the presentation was information regarding the non-Medicare risk profile, and total spending trend for the PEBB Program.

### **Hearing Instrument Benefits Overview**

**Sara Whitley**, ERB Finance Manager, Financial Services Division (FSD), provided an introductory overview on hearing instruments and coverage in the PEBB Program. The overview included evolution of the benefit in recent years, the current level of coverage in the PEBB Program's Uniform Medical Plan (UMP), information on significant increases in benefit utilization highlights since 2021, and describing an opportunity for a future purchasing strategy adjustment in UMP.

### **Medicare Update**

**Ellen Wolfhagen**, Senior Account Manager, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, gave an update on work within the PEBB Program's Medicare portfolio. Topics for Ellen's presentation included updates on the open enrollment issue that occurred with UnitedHealthcare (UHC) files, comments submitted to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on their Medicare Advantage (MA) plan proposed rules, and information on the retiree listening session pilot and upcoming schedule of listening session.

### **Policy and Rules Development**

**Stella Ng**, Policy and Rules Coordinator, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, introduced two new policy resolutions to the Board:

- PEBB 2023-01 – When a subscriber has a change in residence that affects medical plan availability
- PEBB 2023-02 – When a subscriber is involuntarily terminated by a Medicare Advantage (MA) or Medicare Advantage-Prescription Drug (MA-PD) plan.

Stakeholders will be consulted before the next Board meeting and action on these resolutions is planned for the April Board meeting.

### **General Public Comment**

The following members of the public provided comments:

- Helen Shawcroft
- Amy Fortier
- J. Smith
- Sally Holt
- Thesvy Cashen

Their testimonies can be found in the audio recording for the March 9, 2023 PEB Board meeting at:

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/public-employees-benefits-board-pebb-program/meetings-and-materials>.

**Next Meeting**

April 13, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Preview of April 13, 2023 PEB Board Meeting**

**Dave Iseminger**, Director, Employees and Retirees Benefits (ERB) Division, provided an overview of potential agenda topics for the April 13, 2023 PEB Board Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.