

**Alaska Health Care Commission**  
**TELECONFERENCE MINUTES**  
May 26, 2009

**Commission Members Present:** Jay Butler, Keith Campbell, Wayne Stevens, Ryan Smith, Jeff Davis, Wes Keller, Donny Olson, Linda Hall. (absent: Valerie Davidson, Larry Stinson)

**Additional Participants:** Deborah Erickson, Anna Kim, Jim Pound

The meeting was convened at 4:04 p.m. by Dr. Butler. A quorum of the voting members was established.

The group reviewed the 05-04-09 draft of the Vision & Values document and discussed the changes from the previous draft, which were all based on direction from the commission provided at the May 2 meeting. Most changes were made to emphasize the importance of ensuring a sound health care delivery system. An additional change modified the language related to the value of “personal responsibility” re-titling it “personal engagement”, and noting in the explanatory sentence that Alaskans are empowered to exercise personal responsibility for healthy living and for obtaining health care. Rep. Keller proposed one additional modification - to add the words “encouraged and” before empowered in the sentence. That change was approved by the group. Additionally, Ms. Hall pointed out the explanatory sentence for the health care reform component of “Access” was a little long and cumbersome. Revising that sentence to read “Access to affordable health care coverage and to a viable and vital health care delivery system is improved.” was suggested and approved. Mr. Campbell moved that the Vision & Values document, as amended, be approved. Dr. Butler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The group reviewed the changes made to the draft bylaws in the 05-22-09 version, which were based on direction from the commission also provided at the May 2 meeting. Under Article VII regarding parliamentary authority, the issue of absentee voting was intentionally left unstated, but a new Section C was added noting that meetings may be held via telecommunications and other electronic means. The group agreed that flexibility to meet and make decisions as expeditiously as possible needed to be maintained, especially considering the lack of resources to support the commission, and that individual members are responsible to make the decision regarding whether they have been present enough and feel sufficiently informed to make decisions and vote on issues over teleconference and e-mail.

The one other change that had been made was removal of the conflict of interest provision under the ethics article (Article VIII), which had been too restrictive as written in the previous draft. The idea to look into the language used by the Medical Board had been suggested, but the Medical Board has no bylaws and utilizes only the State Ethics Act and related guidelines from the Department of Law. Ms. Erickson provided new, less restrictive wording she had drafted in case the group still wanted to include some conflict of interest language beyond the ethics provision. Sen. Olson and Rep. Keller both pointed out the importance of always noting for the record any potential conflict of interest so that there is transparency in the processes and decisions of the commission. The group concurred, and after a brief discussion on clarifying questions, agreed to include the newly proposed conflict of interest section, added as a new Section B under Article VIII of the bylaws. The added Section reads:

## B) Conflict of Interest

1. A member of the commission who has a direct and substantial conflict of interest in an official action of the commission shall declare such interest on the record, and shall request to be excused from voting on such action.
2. Any person who believes that a member of the commission has a conflict of interest may so advise the Chair of the commission.
3. The Chair of the commission shall make a ruling regarding commission member ineligibility to vote on an issue due to conflict of interest. The ruling of the Chair may be overruled by a majority vote.

Mr. Campbell made a motion that the 05-22-09 draft of the bylaws, as amended, be approved. Dr. Butler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The group moved on to a discussion of the commission's annual report and plan outline, which was drafted by Ms. Erickson following the May 2 meeting. At that and the previous meeting she had provided a proposed draft planning process and timeline, but a clearer picture and agreement regarding the scope of the planning work the commission would be able to accomplish in the first year was needed to make the proposed timeline more meaningful. The group agreed that the 05-15-09 draft report/plan outline was very helpful in enabling them to conceptualize the work remaining for the year, and the tangible outcome they would have as a product at the end. The group discussed how this report could include a planning framework for a 5-year strategic plan, as well as an action plan for implementing 2009 policy recommendations and a work plan for the commission for 2010.

The meeting wrapped up with a discussion on national health care reform efforts, and the commission's next steps related to following and addressing those. The group noted that the weekly updates they've been provided are helpful, and agreed that there is an important role for the commission to play in informing the Governor's Office and Alaska's congressional delegation about potential impacts of reform proposals on Alaska. They decided it would be prudent to wait until legislation is drafted so that there are more specific proposals on which to focus, rather than spending time analyzing numerous options being considered by the various committees at this point. Committees in both houses are targeting mid-June for mark-up of legislation, and so the commission decided to hold its next teleconference in late June to discuss major components of emerging legislation and potential response.

Before the meeting adjourned there was a brief discussion on the need for evaluation benchmarks and measures, e.g., the need for medical inflation rate data for Alaska and the U.S. in order to measure the cost control component of the commission's vision and plan. Mr. Smith asked a question about availability of medical inflation data specific to Alaska, and Mr. Stevens pointed to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics website for Consumer Price Index for medical care data. Ms. Hall noted that CPI data is available for Anchorage, which provides the inflation factor data for adjusting Workman's Comp rates in Alaska. Ms. Erickson offered to follow-up with an e-mail providing links to this data tomorrow.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.