Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund Commission

**Open Minutes**

**October 7, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson J. Prontnicki at 9:32 a.m.

J. Prontnicki announced that in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, the specifics as to time and place of this meeting were sent to the Office of the Secretary of State and the Department of Personnel for filing and posted on the official bulletin boards provided by those offices for notice of public meetings. Also, notices were prepared for two newspapers to inform the public of this meeting.

Due to the state of emergency declared by Executive Order 103 (March 9, 2020) associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with P.L.2020, c.11. (allowing public bodies to conduct meetings, and provide notice, by electronic means during periods of emergency), this meeting was conducted through a combination of teleconference (for the open session) and video/teleconference (for the closed session). The open session teleconference phone number and access code were referenced in the prepared notices and published on the public website of the State Office of the Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund.

J. Prontnicki conducted a roll call of members as follows:

**Present:**

Janice Prontnicki, Chairperson

Ellen DeRosa, Vice-Chairperson

Anthony Valenzuela

Ralph Condo

Jeffery Carrick

Dawn Mergen

Phyllis Shanley Hansell

Steve Shultz

Carl Underland

**Absent:**

Howard Weinberg

**Guest:**

Jeanette Barnard, DAG

**Staff:**

Christian Heiss, Executive Director

Amy Taklif, Analyst

Janet Valentin-Forté, Secretary to the Commission

**Public Attendee(s):**

Mirel Schwartzberg

**Agenda Approval:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to approve the proposed meeting agenda for the meeting. P. Shanley Hansell seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Public Comments:**

M. Schwartzberg identified herself as the parent of a child with an appeal under consideration at the meeting. She explained the reasons the family sought care for the child from out of network providers. She thanked the Commission for their consideration.

**Executive Director’s Report:**

C. Heiss noted that the Commission was scheduled to review 77 applications, for potential payments totaling $1,530,248.87. The State Office estimated a balance of $6,475,000 in the Fund, enough to cover the payments under consideration.

**Approval of Minutes of August 5, 2020 Meeting:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to approve the open session minutes of August 5, 2020, which was seconded by P. Shanley Hansell. All Commission members voted in favor, with the exception of J. Prontnicki and R. Condo who abstained.

E. DeRosa made a motion to approve the closed session minutes of August 5, 2020, which was seconded by P. Shanley Hansell. All Commission members voted in favor, with the exception of J. Prontnicki and R. Condo who abstained.

**Travel Expenses:**

R. Condo made a motion to approve proposed changes to the State Office travel expense policy, clarifying that transportation and travel-related expenses eligible for consideration include travel directly related to the treatment of the child’s medical condition, that temporary shelter will only be reimbursed for travel in excess of 30 miles from a child’s residence, and that travel or temporary shelter due to the living conditions of a family’s residence(s) are not eligible expenses. The motion was seconded by P. Shanley Hansell. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Telehealth and Telemedicine:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to approve Telehealth and Telemedicine expense policy for applicants, which was seconded by P. Shanley Hansell. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Closed Session:**

P. Shanley Hansell made a motion to go into closed session to review application abstracts, which was seconded by R. Condo. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Review of Applications:**

**Appeals:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to uphold the Commission’s ineligibility determination for the following appeals: 217602019, 217612019 and 217622019. P. Shanley Hansell seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

P. Shanley Hansell made a motion to uphold the Commission’s ineligibility determination for the following appeals: 220452019, 22046, 220472019 and 220482019. E. DeRosa seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

E. DeRosa made a motion to uphold the Commission’s ineligibility determination for the following appeals: 220552019, 220562019, 220572019 and 220582019. R. Condo seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Eligibles:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to approve the eligible applications as presented, with the exception of applications 220842019, 222962020, 223472020, 223542020, and 224542020.

P. Shanley Hansell seconded the motion; all Commission members voted in favor.

E. DeRosa made a motion to deny application 222962020 after removing ineligible expenses . D. Mergen seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

R. Condo made a motion to approve application 223472020, but adjusting the award to remove ineligible expenses of $4000. A. Valenzuela seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

R. Condo made a motion to deny application 223542020, as eligible expenses did not meet the Fund’s expense-to-income eligibility criteria. E. DeRosa seconded the motion. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Reconsiderations:**

R. Condo made a motion to approve the reconsidered applications as presented. E. DeRosa seconded the motion; all Commission members voted in favor.

**Ineligibles:**

R. Condo made a motion to accept all ineligible recommendations as presented. D. Mergen seconded the motion; all Commission members voted in favor.

**Closed Session:**

E. DeRosa made a motion to go into closed session to discuss the Executive Director’s performance expectations, which was seconded by P. Shanley Hansell. All Commission members voted in favor.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn meeting made by C. Underland and seconded by R. Condo. All Commission members voted in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.