



***DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority  
Executive Board Meeting Minutes (Conference Call)  
Tuesday, May 28th, 2013  
1:00-2:00pm  
441 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 820N  
Washington, DC 20001***

**Members Present:**

Dr. Mohammad Akhter (Chair), David Berns, Kevin Lucia, Kate Sullivan Hare, Diane Lewis, Dr. Henry Aaron, Khalid Pitts, William White

**Members Absent:**

Dr. Leighton Ku, Wayne Turnage, Dr. Saul Levin

**I. Opening Comments**

The meeting was called to order at 1:03pm by Dr. Akhter.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of May 9, 2013 were unanimously approved.

**III. Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director, Mila Kofman

*Denver meeting:* Executive Director Kofman reported on the meeting of the State Based Exchanges she and staff attended on May 21-22 in Denver, Colorado. The focus of the meeting was on two major topics: (1) the establishment of effective programs for in-person Assistants, counselors, and Navigators, and (2) the media outreach and education for Exchanges. In addition, there were attendees from the federal government representing a number of areas of HHS.

*Preview of next Board meeting:* At the meeting next week, the Board will have reports from the Quality and Financial Sustainability Working Groups, and a presentation on the focus groups testing and branding/marketing research which the Exchange has been engaged in.

*Rate filings:* To date, there have not been any rate filings by carriers for their Exchange products. The Exchange team is working with Commissioner White and his team at DISB to stay on top of those filings. Commissioner White will make those filings public once they are all received.

*Request for Applications for In-Person Assister Entities:* The Exchange released the RFA for In-Person Assister grants on Friday, May 24. It is posted on the website. The Board and the public are encouraged to spread the word that we are now taking applications for Assister grants.

#### **IV. Action Items**

Ms. Kofman reported that there were three procurement items for the Board to consider.

The first two proposed agreements are related. Federal law requires the Exchange to have in-person assister and navigator programs in place to provide experts who can assist people with enrollment in the appropriate public or private program. To ensure that groups receiving assister grants are effective and have the skill set required under the ACA, we need to provide a vigorous training program leading to certification. The program will be twofold with both on-line features and extensive in-person training.

To conduct this training, we have selected two firms, both well regarded in the District. One is Whitman-Walker Health and the other is Families USA. They will work together, with the Whitman-Walker delivering the in-person training and Families USA developing the materials and training modules. Whitman-Walker Health is a well-respected local organization with extensive experience in training. They have an in-house navigator program where their insurance counselors undergo 6 week training on both public and private programs available to their constituency. In addition, Whitman Walker Health is a trusted source for other community groups who need this kind of training. Among other groups they do training for is the DC Bar pro-bono program. Families USA is a nationally recognized firm, based here in DC. They have recently done work with federal regulators around education and have significant expertise not only with the ACA, but in the fields of private insurance and public programs as well. They bring a significant understanding of what the exchanges require in the way or training. Families USA will also provide the Exchange staff with additional expertise and back-up assistance in answering complex and complicated questions received from the Exchange Call Center. Families USA also will provide training support to DHS and their 400 eligibility case workers.

The costs are as follows:

The Whitman-Walker Health procurement final amount is \$435,215 over a 12-month period.

The Families USA procurement total value is \$843,885 over a 12-month period. The breakdown within that number is \$596,067 for the In-Person Assister program and \$247,818 for the Economic Security Administration Worker Training for DHS for which Families USA will be providing the training materials.

The cost for the remaining 6 months of policy support for the contact center and In-Person Assisters through the end of 2014 is \$378,622. This is an additional option year at the option of the Exchange.

*Discussion:*

In response to a question from the Chair about other sources, Ms. Kofman noted that the Exchange reached out to potential vendors and one entity was identified who said it could do training. But after looking at their capacity, we determined we needed a firm with the capacity, expertise, and actual experience in providing training and who didn't have a significant learning curve. Based on our needs, we reached out to Whitman-Walker Health to learn more about their program. Based on discussions with them, we concluded that a partner was needed given the size and scope of the project. We also had reached out to Families USA to discuss some additional staffing support and discussed with them the possibilities of partnering. Ms. Kofman, in response to a question from the Chair, indicated that we did not reach out to local universities to do the training given that they weren't identified to us as trusted messengers in this area in both public programs and private insurance and their overhead and indirect costs are often high.

Ms. Kofman noted that that these are both sole source arrangements. To provide the Board a sense of what other states are spending on training, Ms. Kofman noted that Minnesota is spending in the neighborhood of \$1 million just for the on-line training they are doing. Another state, we have heard, received bids on their RFP of \$8 million for training and developing their materials., Given that the framework for the In-Person Assister program wasn't finalized by the Board until April 19 time is of the essence and we are obtaining the services of a two expert entities who are very likely to succeed at a good price.

Dr. Aaron noted the persuasiveness of the argument, but he requested that, in the future, he receive more timely notice of these matters. Ms. Kofman noted that despite entering into sole source agreements, the staff does extensive negotiation over the scope of work and pricing, including this one where we were still negotiating details up to last Friday. Ms. Kofman said she would try to get the Board more information earlier.

Ms. Kofman also explained the role of the grants administrator and noted that they are not doing the training of the assisters. The role of the grants administrator is to review applications from applicants, select the grantees and manage the grants once awarded. The training of the assisters will be done by the two vendors proposed today. Also, technical training of assisters on use of the web portal will be conducted by our IT vendor, Infosys. That will occur in August or September and the cost is built into the IT contract. In response to a question from Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Kofman also explained that the evaluation of the In-Person Assister Program and Call Center performance will be done by a vendor we still need to engage. The timing is unclear about when that will occur but it is not an immediate need. Dr. Akhter summarized what was before the Board with respect to the contract for training with Families USA:

- 12 month cost for development of training for IPA program

- 12 month cost for development of training for ESA workers
- Option for the remaining 6 months of policy support for the contact center and the IPAs in 2014.

A motion to approve the contract with Families USA was made and seconded and a roll call vote of the directors was unanimous in favor of approving the contract.

A motion to approve the contract with Whitman-Walker Health was made and seconded and a roll call vote of the directors was unanimous in favor of approving the contract.

Board Member Kevin Lucia left the meeting.

LEGAL SERVICES: Ms. Kofman described the third contract up for consideration. The Exchange issued an RFP for legal support and received four proposals. The selected vendor was the law firm Dentons US. This firm is also doing work for the California Exchange, thereby allowing us to leverage some of the work already completed for California. Dentons US is one of the largest firms in the country and has broad expertise not only with the ACA and exchanges, but in the many other areas of the law where we will likely need help. The proposed contract value is not to exceed \$500,000 over a 12 month period.

*Discussion:*

It was recommended that the final contract should reflect not only the maximum hourly rate but the rates for people at different levels within the firm. The proposal of the firm does provide that information.

A motion to approve the contract with Denton's was made and seconded and a roll call vote of the directors was unanimous in favor of approving the contract, Mr. Lucia being absent for the vote.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:47 pm.