



**Oregon**  
Tina Kotek, Governor



350 Winter Street NE  
P.O. Box 14480  
Salem, OR 97301-0405  
503-378-4100  
uhpgb.info@dcbs.oregon.gov  
oregon.gov/uhpgb

Universal Health Plan Governance Board (UHPGB) Meeting  
Thursday, November 21, 2024  
Minutes

Web link to the meeting video: [November 21, 2024, UHPGB Meeting Recording](#)

Web link to the meeting materials:

- [Agenda](#)
- [PowerPoint presentation](#)

**Call to order:**

Chair Helen Bellanca called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

**Board members present:**

Chair Helen Bellanca, Vice-chair Judy Richardson, Amy Fellows, Debra Diaz

Virtually: Michelle Glass and Bruce Goldberg

Absent: Cheryl Ramirez and Chunhuei Chi

**Welcome and Introductions:**

[Written public comment submissions](#)

Chair Bellanca briefly summarized and thanked the members of the public who submitted written public comments for the board to review.

**Approval of October 17, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes:**

*Amy Fellows made the motion to approve the minutes and Debbie Diaz provided a second to the motion. There was no discussion. Chair Bellanca called for a board vote:*

Board vote:

Yes: Chair Helen Bellanca, Debra Diaz, Amy Fellows, Vice-chair Judy Richardson, and Bruce Goldberg

Abstain: Michelle Glass

No: None

*Motion passed 5-0.*

**Executive Director's Report: [00:07:38](#)**

Executive Director Morgan Cowling shared the following staff updates:

- Jessica Merino and Danielle Ross are settling into their OHA policy analyst roles, supporting the board. OHA staff members, Laurel Swerdlow and Devlin Prince, remain in their staff support roles and are training Jessica and Danielle.
- Staff has been focused on getting committees up and running and setting them up for success.
- Committees are requesting "work groups", whereas right now, policies and procedures dictate that only the board can establish work groups. This should be discussed by the board in the future.
- Staff is continuing to build capacity for the board and committees.
  - Diana Bianco, Artemis Consulting, will be starting Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> to support the Community Engagement and Communications Committee (CECC)
  - Health Management Associates (HMA) have been hired on to provide health policy support to committees

- Working with Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) procurement team on the “request for proposal” (RFP) to hire on additional contract support for the board’s work. There will be a need for board member volunteers to create an “evaluation committee” for the RFP. More to come later on this.
- Applications to fill the public engagement seat on the board were due Nov. 15. Director Cowling, Chair Bellanca and Vice-chair Richardson are reviewing all applications and will submit their candidate recommendations to the Governor’s office for final selection and approval. If any board member(s) would like to be a part of this process, please reach out to Chair Bellanca.
- Governor Kotek will be releasing her budget on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, which will include the continued proposed funding for the UHPGB.
- The board has received 12 public records request since it’s establishment. The public remains very interested and engaged in this work and staff prioritizes responding promptly to all requests.

**Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) Overview and Analysis:** [00:15:19 Materials 5.1](#)

[ERISA Memo to Joint Task Force on Universal Care](#)

The board received a presentation from guest speakers and ERISA experts, Erin Fuse Brown and Liz McCuskey. Erin Fuse Brown and Liz McCuskey were consultants to the Joint Task Force on Universal Care, which proceeded the UHPGB, and provided the board with a summary presentation of their ERISA research for the Joint Task Force, which was included in the Joint Task Force’s final report.

- After board discussion, the following suggestions were made:
  - Can staff track how many of the health care systems in Oregon are self-funded? (I.e. Kaiser, Providence).
  - Finance and Revenue Committee need to keep in contact with Erin Fuse Brown and Liz McCuskey regarding the committee’s finance recommendations, to ensure there is not an ERISA challenge.

**Executive Session for Department of Justice (DOJ) Legal Advice:**

Chair Bellanca announced that the UHPGB will now be entering into Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f). Only board members, staff, media, and board’s council are able to attend. No decisions or votes will be made during Executive Session.

**Board Policies and Procedures Update:** [01:27:03](#)

Chair Bellanca reviewed the current board policy regarding communication. Through board discussion, the board weighed whether to amend the current policy.

*Debbie Diaz made the motion to amend the Universal Health Plan Governance Board’s communication policy to “The board and its committees hold a firm commitment to transparency and the preservation of public trust. The board also recognizes the importance to have some limited communication among members to facilitate the board’s work and accomplish its deliverables as laid out in Senate Bill 1089. Communication among less than a quorum of the board is permitted, as long as it does not create a serial communication creating a quorum. A quorum of the members of the board will not, outside of meetings conducted in compliance with the Public Meetings Law, use a series of communications of any kind, directly or through intermediaries, for the purpose of deliberating, making recommendations, or deciding on any matter that is within the jurisdiction of the board. All board and committee members are encouraged to take the training offered by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC) and to submit inquires to OGEC if unsure about compliance” and Amy Fellows provided a second to the motion. There was no discussion. Chair Bellanca called for a board vote:*

Board vote:

Yes: Chair Helen Bellanca, Debra Diaz, Amy Fellows, Vice-chair Judy Richardson, Michelle Glass and Bruce Goldberg

No: None

*Motion passed 6-0.*

### **Legislative Status Report [01:50:57](#)**

[9.1](#)

[9.2](#)

The board's first status report is due to Oregon Legislature on December 1, 2024 and is a requirement in Senate Bill 1089. Based on direction and feedback from the board over the last several months, staff created the final draft report and chair and vice-chair drafted an introductory letter for board members final approval.

After board discussion, the following additions were made:

- To Challenges ahead: "The changes in the national policy landscape may impact our work."
- To Opportunities: Added "Communications expert" in addition to Finance and Revenue.

*Debbie Diaz made the motion to approve the Legislative Status Report with the changes that were made real time in the meeting and Judy Richardson provided a second to the motion.*

There was no discussion. Chair Bellanca called for a board vote:

Board vote:

Yes: Chair Helen Bellanca, Debra Diaz, Amy Fellows, Vice-chair Judy Richardson, Michelle Glass and Bruce Goldberg

No: None

*Motion passed 6-0.*

Chair Bellanca and Vice-chair Richardson will be presenting to the House Interim Committees on Health on December 11. Director Cowling will provide more information (meeting time, location) as it becomes available.

### **Committee Updates: [02:00:11](#)**

Chair Bellanca called upon chairs of the UHPGB committees to share updates on their work thus far.

Community Engagement and Communications Committee (CECC), Co-chairs Amy Fellows and Michelle Glass:

- 14 members
- Have held 2 meetings thus far
- Received a presentation from the Oregon Advocacy Commission on their community engagement work that they have completed
- Consultant Diana Bianco was introduced
- Committee has prioritized the following items to work on:
  - UHPGB FAQ document on the board's work
  - Plain language, multilingual summary document of the board's values and principles
  - Guide to solicit more public comment for the board and committees
- As other committees develop materials that need to be provided to the public, please engage the CECC.
- The committee has requested that the board member monthly talking points are also provided to CECC members.

Plan Design and Expenditures (PD&E) Committee, Chair Debbie Diaz:

- 22 members
- Held one meeting thus far
- First meeting was focused on committee administration, overview of the workplan, committee process, values and principles, and a review of the Joint Task Force on Universal Care’s recommendations
- Purpose of next meeting will be to dive into benefits and comparing Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB), Oregon Education Board Benefits (OEBB), Medicaid, and Medicare
- Recommendation to the Finance and Revenue Committee to factor in auto insurance and how that will impact the final plan

Finance and Revenue (F&R) Committee, Director Cowling representing on behalf of Chair Cheryl Ramirez:

- 8 members
- Held two meetings thus far
  - Have received presentations from the Legislative Revenue Office and how far the work of the Joint Task Force on Universal Care had gotten
  - Information of the Optumas work was presented
  - Received presentation around total health expenditures
- Committee will be focused on landing on what data sources it wants to use going forward
- Coordination between PD&E and F&R will be key

**Committee Communications & Coordination:** [02:12:05](#)

Vice-chair Richardson reviewed the process for committees to present their recommendations to the board. Staff will also be filling out a meeting summary template during each committee meeting that chairs can use to give their read-outs in board meetings. The template captures questions that committees may have for other committees, to help ensure communications are not missed. This template will also assist committee chairs in planning future meeting agendas. As committee work is progressing, chairs need to be focused on how committees communication with one another and the board and how recommendations are brought to the board.

**Board Outreach and Meeting Take-aways:** [02:18:20](#)

Outreach:

- Amy Fellows shared that the Lane County Commissioner held a meeting that involved their Board of Health on November 5, 2024. PD&E committee member, Eve Gray, was able to get an item on the agenda to create a resolution to support the work of the UHPGB. The resolution passed unanimously. Amy Fellows and a few CECC members provided public testimony in support of the resolution. Suggestion was made for staff to track county resolutions of support around the state.
- Chair Bellanca scheduled time to meet with he director of Health Care for All Oregon.

Take-aways:

- ERISA presentation and amendment to board policy

**Public Comment:** [02:20:53](#)

Lou Sinniger shared oral testimony related to the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) and the lengths Oregonians go to ensure they qualify for OHP and how that impacts the state as a whole.

**Adjournment:**

Bruce Goldberg shared the following quote:

“Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be change until it is faced.”

– James Baldwin

Chair Bellanca adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.