

Meeting Minutes: Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board

Date: Monday, March 18, 2024

Minutes prepared by: Linnea Becerra

Location: Minnesota Room (DLI) and Hybrid

Members Present

- Commissioner Nicole Blissenbach
- Chair Jaime Gulley
- Michelle Armstrong
- Kim Brenne
- Maria King (remote)
- Michele Fredrickson
- Katie Lundmark
- Paula Rocheleau
- Ali Afsharjavan Swanson

Visitors

- Todd Bergstrom
- Jeff Bostic
- Brian Elliott
- Casey Murphy (remote)
- Toby Pearson (remote)
- Kent Peterson (remote)
- Kari Thurlow (remote)
- Ryan Usher (remote)
- Rick Varco (remote)

DLI Staff

- Ali Afsharjavan
- Linnea Becerra
- Paul Enger
- Leah Solo

Agenda items

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Jamie Gulley at 10:01 a.m. A roll call was taken. *A quorum was declared.*
2. **Approval of agenda** – *A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Michele Fredrickson, seconded by Michelle Armstrong. Roll call was taken, the motion passed unanimously.*
3. **Approval of drafted meeting minutes** – *A motion to approve the 03/14/2024 drafted meeting minutes as presented was made by Michele Fredrickson, seconded by Michelle Armstrong. Roll call was taken, the motion passed unanimously.*

4. Board Updates

- Ali Afsharjavan presented the rule making process to the board. A preliminary proposal form was submitted to the Governor's office on 3/8/24 which let the Governor's office know that a rule idea has been developed and the NHWSB is seeking a rule. More information is located on the NHWSB webpage which is housed on the DLI webpage. Next steps are getting the rules drafted and sent to the revisors office for a review of formatting and approval. This is being done. Certification and training rules were sent over on 2/28 after being approved by the board. After the rules are published there is a 30-day waiting period for public comment, where then the rules can be changed but cannot be made substantially different. Rules take months to be made. Rules are being submitted in three parts but are being published as one rule. Board member Lundmark asked what the date the board must meet to get the rules submitted, Executive Director Solo clarified that the rules should be submitted as soon as possible to meet the August 1st deadline.
- Kim Brenne presented the information from the Data Workgroup's meeting on 3/14/24. The workgroup talked about the DHS cost reports and Kim described the sample report included in the materials. The purpose of presenting this document is to look at the categories in which jobs are labeled and those may be used to create standards based on job function. Paula Rocheleau added that the group discussed the overall economic impact by total hours worked. The spreadsheet is being edited to show how many hours each job category has, then those hours can be used to multiply by the proposed increased wage in order to see a wide scale economic impact. It was clarified that the group will not know the exact amount this increase will cost but can know the estimate.

5. New Business –

- The board discussed pros and cons of setting a minimum wage by geography, specifically one wage for the whole state. Pros included ease of understandings and implementation, equal pay for equal work, stability between facilities, etc. Cons included cost of living, rate disparity, benefits less people, etc. The document was created and updated in real time. The board then discussed the pros and cons for setting a minimum wage by occupation. There was discussion around longevity pay and the idea of a base wage one for direct care workers and one for non-direct care workers. The discussion was wrapped up by looking at the proposed options from the previous meeting as presented by Chair Gulley. For next meeting, proposals should be submitted so they can be openly discussed at that time.

Geography- Statewide Wage	
Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple to understand and implement • Easier for the facilities to prepare financials • Equal pay for equal work • Doesn't divide the state • Because of equalization would create stability between facilities • Easier to prepare a fiscal note moving forward and in conjunction with other rules moving forward • Possibly less "winner and losers" • Non-direct care falls under a statewide rate so a statewide minimum wage would be more fair <p>Is it easier to pass through the legislature?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of living is different in the Twin Cities vs. other cities • Rate disparity in rural area • (put on both) Impact on organizations to adjust for the minimum- will need to adjust for all other workers in the facility • Could cost more, depending on where the minimum is set • Could benefit fewer people, depending on where the minimum is set • Could create more waiver requests, depending on where the minimum is set

Occupation- One wage, regardless of job class	
Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One message, all same wage • Easier to understand • Easier to implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified staff could feel neglected • Certified staff could leave to take other jobs • Less of an impact • Cause compression • No specific standard for higher earners

Occupation- Depending on job class	
Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can respond to wages more closely aligned to the category of workers • Can recognize education and certifications • Messaging can affect the workforce, can incentivize the position and can lead to a job path, could lead to more respect for the workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harder to get cost estimate • Minimum standard will not be equal

6. Next Meeting – Thursday, March 21 at 9 a.m.

Adjournment:

A motion made by Paula Rocheleau to adjourn at 12:05, seconded by Commissioner Blissenbach. A roll call was taken, motion passed unanimously.