



State of Nevada
MERIT AWARD BOARD



“**Good Government, Great Employees**”

209 E. Musser Street, Room 101
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4204

Brian Sandoval
Governor

MERIT AWARD BOARD

Tuesday, February 21, 2017 – 1:30 p.m

**Blasdel Building
209 E. Musser Street
1st floor, Room 105, Carson City, NV 89701**

And

**Grant Sawyer State Building
555 East Washington Avenue
Room 1400
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101**

The sites will be connected by videoconference. The public is invited to attend at either location.

**MINUTES OF MEETING
(pending Board approval)**

Members

Present: Rosa Mendez – Chairperson and Representative, Governor’s Office
Melanie Young – Representative, Governor’s Finance Office, Budget Division
Harry Schiffman – Representative, American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
Neil Lake – Representative, UNLV
Rachel Baker – Representative, Department of Administration, Division of Human
Resource Management

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Rosa Mendez called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established. Chairperson Mendez opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 21, 2016

Chairperson Mendez asked if there were any changes to the minutes. There were none.

MOTION: Moved for approval of adoption of minutes for October 21, 2016 Meeting.
BY: Neil Lake
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

Chairperson Mendez provided a report on NRS 285. She reminded the Board that they've been working on revising the statute that oversees the Merit Award Board and was happy to report that, Senate Bill 72, which is the revised statute, was approved by the first legislative committee without any incident.

IV. EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS

Chairperson Mendez provided a brief history on the operation of this section of the meeting. She noted the Board will hear from employees that are present and then hear from the corresponding agency representative(s) that were involved in the decision.

A. Lisa Swearingen (tabled from October 21, 2016 meeting)

Chairperson Mendez reminded the Board this suggestion was tabled from the last meeting. The Board had asked for more information regarding the program and how it fit into the agency suggestions. She noted that she was able to pass on to the Board information regarding the program, how it works, and how long each of the pilot programs are. She asked Ms. Swearingen to present any information she may have to add.

Ms. Lisa Swearingen noted that she also sent in information to show that the project was ongoing and shows a base from when they started the project the previous year.

Chairperson Mendez clarified that her project was that of a 60-day duration, which is a bit longer than the usual project. She asked the agency representatives to provide information to the Board regarding their decision.

Mr. Steve Fisher introduced himself and stated he felt he did not a very good job at the last meeting of explaining the project and the fact this particular suggestion was already under consideration and actively being pursued prior to Lisa Swearingen taking this on as a CPM Project. He introduced Naomi Lewis, Deputy Administrator, who was closer to the process and who would be able to provide better insights into the suggestion.

Mr. Fisher recollected that back in October of 2014, the agency had subcontracted out to a vendor for our interpretative services. The agency realized then that the cost of those interpretative services were increasing, so they decided at that point in time to monitor it for another year and see where interpretative services was going (as related to costs); where they to continue to increase steadily, from a budgetary perspective, the agency became concerned about it.

In November of 2015, so, a year later, the agency took a look at the interpretative services and confirmed they had continued to increase and then the agency conducted a projection forward and realized that interpretative services costs to the agency were going to continue to increase by 10% per month. So at that point in time they knew they had to start looking at another alternative to the current interpretative services service arrangement. They also knew that the third-party vendor was not going to be cost effective, and they were going to have to look for other options internally within their own organization to resolve this issue and to save costs to the state.

Ms. Naomi Lewis introduced herself and noted, as Steve previously indicated, the agency knew they had a problem needing to be solved and that there were opportunities in identifying how to solve that problem. Ms. Lewis had been working with different units in the agency; including the Field Operations Unit. At one point, she asked them to take over the invoicing and the billing so they could see exactly what was coming into Central Office to see if there were places the agency could streamline the process or save the state some dollars. Part of the change management process, in Ms. Lewis' mind is giving the problem to the stakeholders and letting them identify some solutions. But, in her mind, she had conversations about that particular problem for two years prior and already had a solution in mind.

Ms. Lewis recognized Lisa as a very valued employee who participated in the CPM Course. Employees are instructed to meet with the agency Sponsors and management (Ms. Lewis) needs to identify a project the employee can work as part of my Capstone Project. In her mind, as a boss, as a good boss, she would hope, that one sits down with your employees and find a way to help them be successful in their homework project. Ms. Lewis noted that when Lisa came in with the ideas to explore for her CPM Capstone Project, management had a couple of IT options and an option with the interpretative services. There is a group present and all talk about these issues and based on your own experience with the program and as a graduate, you make a recommendation to the employee regarding which project to select, one that as a supervisor you can assist the employee with, help them focus their energy.

And so, Ms. Lewis said they had that meeting where all parties discussed problems they knew existed within the agency. The group focused on this (IS) as where to apply her Capstone Project. Ms. Lewis made sure it was an area that she's focusing so she is successful. She is the supervisor for the people that are going to be on the team, so Ms. Lewis feels she can help her be successful. In her case, Ms. Lewis stated it's all about learning project management: identifying who your team members are; forming, brainstorming, identifying the problem; getting people who do not agree to work on a solution and then implementing that solution. Furthermore, Ms. Lewis mentioned the suggestion she believes is like a homework project, as the project is assigned to teach participants project management. In her mind, every graduate of the CPM Program is successful or they don't graduate. So every one of them is potentially a Merit suggestion, if that's how the Board is going to look at this. Additionally, HR uses those savings from all of those Capstone Projects to present to the Governor to show what was accomplished by the agency to save money and in turn, fund the related unit so they can keep the program(s) going. The return on investment for the training program are those program

savings, those dollars, but to a different end, a collective end or the agency, not an individual.

Ms. Lewis recognized Lisa as doing an amazing job on the project. She credited her for creating the team, coordinating necessary meetings, documenting the process and outcome. However, Ms. Lewis said that at the same time, she already had a solution in place. So, Ms. Lewis was working with the group that Lisa supervised to try and make sure that she had a successful outcome for her homework project, allowing one to view this not as a one-person project warranting individual merit, but a project the agency had already identified and supported for finding a resolution with the agency's help.

In closing, Ms. Lewis does not think the suggestion is Lisa's idea. She believes that it was something the agency was already working on. However, it absolutely was her idea to come in and identify and present the problem areas for focusing on. Then she stated that they, as an agency, helped her with that process, because they were already going to address the problem with that process.

Mr. Harry Schiffman asked for a clarification regarding participating employees who sign up for the Capstone Project, wanting to know if the employees come up with these ideas (typically). Ms. Swearingen explained the benefit is you completing a successful project and graduating the program. You have to complete the project in order to graduate. Ms. Schiffman wanted to know what the program does for the employees down the line. Ms. Swearingen explained that she asked her administration about enrolling because she wanted to further her career within the Division. She admitted she promoted quickly throughout the agency, so she was able to bypass a lot of the steps she would've needed to qualify for some higher upper management levels of employment.

Mr. Schiffman asked if by enrolling in this program, if it helped with promotions and furthering the employee's career within the State. Ms. Swearingen confirmed. Mr. Schiffman noted, that he assumed by doing that (graduating) she also benefited monetarily, because it increased the employee's salary. Ms. Swearingen noted it had not happened yet but it could.

Mr. Schiffman asked, for clarification regarding whether the enrolling was voluntary for employees, and if they do apply, are the program fees covered by the agency or by the state? Ms. Swearingen responded stating she believed the agencies are given numerous slots based off of monies they were given. Then if the agency wants to send additional people, they can send other people for a fee and pay that fee to have them attend. She noted she actually approached her supervisor and asked if she could possibly apply for the program, adding that it's a pretty drawn out process requiring the submittal of a pretty lengthy application and answering several pages of questions in order to get accepted.

Mr. Schiffman asked if there were out of pocket expenses to enroll in the program. Ms. Swearingen noted there were not.

Mr. Schiffman noted that if the criterion of the program was explained as something you have to do within the program and asked for clarification regarding whether participants are the ones that have to come up with ideas that are going to save the agency or the state

money or doing a project or doing a service in a more efficient manner. Ms. Swearingen confirmed and added that every candidate has to do a Capstone Project and that project is to show that you can manage a project and be a project manager. Part of the process requires participants to create a team. Participants have to go through the whole process of submitting an idea and it has to be accepted by the Director of the CPM Program. Then you move forward with building your team and having your meetings and implementing your idea. Projects have to show a certain amount of cost savings. She believes the agency has changed that and tweaked that over the years because it was getting harder and harder for the candidates to show that they had saved actual money to the agency. So the agency is looking more on whether or not they saved time and other things, not just actual money.

Mr. Schiffman asked if she came up with three different ideas brought forward to her Supervisor. Ms. Swearingen noted she brought it to her Supervisor and to Naomi [Lewis]. Mr. Schiffman asked if management chose interpretative services for her to work on or if it was a joint decision. Ms. Swearingen confirmed and added that it was agreed that that one would be easier to handle in-house and the agency would be able to control the process internally than having to involve our IT staff.

Mr. Schiffman further asked if she was working on this project of interpretative services alone or if she had other members within the Capstone Project working with her on it. Ms. Swearingen explained that part of the project is building a team, so she had developed a team of herself including another program specialist, now the Chief of EPM that used to or still handles the actual invoices every month from CTS, and she involved another chief, a couple of office managers, and somebody from the phone center. She built the team of upper management staff so that it would be easier to implement the suggestion and get that funneled down to the field members.

Chairperson Mendez responded to the original question regarding benefit to employee stating that participants receive a certification as a Certified Program Manager once they successfully complete the program. She further explained Naomi Lewis's point regarding a discrepancy because, yes, the varied proposed projects were discussed and it was decided the Interpretive Services project was going to be the project but the agency is stating that they had already identified the issue and they were working on a solution. Ms. Swearingen added that it was what she'd like to focus on but they're saying it had already been considered. Chairperson Mendez wanted to clarify those details for the record.

Mr. Neil Lake asked if when the agency proposes these projects to program participants, do they already have a solution for these projects, noting that it appeared to be more of a test to see if they arrive to the same conclusion the agency already determined, or is this something you expect them to come up solutions all on their own. Ms. Swearingen explained that when she met them, she had tried to come up with three different ideas on things she thought she could do as a Capstone Project. Again, two of them were IT related and one was for interpretative services. After meeting with them this morning, she never was aware of the fact the agency was looking at the fact that they had an issue with interpretative services prior to her ever having that meeting and addressing her concerns in wanting to tackle this issue. She didn't even really find out about it until they had their meeting, that the agency had been working on all of this prior to. She also found out that Naomi was trying to be helpful or was being helpful in the background and providing

information to the field offices to bring some of those ideas to the brainstorming meetings that she was having. At the time, she was not aware of it, and thought it was her idea. She moved forward with it thinking it was her idea. She continued thinking it was her idea until she found out this morning that it wasn't. She had no idea that all of this stuff was happening in the background and moved forward thinking that she had a great idea.

Ms. Lewis stated that the agency didn't think they want to take away from that Lisa. She was successful in leading a team that got to an idea and then implemented that idea and that is unchanged. She completed a successful homework project. Ms. Lewis wanted to stress, that as an employer, she wants to make sure that program participants are successful. So, she worked behind the scenes to make sure the employee got every step of the project in place and the outcome was measurable and that she would be successful for that homework assignment. She'd do it with anybody in the CPM Project. It's about teaching the process and knowing how to manage the process so that you have a successful outcome. Ms. Lewis felt Lisa led a successful project.

Mr. Schiffman noted the successful outlook or outcome the agency is looking for is already known, is the point. The agency already knew what that outcome was supposed to be because they already had the answer. So, to him, it's more of to see if the employee can come to same conclusion the agency already had arrived at. Ms. Lewis explained, that as management, you try to steer employees to that same conclusion, because they already had a well-developed idea of what they wanted it to look like. Yes, you try to steer the team to what you want the outcome to be.

Mr. Schiffman noted, that if he is understanding what Neil said and what Ms. Lewis just answered, the agency already had a solution and whatever anybody else comes up as a team is just enhancing on that solution. It's just making it better, so it's not really any of their personal ideas? He noted his confusion. Ms. Lewis stated, in any brainstorming session, when you identify that you have a problem statement and people come to the table and they try and brainstorm solutions, everybody has some concept of what they believe the solutions should be, or, what they think might work as a solution. As a change management agent, you go in with trying to convince folks that this is the solution they should choose. You have to get them to buy-in to that solution. So, she fed that solution right into the team. That's the one that they bought into. That's not to say that if someone hadn't had a completely different solution that would solve the problem, that the agency wouldn't evaluate it or use it.

Mr. Schiffman wanted clarification regarding the employee's meeting with her Chief and Deputy Administrator, asking if there is somewhat a solution or a game plan on the table already, would staff tell her they already have an idea, and her work is just making it better? Ms. Lewis explained, in this instance, that's what they did, and Lisa dove right into problem solving in that meeting, and said she had a bunch of great ideas for solving the problem. Ms. Lewis cautioned her not to solve the problem for them, but to take the problem to the team and let the team solve the problem. Again, it's about teaching her the steps of project management. As the team lead, she does not have to solve the problem or that she had to come with a solution but that she had to learn how to put together the team and have the team come up with some ideas and solutions. They did that. Then the team came up with some solutions. One of those solutions was from her (Ms. Lewis).

Ms. Swearingen added, that when she spoke with Naomi this morning she said, it would've been, in her opinion, better, as was stated, in that meeting with them, if she would've confided that she had some ideas, they could've been in collaboration and she wouldn't have spent this whole time thinking it was all her idea, or her suggestion. She knows they've had a lot of ideas but if she hadn't jumped on board to implement this, they wouldn't be where they are right now with a savings of almost \$150,000.

Chairperson Mendez stated that one of the main things the Board spoke about at their last meeting was the fact that the program is something that is voluntarily entered into by the employee and the suggestion is considered part of what is required of the program, homework if you will for CPM program. Does that make that an awardable suggestion?

Ms. Melanie Young thanked Lisa for attending and bringing this suggestion to the Board. The CPM Program is a commitment from both the agency and the employee because the Board knows she did a lot of work outside of her regular day duties to complete the program. In hearing the testimony today, she acknowledges the agency came to Lisa with a problem that she had with interpretative services and it was a collective group of people that came together and found a solution together, which ultimately ended up being utilized. She knows, the agency did indicate when they first submitted this it was under active consideration and understanding that now, that's one of the disqualifying factors in our statute that governs the program. She noted, she needed to hear where the suggestion came from because that's the ultimate goal is that there was a suggestion submitted.

Mr. Lake noted the last time the Board talked about this; it was believed the suggestion may be awardable even though it was brought forward awkwardly. However, Mr. Lake stated that if there was a solution already in place, he believes that an award can be withheld from that person or that group to find out if that group and that person learning this process as part of a separate program. He further stated he believes that it is something that can be awarded, but does not believe this situation warrants award based on all the testimony heard today.

MOTION: Moved for dismissal of the suggestion.
BY: Neil Lake
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

B. Giovanni Chavez (tabled from October 21, 2016 meeting)

Chairperson Mendez reminded the Board this is a suggestion regarding an Adobe based form that was made by Mr. Giovanni Chavez. She noted the agency's response was that the form was really a duplication of what was already being done, and the agency did not recommend implementation. They did acknowledge that a portion of the suggestion regarding the widgets would make nice tools but would need to be maintained and updated.

Mr. Giovanni Chavez introduced himself and noted he didn't have any comments to make but wanted to answer the question regarding the maintenance. He explained that the

maintenance was minimal and would take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete. The coding on the background doesn't need to be changed. The only thing that needs to be maintained is the dates as they are entered.

Mr. Steve Fisher agreed that there were a couple of widgets on the form the agency thought could be useful. Mr. Chavez noted he understood and stated he believes there was a misunderstanding in terms of what the entire approach was, as he did not force his form on anybody. It was more so meant to be just a tool, like a handy calculator. His intent was to present this form to see how serious it would be taken because he believes that it's something that is definitely useful. He also stated that he understood the majority of the errors don't come necessarily from the agency but rather from the public, but felt like there was other things that he could bring to the table that are definitely worth more than \$25,000. This is why he is not necessarily concerned with this award, and that's why he gave this form as a donation. He did not want to spend the time with the other programs, knowing how long it would take him and knew the form would work and save millions.

Mr. Fisher noted he did not have anything further to add. He added and hoped the response in the memorandum, would be enough.

Mr. Giovanni Chavez stated that he didn't want to just send the form out to the Division and not follow the proper process. However, if agency wanted him to, he could change the form regarding the widgets, and then email it statewide.

Chairperson Mendez stated that the final statement on the memo says that the team found that based on their analysis and recommendation, they're recommending the suggestion not be implemented and not be sent out. That was the final recommendation. Mr. Chavez noted he misunderstood. Chairperson Mendez acknowledged that they did talk about the widgets in the form, but the final recommendation is not to implement. Mr. Chavez stated he understood.

MOTION: Moved for dismissal of the suggestion.
BY: Melanie Young
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

C. Crystal Madera-Cibrian (tabled from October 21, 2016 meeting)

Chairperson Mendez reminded the Board this is a suggestion that was one of two for Ms. Madera-Cibrian. This is the suggestion to do the initial change to the Civil Rights Statement. The forms regarding additional categories. The initial agency response was that the agency was already in compliance with it and did not see at the time to change it. It was also noted on the response from the agency's Deputy Attorney General that there is no legal requirement to add the language, as it is not included in the final regulation, indicating the agency is in full compliance. Ms. Madera-Cibrian was not present.

Ms. Melanie Young noted the Board should move to not approve the suggestion as the agency indicates that they have met their federal requirements.

MOTION: Moved for dismissal of the suggestion.
BY: Melanie Young
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

D. Nancy Linder

Chairperson Mendez explained the next suggestion is from Nancy Linder, an RN under DHHS. Her suggestion is regarding prior authorization of medications for the out-patient clinic. She invited Ms. Linder to address the Board.

Ms. Nancy Linder introduced herself to the Board. She explained her effort started six years ago (in 2011) when fee-for-service Medicaid was the only one that needed prior authorizations. She added the agency has three divisions of Medicaid which is fee-for-service, Amerigroup and Health Plan of Nevada and approximately 15 other plans within Medicare, all needing prior authorizations for our specialty medications for psych meds.

She stated that Richard, from their Outpatient Pharmacy, compiled totals for the month of December resulting in an actual savings of \$283,469.42 and that was based on her work alone. Included in this total is under packed savings for Mental Health Court, Friends at Court and other areas including Silver Springs, Carson City and all of outpatient at NNAMHS.

Although Ms. Linder understands the agency rejected the suggestion because it is already part of existing policy, she couldn't find the policy. She was also aware the agency stated the work was part her job description, but she couldn't find that either, and added she thought it was not part of her job description when she was hired in 2010, noting that nowhere in her job description does it say anything about prior authorizations. She also stated that in the month of January of 2017, she accrued \$23,161.26 in savings, \$3,000 more than January of last year, as reflected in the materials she brought for meeting.

Ms. Linder continued with an example, citing Medicare and the other insurance companies that cover Medicare patients as related to the specialty drugs the patients need. If staff does not preauthorize the medications, or work with the companies to find a generic drug that may be utilized instead of the name brand, incurring additional costs would fall on the agency pharmacy budget, costing the agency more money. There numerous providers and many more medications, generic and name brand one must be familiar with so staff can process the pre-authorizations properly. Ms. Linder feels there is enough work for another person to assist in completing pre-auths. Specialty medications, such as, Abilify or Latuda, can run anywhere from \$800 a month with these new ones running \$1,000 a month. These are the amounts the state would have to pay if they are not authorized. Additionally, there is a great deal of paperwork that is utilized with the varied providers, about 15-18 forms that she has researched and confirmed for the providers.

Ms. Melanie Young noted the suggestion is the hiring of additional RNs, so the pre-authorizations can be done. She asked how many nurses would be needed. Ms. Linder noted she wasn't sure if the fix would necessarily be additional nurses, or training and

different job titles as prior authorization nurses, as the agency does not have any title for a prior authorization nurse. She does believe the work load justifies the need for two full time prior authorization nurses in the clinic. These Dedicated Prior Authorization Nurses would focus only prior authorizations, and not be pulled in 12 different directions by other tasks. She explained that she's pulled in 12 different directions due to her other duties. To job share, if there's two full time employees just doing the pre-authorizations, then it's doable. Again she reiterated that she could not find the policy that staff was referring to in their response.

Ms. Young also had a question regarding her indicated savings totaling \$283,000. She asked for clarification on the savings piece, if that is the savings the agency is missing out on now or is that a cost that they incur. Ms. Linder stated the savings is what the agency did not have to pay out. It represents what she saved what she was able to have the patient fill with an outside pharmacy and not filled here or at NNAMHS. Ms. Melanie Young asked if it was billed outside insurance, through a third-party. Ms. Linder stated, she kept track of medications she got approved and then Richard in pharmacy would enter the cost savings associated with that medication. These were all added up to reflect the total for one year.

Ms. Young then asked if Ms. Linder happened to look her work performance standards to see if the prior authorization is listed as a work performance standard in her job duties. Ms. Linder confirmed she did and it was not listed. Ms. Young asked when was the last time she received work performance standards. Ms. Linder noted she had her evaluation for the year.

Mr. Darren Squillante was invited to speak regarding the suggestion by Chairperson Mendez.

Chairperson Mendez interjected that she is also a little unclear about the savings, wanting to know if the staff gets a lower rate that the third-party or the other pharmacy would pay, and if not, the state pharmacy would then be responsible for covering the medication regardless. Ms. Linder explained the state is obligated to pay and to fill the patient's prescriptions simply because they're at NNAMHS. They are obligated to supply patients their medications.

Chairperson Mendez asked for further clarification about it coming out of the budget. When pre-authorizations are not conducted, the state pays for the medications from their operational budget, whatever line item it might be for that particular clinic. Ms. Linder noted that it comes out of the pharmacy budget. Chairperson Mendez then asked if the numbers reflect one pharmacy, for one location. Ms. Linder confirmed it was only for NNAMHS, as there is only one NNAMHS Pharmacy. Ms. Linder concurred.

Mr. Squillante introduced himself and stated that although this was his first time attending a meeting, he was very impressed. He noted the state has a lot of caring employees here bringing forward some wonderful ideas and thoughts in an effort to make it better which is always good to see. He noted he had brought along a fiscal staff member who works in the billing side to answer specific questions members and attendees may have if you get into the details. He added that from a global perspective, he has been with the Division now on

and off for 12 years, that the agency's business model has changed over those 12 years based on ACA and some things that are happening, and it is about to change again. What will be happening is with ACA and if it continues in its current form, outpatient services and the pharmacies and the things done there, would be reduced greatly in the next biennial. He also noted, that if you just look at what the Division has done as a whole with ACA and as it came into being, it's always been the Division's practice and desires that all direct service providers, some of their support staff and they have specific units in our fiscal side will get what the agency calls the PARs, the Prior Authorizations completed and then bill for as many services as the state can. That's being built into the agency's budget. In addition, it's also in the work performance standards for many of the agency's employees. Mr. Squillante presents a copy of Ms Linder's work performance standards signed back in January 2016 illustrating his point regarding conducting PAR's, as being applicable to folks who work in the outpatient clinics, as well as the fiscal side. They are responsible for getting those prior authorizations completed so the agency can bill for as much as they can.

Mr. Harry Schiffman expressed concern that there were two parties, each claiming something different and the work performance standards were not initially provided to determine which was correct. He added, maybe a classification of the position would be helpful. He noted the same with the agency stating it was in their policy and not providing the policy makes it difficult to make a decision.

Mr. Neil Lake agreed and added the Board is trying to make decisions based on what information is provided by all parties and that is all the Board has to go by.

Mr. Tim Doucette introduced himself as being from NNAMHS. He explained that his understanding of the policy is there is a policy that the agency will pursue prior authorizations and it specifies for services. If a client is receiving services at NNAMHS, like seeing one of the state's doctors or providers, the state will pursue a prior authorization to get the insurance to pay for that service. However, he added that the policy doesn't specifically state the state will pursue a prior authorization for medications. There is some gray area in that policy, as far as I'm aware that is a distinction between services and medications.

Mr. Squillante noted he would help to provide copies of the WPSs that have been signed along with a copy of the policies.

Mr. Lake noted he would appreciate that and added it would help the Board make a better decision and come to the right conclusion. It is difficult to base decisions on verbal testimony, as the Board wants to make sure they're doing the right thing for the employee and the agency at the same time.

Ms. Linder reiterated that the recommendation was rejected with a note that this recommendation is already division policy, which she believes is not applicable because she was unable to find it, and believes it should be reconsidered because she can't find a policy. She also referenced Mr. Doucette's statement related to policy being applicable for clients seeking services, not specifically aimed for medications and not for employees. She then asked if the policy is for services or is it for nurses.

Chairperson Mendez noted that she understood like the statement was being applied generally. If you're in a particular branch of offering services, whatever that service may be, a general policy is that you're going to look for those cost savings measures by doing pre-auth because that's what you're going to be doing anyway. That's part of what you're doing. She added that she believed the policy is not specific to medications, but in whatever that area is, as staff you're always looking to earn cost savings by doing pre-auths.

Mr. Doucette confirmed Chair Mendez's clarification and added that his understanding is that the agency is always pursuing services by doing prior authorizations. The distinction is whether the policy which states services also includes medications, because the policy pre-dates the Affordable Care Act, when the patients typically at NNAMHS or any of our other mental health services didn't qualify for free Medicaid based under ACA coverage. And so, if you're looking at a time before the Affordable Care Act, typically you'd have all these patients at NNAMHS that weren't insured going to the NNAMHS pharmacy to receive medications. As the provider of last resort, the state has to provide those medications. Mr. Doucette further explained that with the advent of the Affordable Care Act and getting these patients enrolled into insurance, free Medicaid, either through Amerigroup or HPN or if you're looking at our rural services, typically Medicaid fee-for-service, now they do have insurance. He added that with these types of medication, insurance companies typically apply a rubber stamp denial, denying the request until the state proves to them that they should be paying for this person's medication. What Ms. Linder helps with is submitting that documentation the agency is providing to the insurance companies to get them to give an approval to say that they will pay for that patient to go to an outside pharmacy to fill the medication and this means the insurance will pay for it instead of the state having to pay for that medication for the client at the state pharmacy. The state orders the meds, and pays for them, then essentially give them out to the patient for free if they're not billing their insurance.

Chairperson Mendez made a motion to table this suggestion until the Board can receive and review the actual policy and/or documentation from the agency regarding this particular suggestion. She added, that it appears there's another component to this suggestion, as Nancy's suggestion not only examines the process, but also proposes the hiring of additional staff or existing staff be designated specific work scope and/or job title. Chair Mendez noted that if policy is saying, that's already part of what staff is supposed to be doing anyway, then that's what the Board would have to look at and again suggested the item be tabled this until the Board can get feedback from the agency regarding said policy and work performance standards.

MOTION: Moved to table suggestion until more information can be provided to the Board for review.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Neil Lake
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Neil Lake left the meeting for a prior engagement.

E. Joy Gonzales

Chairperson Mendez noted, this particular suggestion is the one about the handbooks through DMV. She noted there were no representatives from DMV and Ms. Gonzales was not in attendance. She explained, in 2010, the agency had already considered a very similar suggestion and at that time, the Director rejected the suggestion when it was proposed in January 2010 by the DMV Management Services and Programs Division. DMV does acknowledge in their response that Ms. Gonzales's suggestion adds a new component to it and that would be the kiosks that she is proposing and the vending machine component. She reminded the Board of a note she provided everyone regarding the different milestones the agency seems to feel that they would have to match because it will require a request for proposal and a request for information which would tentatively put this not even being looked at until 2019 and not implemented until 2020.

Mr. Harry Schiffman stated, with the data presented he does not know how the Board could even entertain an award here it doesn't know what the actual cost savings might be.

Chairperson Mendez stated, as part of this suggestion, also the agency is also saying they're going to have to propose new legislation because the ability to actually charge for handbooks is in statute. The agency does not currently charge now. If they wanted to do that, they would actually have to propose legislation, adding that legislation could not be proposed until the 2019 Legislative year.

Ms. Melanie Young asked why the related costs incurred by the agency had not been included. She is not certain their kiosks or vending machines would be able to provide a book through that service, and would require them to get new vending machines resulting in a significant cost. Chairperson Mendez concurred and stated the agency also talked about the need to gain sufficient benefits to the vendor who would actually be given this contract. The Chair felt there are too many questions for this suggestion that are currently unanswered and feels the Board would be unable to make a decision.

Mr. Schiffman asked if this suggestion were to be implemented in 2019-2020, would the employee who suggested it be recognized at that time.

Chairperson Mendez noted, according to the agency, the first part of the suggestion has already been previously considered. What they're looking at here is the vending machine kiosk component of it.

That's the only component that the agency feels like would warrant award, because the actual suggestion to do it, to provide the handbooks in another matter, whether it's digitally or by sale, had previously been considered and rejected by the agency. Chair Mendez again noted there's a lot of unanswered questions here, included the missing estimated cost savings. She further noted the agency knows there will be associated costs that are going to be related to this particular suggestion and those are also missing. Tabling and considering award at a distant future would be something the Board would have to discuss because it's never been presented with this situation in the past.

Ms. Rachel Baker asked if this item can tabled because she had the same concerns. She added there are a great deal of questions associated with this suggestion and thinks it would be a good idea to hear from the agency or at least be able to ask these questions of the agency. Chairperson Mendez agreed to table this suggestion indefinitely until the agency can provide more information.

MOTION: Moved to table suggestion until more information can be provided to the Board by the agency.
BY: Harry Schiffman
SECOND: Rachel Baker
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

F. Dawn Bridgeman

Chairperson Mendez stated the next suggestion was regarding utilizing pencil on for client files to temporary files. The agency found that it would actually cost more money if it was to use pencil and not the labels, based on the unit price. There were no additional comments.

MOTION: Moved to dismiss the suggestion.
BY: Melanie Young
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

G. Crystal Momii

Chairperson Mendez stated the next suggestion was regarding transportation offering SNAP and TAP recipients discounted or free bus fare, if they're participating in the program and receiving benefits. The agency's response stated that they already provide the service to a certain extent, and they could not extend that to immediate family members. Also, they cited there would be additional costs, stating that bus passes each month would cost \$23.7 million or \$284 million per year for all participants in TAP and SNAP. There were no additional comments.

MOTION: Moved to dismiss the suggestion.
BY: Harry Schiffman
SECOND: Melanie Young
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Chairperson Mendez stated she would take the next two suggestions one at a time.

H. Melissa McNeal (1)

Chairperson Mendez stated this suggestion is for the installation of instant messaging. The agency's response is that the division is currently planning to upgrade their software, to

Office 365, enabling use of Skype for business, including instant messaging. Chairperson Mendez noted the agency is already addressing this particular concern or problem with their proposed roll out of their new software package within the entire Division. She did ask about timeframe for rolling out the plan.

Mr. Steve Fisher explained the software was a budget item that was approved in the last biennium. The agency is in the process of purchasing Office 365, so in order to get it rolled out to the entire 2,000 employees within the Division, it will take some time. He estimates it would be completed over the next six months, and further noted the software not only contains an instant messaging component, but also has other capabilities the agency can utilize.

MOTION: Moved to dismiss the suggestion.
BY: Rachel Baker
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

I. Melissa McNeal (2)

Chairperson Mendez stated this suggestion is the one that deals with notifications for welfare recipients. The agency's response is stating that this is an ongoing effort within the Division. The Food and Nutrition Service has already made that recommendation to simplify and upgrade their notices and fast reviews. She asked for a timeframe for this implementation or if it was ongoing.

Mr. Steve Fisher confirmed and added that the agency has hundreds of thousands of notifications that go out to its clients. They are constantly updating, changing, and modifying the language that is in or is contained in the notification that go out to clients. It's an ongoing effort. The agency not only takes natural opportunities to come up to make the changes to the language, but also has a project in place where they're going through notices and language and making changes to them. The agency participates in federal audits, when the federal government comes in and audits their programs. He noted this recommendation has come to fruition a couple of times over the past couple of years and it takes a long time to make the changes to the language.

MOTION: Moved to dismiss the suggestion.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Melanie Young
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the

V. PUBLIC COMMENT & DISCUSSION - (Note: No vote or action may be taken upon a matter raised during public comment until the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action may be taken. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person, and persons making comment will be asked to begin by stating their names for the record.)

There was no public comment or discussion.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Mendez stated, the one item I really want to talk about is, the revised suggestion form. In lieu of recent developments pertaining to suggestions that either recently or historically have been part or a component of other types of programs, whether they're training, educational or resulting in certification, she asked for feedback with regards to making a small change to our form or, to ask of the applicant, if the particular suggestion is part of any other program or any other project or another related item.

Ms. Melanie Young asked for clarification on what was trying to be established. Chairperson Mendez noted, whether the suggestion was already part of a project or program prior to be submitted to the Board. She deferred to Dawn Buoncristiani, Deputy Attorney General to the Department of Administration.

Ms. Dawn Buoncristiani asked for clarification. Chairperson Mendez replied, the question would ask applicant to explain whether their suggestion is a component, either currently or ever of any type of program or project, regardless of whether the program is educational, a certification program or other type of program. Ms. Buoncristiani replied that it sounds like it would be part of the statute. She added it would probably help the person to know if you put some of those on there that, if you do state yes to any of these, the possibility exists pursuant to the statute. These are reasons where the request would be denied because that almost sounds like what the Board is saying. Not that you necessarily have to say that on there but you could state, has this been considered before by the agency?

Chairperson Mendez noted this could be talked about offline, but there is an FAQs online for the employees to access that actually lists the statute and says, not previously considered but that's a very open statement. That means in any way considered. Chair Mendez was not sure if the proposed change to the form would actually help at all, adding the her intent is to make the change so the Board is informed if the proposed suggestion is or has ever been part of an educational project or a certification program that might have already been submitted to the state. The first individual who was a CPM participant and given an award did not declare that on her submittal form. When the Board approved that award, they didn't know that her suggestion had already been looked at by the agency as part of her CPM Project.

Ms. Buoncristiani confirmed, that it may be helpful to ask something to the effect, that the suggestion has been considered by the agency before. It's worthwhile, particularly since it is statutory. Your first suggestion sounds like maybe limiting it. She noted that she is not familiar with the program that they were talking about and asked if it is that something the Board comes across frequently? Ms. Young replied that it's sponsored to the Department of Human Resources, and it is an 18-month program that people apply to go through, a leadership-type program. It's a commitment from both the agency and the employee to go.

Ms. Buoncristiani asked if program participants come before the Board for consideration. Ms. Young replied that Ms. Swearingen was the first person the Board has seen as a suggestion coming through as a part of the CPM Program. She added that as she read the CPM piece and did some research from when the Board tabled this last time, she didn't see where the CPM Program itself prohibits submitting their suggestion they get in their CPM

Program, also noting she didn't really see that as one of the disqualifying factors in the Board statute. Ms. Young continued to say that if the agency today really had not said that they fed the idea and you knew, it was something that they were working on, she was really leaning more towards an award for the employee. If the CPM Program is something the Board wants to take a look at and say that if a suggestion is a part of that type of program, the employee knows going in that they're going to have to develop that type of Capstone Project that creates a state efficiency or that the Board be very upfront in the fact that we will not entertain those types of suggestions.

Ms. Buoncristiani stated that may not always be something the agency has considered, and added that it would be limited. It would not exactly be correct but it might be something that you could just generally state. How to state it would need to be determined.

Ms. Young noted going back to the CPM Program itself; the agency had identified more of a problem statement, a problem with their interpretative services. When she read the statute and read it as the employee's suggestion. The employee and the team of employees came up with this suggestion. That's what we're awarding is the suggestion, not the fact that they were already looking at interpretative services. Because until, you know, she said, that they fed the idea back to the team and helping them becoming successful—that might not be the case in every instance.

Ms. Rachel Baker stated, this question would serve just to prompt those questions. She asked, is it being fed by the agency or, did you come up with this all by yourself. Then we could make a decision to award based on the duration of the pilot. Chairperson Mendez confirmed and added, the whole intent by having something on the form and maybe the Board doesn't include it on the form. If you are an employee reading the form you would answer the question and the Board would then know it's part of that program or a similar program. Ms. Young recommended the Board not only change the employee form but also change the form the agency submits, and asked that similar question on there. So, that it's clear to all parties, so the change is reflected on both sides. Ms. Baker replied that the employer responses or the agency responses are in such different formats and asked if the Board wanted to generate a uniform response form that asks these questions.

There was some confusion regarding the form. Chairperson Mendez reminded the Board the agency response form was created by DHHS and added she would develop a new form based on the DHHS template, but with additional questions. All the Agencies would utilize the same form and respond in uniformity.

Chairperson Mendez noted she would be happy to come up with a form based on the DHHS form and present it at the next meeting. It was noted that supporting documentation should also be requested at the same time. Examples were given from earlier suggestions where it was noted that the suggestion was in policy but no policy documentation was provided.

Chairperson Mendez asked that the Board Members email her with any other suggestions or comments to the form and she would put something together for the next meeting for review.

Ms. Baker noted it would also be beneficial if the Board included those items on the form related to previously considered, when was it considered, in what format was it considered, whether it was discussed in past state or Board meetings, etc.

Chairperson Mendez noted there were a couple of other items to discuss. She provided a status on Mr. Robert Shaw. She reminded the Board that it tabled because B&I was going to look at it as a pilot program. Apparently, the Chair's last conversation with Mr. Terry Reynolds indicated the Board should have received some kind of formal response from the team at B&I. To date, the Board still has not received that formal response. She is awaiting receipt of another response from Mr. Reynolds or from B&I directly regarding this pilot program for the agency.

Regarding Haaland McIntire, Chair Mendez stated the Board is waiting to hear back from the Controller's Office regarding the actual realized savings. It looks like it's going to be quite a bit more time to get that information, after the end of the FY. Mr. Bud Milazzo who is the Senior Deputy Treasurer informed the Board they are very comfortable with utilizing the confirmed estimated savings of \$11,573. If the Board should want to pursue an actual award in a more timely fashion, they are fine with using that figure that was initially provided. Chair Mendez asked him to send his approval in writing as well. It was asked if they have implemented the suggestion. Chairperson Mendez confirmed and added, we were just waiting for the actual numbers to start coming in to confirm that \$11,000. He says that they don't have the figures yet and noted they won't have the figures until after the close the state fiscal year, which closes in June. Chairperson Mendez confirmed. It was noted, it won't be until after September when the actual fiscal year closes and the Controller's Office stops processing transactions. Ms. Young stated she was not comfortable with awarding off the \$11,000 because the award in the statute, it says it has to be realized. The cash payment in NRS 285.070, pointing out that in No. 7, it says an award may not be made for an employee's suggestion pursuant to this section until the state has realized a reduction, elimination or avoidance of expenditure or any improvement in operations as a result of employee suggestion. She also noted the potential could be that it could be higher when the agency finally does their final amount and was not comfortable with awarding this without the confirmed savings.

Chairperson Mendez noted she would get back to Bud and let him know. She asked the question because it was going to take so long and his statement was, they're fairly confident that that's what the savings are going to be, is what's stated. That's why he didn't have an issue with it. Chair will follow-up and let him know what the Board said. There was no decision made.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Moved to adjourn.
BY: Chairperson Mendez
SECOND: Harry Schiffman
VOTE: The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.