

# VOTE 1: MEETING MINUTES

Date of Meeting: December 12, 2024  
Start Time: 12:00 PM  
End Time: 3:07 PM

	Present?	Vote 1: Approval of Minutes (October 10, 2024)	Vote 2: Executive Session	Vote 3: Mass General Brigham's Performance Improvement Plan
Deborah Devaux*	X	2 <sup>nd</sup>	X	X
Barbara Blakeney	X	M	X	X
Matilde Castiel	X	X	X	X
Martin Cohen	X	X	M	M
David Cutler	X	X	X	X
Timothy Foley *arrived ~1:50 PM	X	*	*	X
Patricia Houpt	X	X	2 <sup>nd</sup>	X
Ron Mastrogiovanni	X	X	X	X
Alecia McGregor	X	X	X	X
Secretary Kate Walsh or Kiame Mahaniah (Designee)	X	X	X	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz or Dana Sullivan (Designee)	X	ab	X	X
Summary	11 Members Attended	Approved with 9 votes in the affirmative	Approved with 10 votes in the affirmative	Approved with 11 votes in the affirmative

Presented below is a summary of the meeting, including time-keeping, attendance, and votes.

\*Chairman

(M): Made motion; (2<sup>nd</sup>): Seconded motion; (ab): Abstained from Vote; (A): Absent from Meeting

## Proceedings

A virtual meeting of the Health Policy Commission (HPC) was held on December 12, 2024 at 12 PM. Commissioners attended the meeting remote, via Zoom. A [recording](#) of the meeting and the [meeting materials](#) are available on the HPC's website.

Participating commissioners who attended virtually were Ms. Deborah Devaux (Chair); Mr. Martin Cohen (Vice Chair); Ms. Barbara Blakeney; Dr. Matilde Castiel; Dr. David Cutler; Mr. Timothy Foley; Ms. Patty Houpt; Mr. Ron Mastrogiovanni; Dr. Alecia McGregor, Sec. Kate Walsh, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EHS); and Ms. Dana Sullivan, designee for Sec. Matthew Gorzkowicz, Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF).

Ms. Devaux began the meeting at 12 PM and welcomed the commissioners, staff, and members of the public viewing the meeting on the livestream.

### ITEM 1: Approval of Minutes

Ms. Coleen Elstermeyer, Deputy Executive Director, managed the roll call vote to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2024 Board meeting. Ms. Blakeney made the motion to approve the minutes, and Ms. Devaux seconded it. The vote was taken by a roll call. The motion was approved.

### ITEM 2: Executive Session

The Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 12:05 PM.

The Board returned to the public session at 1:20 PM. Ms. Devaux welcomed the public to the open session of the meeting and provided an overview of the remaining items on the agenda. She also introduced Dana Sullivan, the new designee to the Board of Commissioners on behalf of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance.

### ITEM 3: Office of the Attorney General's 2024 Examination of Health Care Cost Trends: Presentation from Assistant Attorney General Lisa Gaulin and Assistant Attorney General Chloe Cable

Ms. Devaux introduced the guest presentation and the guest speakers, Assistant Attorney General Lisa Gaulin and Assistant Attorney General Chloe Cable from the Office of the Attorney General. The presentation focused on the Office of the Attorney General's "2024 Examination of Health Care Cost Trends." The [presentation materials](#) and a [recording](#) of the presentation is available on the HPC's [website](#).

### ITEM 4: Evaluation Results: Mass General Brigham's Performance Improvement Plan

Mr. Seltz provided an overview of the topic and Ms. Kara Vidal, Director, Health System Planning and Performance, presented the evaluation results of Mass General Brigham's (MGB) Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). For more information, see slides 37-58.

Mr. Cohen commended staff for their work on the evaluation and findings from MGB's PIP. He expressed concerns about the sustainability of MGB keeping their spending growth reduced and asked if the HPC had

the metrics to continue to measure their growth over time to see if sustainability continues, outside of the PIPs process. Ms. Vidal responded that PIPs process is the best way to continue monitoring MGB, as it allows staff to review total health care expenditure data and engage directly with referred payers and providers. She said if MGB were to be referred again to the HPC for a potential PIP, the agency would be able to use that process not just to evaluate spending trends but to seek additional information on each of the factors shown in the presentation such as pricing, utilization, patient demographics served, and payer mix data. Mr. Seltz added that the HPC's Cost Trends Hearings provides another public opportunity for the Board to engage with MGB in future years and ask about their sustainability efforts.

Dr. Cutler also commended the staff for their work during the PIPs process and the evaluation. He said that the PIPs process worked for MGB, and that the agency and public have learned that spending can be reduced during this process. He noted that these are real savings impacting people of the Commonwealth receiving care at MGB. He added that by itself, the PIPs process is not the only tool that the HPC needs in its toolbox to oversee the health care market. He overall felt good about the progress made by MGB under the PIP.

Dr. McGregor said that in the future, it would be important to see the evaluation of how the savings were achieved and if the savings were made at the expense of vulnerable populations or those on specific health plans, noting that it would be important to know the impact on the populations served by MGB as well as the savings accrued by the hospital.

Ms. Devaux underscored the point that engaging in a PIP with an organization that is prepared to provide the rigor and commitment to the PIP has proven to work. She added that given that this was the HPC's first PIP, the agency learned a lot in the process and thanked the leadership of MGB for working with the agency during the PIP.

Mr. Foley emphasized the points made by previous commissioners and thanked HPC staff for their work on the PIP. He added that the HPC was able to learn a lot during this process and that the success of the PIP speaks to strengthening the HPC's role in market oversight moving forward. He said that this reinforces the agency's policy recommendations to provide the HPC with additional tools to continue our work and better oversee the health care market. Mr. Seltz added that many of the strategies utilized by MGB for cost-savings are consistent across areas that the HPC recommends for cost-savings throughout the entire health care system, and he looks forward to legislative adoption of some of these policies.

## **ITEM 5: Mass General Brigham's Performance Improvement Plan**

Ms. Elstermeyer managed the roll call vote to determine whether Mass General Brigham's Performance Improvement Plan was successful. Mr. Cohen made the motion for the Board to vote to determine that Mass General Brigham's Performance Improvement Plan was successful. Secretary Walsh seconded it. The vote was taken by roll call. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **ITEM 6: Research Presentation: Behavioral Health Emergency Department Boarding in Massachusetts**

Mr. Seltz noted the short remainder of time left for the public meeting and postponed the research presentation on Behavioral Health Emergency Room Boarding in Massachusetts for a future meeting. He acknowledged the importance of the presentation and discussion around the findings with commissioners at a later date.

## ITEM 7: Executive Director's Report

Mr. Seltz began the Executive Director's Report and turned to Ms. Kate Mills, Senior Director, Market Oversight and Transparency to provide an update on the notices of material change (MCNs) received since the last Board meeting.

Mr. Seltz turned to Ms. Kate McCann, Assistant General Counsel, to provide an update on recent legislative changes impacting Massachusetts' entrance into the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) and impacts on the Commonwealth. Mr. Foley asked if there would be an assessment of the impact of the nursing workforce in Massachusetts. Ms. McCann said the enabling legislation did not require an evaluation or an assessment to be conducted but something like that could potentially be done in the future. Ms. Blakeney commented that one area for a potential evaluation would be the other states that have been involved in the compact for longer period of time and assessments have been made on the NLC's impact. She added that the Compact would likely have information tracking the impact of the NLC over the years.

Mr. Seltz provided an overview of the HPC's future priority areas for discussion with the Board and turned to Ms. Hannah Kloomok, Chief of Staff, to announce the release of the 2024 Summer Fellowship Program Report and provided an overview of the HPC's year in review, 2024: By the Numbers. For more information, see slides 86-101.

## ITEM 8: Adjourn

Ms. Devaux acknowledged that this meeting would be Commissioner Blakeney's final public meeting on the HPC Board and Ms. Blakeney provided remarks on her time as an HPC Commissioner.

The meeting adjourned at 3:07 PM