

**NEW JERSEY COUNTIES EXCESS JOINT INSURANCE FUND  
OPEN MINUTES  
OCTOBER 23, 2025  
VIA TELECONFERENCE  
9:30 AM**

**MEETING OF THE FUND CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:30 A.M. BY CHAIRMAN ANGILELLA  
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT READ INTO RECORD**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL BOARD OF FUND COMMISSIONERS**

Ross Angilella, Chairman	Camden County	Present
Tim Sheehan, Secretary	Gloucester County	Present
Janette Kessler, Commissioner	Atlantic County	Present
Ashley Buono, Commissioner	Burlington County	Absent
Kevin Smaniotto, Commissioner	Cumberland County	Absent
John Kelly, Commissioner	Ocean County	Present
Edmund Shea, Commissioner	Hudson County	Present
Chris Marion, Commissioner	Mercer County	Present
Laura Scutari, Commissioner	Union County	Present
Teri O'Connor, Commissioner	Monmouth County	Present

**ALTERNATE FUND COMMISSIONERS**

Anna Marie Wright	Camden County	Absent
Dina Rocco	Burlington County	Absent
Michael Fiure	Ocean County	Absent
Nicola Trasente	Mercer County	Absent
Eugenio Esquivel	Union County	Present
Joseph Kelly	Monmouth County	Present

**APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Executive Director/Administrator	PERMA Risk Management Services <b>Joseph Hrubash, Nancy A. Ghani, Brandon Tracy</b>
	Perma Claims <b>Robyn Walcoff</b>
Attorney	<b>Laura Paffenroth</b>
Safety Director	JA Montgomery Risk Control <b>Glenn Prince</b>
Underwriting Manager	Conner Strong & Buckelew <b>Edward Cooney, Jonathon Tavares</b>
Claims Administrator Property Claims Administrator	Vanguard Claims Administrator <b>Sarah Mentzer</b>
WC Claims Administrator	Claims Resolution Corporation <b>Lauren Joseph, Domenic Mariani, Linda Tinsely-Page</b>

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Elaine Flacco, Camden County College  
Antoinette DePaola, Ocean County  
Jenna Baumgartner, Old Republic Specialty Insurance Group  
Rachel Perry, Conner Strong & Buckelew, Underwriting  
Muhammed Hernandez, Conner Strong & Buckelew, Underwriting  
Tom Merchel, Conner Strong & Buckelew, RMC  
Katherine Walters, Conner Strong & Buckelew, RMC  
Jaclyn Lindsey, Conner Strong & Buckelew, RMC  
Peter Soriero, Allied Risk Management Services, RMC  
Victoria Sjulander, Alliant Americas, RMC  
Christina Violetti, Hardenbergh Insurance Group, RMC  
Robin Racioppi, North American Insurance Group, RMC  
Bradford Stokes, PERMA  
Cathy Dodd, PERMA  
Jason Thorpe, PERMA  
Karen Read, PERMA  
Elisabeth Chipman, PERMA  
Kerin Drumheiser, PERMA Claims  
Shai McLeod, PERMA Claims

**MINUTES:** Open Minutes as of September 25, 2025 were included in the appendices agenda and Closed Minutes as of September 25, 2025, were distributed separately for review.

**MOTION TO APPROVE OPEN MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 AND CLOSED MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 AS PRESENTED:**

Moved: Commissioner Kessler  
Second: Commissioner Shea  
All in favor: Unanimous

**CORRESPONDENCE: NONE**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**NJCE CLAIMS REVIEW COMMITTEE:** Executive Director reported that the Claims Review Committee met on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00am to review PARs. There were no additional questions, however Closed Session was needed to discuss a property claim that exceeded \$500,000 and will be discussed in Closed Session. Chairman Angilella said the motion to approve the claims committee's recommendations will take place following the closed session.

**NJCE COMMITTEES:**

**FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE:** Executive Director reported the Finance Sub-Committee met on October 17<sup>th</sup> to review the 2026 Preliminary Budget, receive an update on the excess insurance marketing, discuss preliminary 2025 dividends, and update on responses to the procurement of certain professional services. Executive Director said the Finance Sub Committee is scheduled to meet again on virtually November 14<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Included in the agenda was the preliminary budget and preliminary ancillary budget. The following items were discussed:

**EXCESS INSURANCE MARKETING UPDATE:** Underwriting Manager touched on discussion points mentioned during the 2026 pre-renewal webinar on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10am advising the Sub Committee the insurance marketplace has continued to stabilize from the hard insurance market, which will help with our budget projections.

**2026 PRELIMINARY BUDGET:** The 2026 preliminary Budget is \$45,527,982 representing an increase of \$2,110,154 or 4.86% over the 2025 Annualized Assessed Budget. Executive Director said the premium portion of the budget does not include final changes to the exposure basis and is based on current projections from Underwriting Manager. Also, there is a premium contingency line to account for any changes in projections and quotes.

Executive Director provided a high-level overview of the budget noting *Lines 1-9* reflect loss funding provided by the Actuary, *Lines 12-18* reflect the excess insurance noting liability is showing a large premium increase and *Lines 25-42* reflect expenses incurred by the fund representing a 2% cost of living increase for the vendors in addition to funding for property appraisal reimbursement and Safety Grant supplemental funding. With respect to property appraisals, Member Commissions/Counties are still in various stages of completing the required property appraisal program so consideration should be given to extending the reimbursement program for the 2026 budget year. The reimbursement is currently capped at \$20,000 per member Commissions/Counties. The intent for our membership would be to self-fund this starting with the 2027 budget.

Executive Director said we are getting further removed from the pandemic and one of the harder insurance markets since the 1980's. The Ancillary budget also reflects current projections from the Underwriting Manager.

**2025 DIVIDEND OPTIONS (PRELIMINARY):** Fund Office is in the early stages of budget development, and it was agreed to delay a dividend decision. The Sub Committee reviewed the historical distribution of dividends for informational purposes and was also presented with three dividend options in the amounts of \$250,000, \$500,000 and \$750,000 should the subcommittee consider recommending a dividend at the appropriate time. Executive Director added that dividends were suspended for several years due to a significant decline in surplus due to a culmination of several factors such as the hard market, pandemic and significant property losses.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:** Executive Director reported the contracts for Actuary, Auditor, Payroll Auditor and Litigation Manager expire December 31, 2025. Fund Office in conjunction with NJCE Fund Attorney and QPA issued requests for quotes with proposals due by October 15<sup>th</sup>; only responses from the incumbent professionals were received.

Executive Director said the quotes for a term of January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026 were as follows Actuary – Actuarial Advantage submitted a quote in the amount of \$26,130, Auditor – Bowman & Company submitted a quote in the amount of \$19,664, Payroll Auditor - Bowman & Company submitted a quote in the amount of \$24,202, Litigation Manager - Judge E. David Millard of Citta, Holzapfel & Zabarsky submitted a quote in the amount of \$295 per hour.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE AND AWARD ACTUARY SERVICES TO ACTUARIAL ADVANTAGE, AUDITOR SERVICES TO BOWMAN & COMPANY, PAYROLL AUDITOR SERVICES TO BOWMAN & COMPANY, AND LITIGATION MANAGER TO CITTA, HOLZAPFEL & ZABARSKY**

Moved: Commissioner Jack Kelly  
Second: Commissioner Kessler  
Vote: 8 Ayes – 0 Nays

**SAFETY COMMITTEE:** Safety Director reported the Safety Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am via Zoom; a variety of topics will be discussed.

**2025 BEST PRACTICES WORKSHOP:** Executive Director reported the NJCE Best Practices Workshop will be hosted virtually on October 30, 2025, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. John Geaney of Capehart Scatchard will be the keynote speaker. Several County representatives have volunteered to participate in presentations. An invitation to register was distributed via email on September 4<sup>th</sup> and was included in the agenda. Perma Claims sent reminders via email to register on October 20<sup>th</sup> if you haven't already done so. Ms. Drumheiser encouraged Fund Commissioners to invite department heads and employees to register/attend.

**DUE DILIGENCE REPORTS**

**FINANCIAL FAST TRACK:** Enclosed in the agenda was the Financial Fast Track as of July 31, 2025. Executive Director reported the statutory surplus was \$16.1 million an increase of \$4.1 million year to date and a strong cash balance of \$41.07 million.

**CLAIMS MANAGEMENT REPORT:** Enclosed in the agenda was the Expected Loss Ratio as of July 31, 2025. Executive Director said this report correlates with the Financial Fast Track and highlighted the 2021 and 2023 Fund years which showed significant losses in Property.

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST – AS OF 10/21/2025:** Enclosed in the agenda was a checklist that tracks contracts, compliance and other Fund business.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:** The Counties of Mercer, Ocean, Hudson and Union are scheduled to renew their three-year membership with the Fund as of January 1, 2025. To date, the Counties of Ocean and Mercer have renewed their membership with the NJCE JIF. Executive Director reported that the Fund Office received notice that the Counties of Union and Hudson are expected to renew their membership with the Fund.

**AUDIT FILING:** Executive Director reported the final 2024 Year End Audit has been filed with both Departments of Insurance and Community Affairs and the Synopsis of Audit was published in the Fund's official newspapers.

**2025 NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES (NJSLOM) ANNUAL CONFERENCE:** The 110th annual conference is scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> through November 20<sup>th</sup> at the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City. Executive Director reported the MEL JIF holds its annual elected officials seminar on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Included in the agenda was a copy of the memorandum distributed by the MEL on the MEL/JIF events being held in Atlantic City – including the Elected Officials Seminar. Deputy Executive Director welcomed interested individuals to attend the MEL Annual Professional Reception scheduled for November 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM.

**UNDERWRITING MANAGERS REPORT:**

**REPORT:** Mr. Cooney reported on the renewal and said he will keep communication open with any changes concerning the excess insurance marketing, other plans and developments as his team works through the overall renewal.

**TREASURER REPORT:**

Included in the agenda was the approval of payments and the Treasurer's reports for October and August 2025.

**VOUCHER PAYMENTS (BILL LIST) –**

Resolution 37-25 Approval of October 2025 Payments      \$209,690.49

**CONFIRMATION OF AUGUST 2025 CLAIMS PAYMENTS/CERTIFICATION OF CLAIMS TRANSFERS WAS UNAVAILABLE FOR THE OCTOBER AGENDA.**

**MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 37-25 APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2025 PAYMENTS**

Moved: Chairman Angilella  
Second: Commissioner Jack Kelly  
All in favor: Unanimous

**SAFETY DIRECTOR:**

**REPORT:** Safety Director submitted a report reflecting the risk control activities and the Safety Director Bulletins distributed from September 2025 to November 2025 and training opportunities through December 11<sup>th</sup>. Safety Director's office distributed a notice on the final MEL/NJCE expo at the Rowan College of Gloucester County on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

The NJCE Leadership Academy open enrollment will be open from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 22<sup>nd</sup> and can be accessed through the website – njce.org.

**FUND ATTORNEY:**

**REPORT:** Fund Attorney had nothing additional to report.

**CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR-WORKERS COMPENSATION:**

**REPORT:**

Claims Resolution Corporation submitted their network savings report-showing provider billed amounts of \$32,092, paid amount of \$120,205 and net savings of \$26,103 or 82% through September 2025. There was a 72% network utilization rate through September 2025.

**CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR:**

**REPORT:** Vanguard had nothing further to report in open and no PARs to review in Closed Session.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Executive Director requested closed session to discuss a property PAR that was \$500,000 or more in closed session. There were no members of the public and all attendees attended the closed session.

**MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 38-25 TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION**

Moved: Chairman Angilella  
Second: Commissioner Jack Kelly  
All in favor: Unanimous

**NJCE CLAIMS REVIEW COMMITTEE:** Following Closed Session, Chairman Angilella motioned to approve the claims committee's recommendations from the meeting held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 AM.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CLAIMS COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE THE CLAIMS**

Moved: Chairman Angilella  
Second: Commissioner Jack Kelly  
All in favor: Unanimous

**OLD BUSINESS:**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Jack Kelly said he will no longer be the Fund Commissioner for Ocean County beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> because his role within the County is changing. Chairman Angilella wished him luck in his new role.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

NONE

**NON- AGENDA ITEMS:**

NONE

**NEXT MEETING: Friday, November 21, 2025 - 9:30 AM via Zoom Video/Audio**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

Moved:	Commissioner Jack Kelly
Second:	Chairman Angilella
All in favor:	Unanimous

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:00 AM**

Brandon Tracy, Assisting Secretary