

Minutes: NHWSB Data Workgroup

Date: Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025

Minutes prepared by: Linnea Becerra

Location: Hybrid – Koochiching Room at the Department of Labor and Industry and via Webex

Attendance

Members present

Kim Brenne

Michele Fredrickson (remotely, joined at 11:39 a.m.)

Paula Rocheleau (remotely)

Visitors present

Elyse Bailey, Department of Human Services

Todd Bergstrom

Jeff Bostic

Peter Butler, Department of Human Services

Brian Elliott

DLI staff members present

Ali Afsharjavan (remotely)

Linnea Becerra

Paul Enger

Ken McGurran

Leah Solo

Agenda items

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Executive Director Leah Solo at 11:04 a.m. Roll call was taken. A quorum was declared.
2. **Approval of agenda** – A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Kim Brenne and seconded by Paula Rocheleau. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Approval of drafted meeting minutes** – A motion to approve the Aug. 8, 2024, drafted meeting minutes as presented was made by Brenne and seconded by Rocheleau. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.
4. **Board updates** – Executive Director Solo introduced the purpose of the workgroup meeting, which was to discuss data needs post the release of the November forecast and post the governor’s first budget. The item on the table is the change item specifically related to the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board included in the governor’s first budget. Solo said the board has gone through its first process of rulemaking and can now reflect on what it may need for the next rulemaking process, specifically what kind of data and how it will be collected.
5. **New business** –

- Everyone present, both online and in person, introduced themselves and their roles both in relation to the board and separate of it.
- Peter Butler, budget manager for aging disability services at the Department of Human Services, walked through the change item. Different from a fiscal note, as was presented last spring, the change item gives more background and context around the policy rationale for the proposal. Butler talked about the costs in the coming fiscal years. He said the proposal includes two components: the cost of medical assistance and the small cost for Minnesota IT Services (MNIT). Butler explained the interactive effect noted in the change item and how the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board relates to other nursing home changes in the governor’s budget. The interactive effect is the main reason why the numbers look different than the fiscal note previously presented to the Data Workgroup; secondarily, this updates cost report numbers. Butler introduced the governor’s proposal to cap nursing home payment rates with an inflationary cap of approximately 2% a year. Rates would be calculated as they are now, but would be capped at 2%, excluding the property rate and the external fixed cost portion.
- Brenne shared the estimated daily rate add on – the estimated increase to the nursing daily rate would be \$3.97 a day, per resident, for calendar-year 2028. The \$3.97 is in addition to the 2% increase facilities would be receiving. These are calculated on a statewide basis.
- Jeff Bostic questioned how the Department of Human Services arrived at the \$3.97 number. Brenne responded it was inflated based off the workforce incentive grant data and some cost report data. Bostic also said a facility-specific add on would be a better path, rather than the statewide add on.
- Rocheleau added that the proposed cap is affecting the negotiating that is already happening with staff members and unions to get closer this year to the proposed minimum wages taking effect Jan. 1, 2026.
- Michele Fredrickson asked what would happen if the proposed language does not get approved; Executive Director Solo said new standards would be set if the appropriation by the Legislature is not made or federal approval is not secured.
- There was clarification that whatever form this change item takes, it will be clear to lawmakers which parts are directly affecting the standards and higher wages for nursing home workers.
- Solo emphasized the board is not set up as an advocacy organization at the Capitol and creates the rules the Legislature will weigh in on.

6. Next meeting –

Adjournment

A motion was made by Brenne to adjourn the meeting at 12:09 p.m. and was seconded by Rocheleau. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.