SOUTH BERGEN VII WORKERS' COMPENSATION POOL
MINUTES
MEETING –MARCH 16, 2026
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING
1:30 P.M.

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Wasserman. Open Public Meeting Act read into Minutes by Chairperson Wasserman.

ROLL CALL OF 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Chairperson		
Andrea Wasserman	Montvale BOE	Present
Vice-Chair		
Samantha Dembowski	North Arlington BOE	Present
Secretary		
Keith Rosado	Westwood BOE	Present
Trustees		
John Marmora	Emerson BOE	Present
Jenine Murray	Hasbrouck Heights BOE	Absent
Laurel Spadavecchia	Moonachie BOE	Present
Thomas O'Hern	Ramsey BOE	Present

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Executive Director/ Administrator	Perma Risk Management Services **Joseph Hrubash** **Cate Kiernan**	 Present Present
Attorney	**William Bailey, Esq.**	Present
Treasurer	**Dr. Philip Nisonoff**	Absent
Underwriting Manager/ Excess WC Broker	Polaris Galaxy **Justin Gallo**	 Present
Claims Services	Bergen Risk Managers **John Markel**	 Present
Actuary	AIS Risk Consultants **Allan Schwartz**	 Absent

OTHERS PRESENT:
Jody Pietrowitz, Wallington BOE
Jason Thorpe, PERMA
Pauline Kontomanolis, PERMA
Emalee Cronwell, PERMA
Candy Leonard, PERMA
Kerin Drumheiser, PERMA
Brian Vassallo, PERMA
Kathleen McGuire, BRM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OPEN MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2026

MOTION TO APPROVE THE OPEN MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2026

MOVED:	Vice-Chair Dembowski
SECOND:	Director Marmora
VOTE:	Unanimous

CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Wasserman referred to six letters of intent to seek alternate quotes that were sent received by the Pool office enclosed within the agenda.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ADMINISTRATOR:

2026/2027 BUDGET PROCESS – Executive Director said the proposed SOBER Pool 2026/2027 budget is being introduced at this meeting. Executive Director reported that PERMA met with the Pool Officers multiple times to review various budget options. Executive Director referred to the proposed budget and assessments enclosed within the agenda. Executive Director advised since a surplus transfer was used for the 2025/26 budget, the overall budget is in the amount of $3,727,018 which reflects an increase of $98,109 or 2.7% before factoring any potential surplus offset for the upcoming fiscal year. Executive Director advised that the introductory budget exhibit includes a potential premium surplus offset of $454,248 from the 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 fiscal years. Executive Director noted that the actual surplus offset amount is $500,000 and explained that 91% of that surplus ($454,248) will be applied to the current membership's assessments, subject to approval by DOBI and DCA. Executive Director added the balance of the surplus offset is retained by the Pool to pay for existing and/or potential claims associated with former Pool members. Executive Director then proceeded to review the proposed budget further. Executive Director advised that loss funds are provided directly by the Pool Actuary and noted that they are increasing by 3%. Executive Director reviewed the expenses section of the proposed budget and advised that a 2% inflationary increase has been applied totaling $6,161. Executive Director asked if there were any questions and/or comments on the proposed budget. Chair Wasserman thanked everyone from PERMA for their time and effort on preparing the budget. Executive Director then referred to the proposed assessments within the agenda and reviewed the various columns. Executive Director added that if any of the members who submitted letters of intent were to leave the Pool, it will impact the budget. Executive Director reminded the Board that if their district plans on seeking alternate quotes they must notify the Pool office by April 1, 2026. Executive Director asked if there were any questions and/or comments on the proposed assessments. Chair Wasserman asked what happens if a member decides to leave the Pool after the budget is adopted. Executive Director advised that a meeting would be

scheduled to approve a budget amendment. Mr. Bailey, Esq. noted that the Pool Bylaws require that members provide 30-day notice to the Pool office if they are leaving the Pool July 1, 2026. Secretary Rosado asked when the budget needed to be adopted by. Executive Director advised that the budget is scheduled to be adopted on April 20th and noted that the changes would not take effect until July 1, 2026. Executive Director added that the surplus transfer approval request will be sent to the state following the April 20th budget adoption and noted that he does not anticipate any issues with the approval. Executive Director advised that the goal was to use less funds for the surplus transfer, however, considering the environment and the landscape such as rising health insurance costs, the Pool Officers suggested issuing roughly the same surplus transfer amount again this year. Executive Director asked if there were any questions and/or comments. Hearing none, Chair Wasserman asked for a motion to introduce the 2026/2027 budget.

MOTION TO INTRODUCE THE 2026/2027 BUDGET FOR THE SOUTH BERGEN VII WORKERS' COMPENSATION POOL IN THE AMOUNT OF $3,727,018 AND SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING FOR APRIL 20, 2026 AT 1:30PM VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING.

MOVED:	Director Spadavecchia
SECOND:	Director Marmora
ROLL CALL VOTE:	Unanimous

POOL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – Executive Director advised that PERMA's contract is set to expire on July 1, 2026. Executive Director noted that the contract was awarded in 2023 with an option to renew for an additional 2 years. Executive Director said the Board can decide whether to issue a Competitive Contracting RFP or adopt the enclosed Resolution to extend the contract term. Chair Wasserman asked what happens to the contract if most of the membership leaves the Pool. Mr. Bailey, Esq. advised that if a member leaves, they will still be responsible for certain obligations they may have accrued prior to leaving the Pool. Executive Director said that if many members left the Pool, contract discussions would need to take place. Chair Wasserman asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, Chair Wasserman asked for a motion to adopt the resolution extending PERMA's contract for an additional 2 years.

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 18-25/26 AUTHORIZING THE EXTENSION OF AWARD OF POOL ADMINISTRATOR/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR THROUGH THE COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING PROCESS CC# 23-01 FOR A PERIOD OF 2 YEARS.

MOVED:	Vice-Chair Dembowski
SECOND:	Director Marmora
ROLL CALL VOTE:	Unanimous

Executive Director thanked the Board, on behalf of the PERMA staff, for the contract extension and said the PERMA team will continue to work hard on this account. Chair Wasserman thanked PERMA, on behalf of the member school districts, for all of their work on the Pool account.

SOBER MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS – Executive Director reminded the Board that with the exception of Westwood School District, all other members are now in year three of their

3-year membership with the Pool which will expire 6/30/2026. Executive Director noted that the Pool office will distribute the renewal documents to the membership in the month of April.

CLAIMS TRACKING REPORTS – Executive Director referred to a copy of the Claims Management Expected Loss Ratio Analysis Report as of January 31, 2026. Executive Director advised this report measures how the losses were running compared to the actuary's projections. Executive Director reviewed the Fund Years with the Board.

TREASURER

Chair Wassermann referred to the March bills lists, Resolutions 19-25/26 included in the agenda. Chair Wassermann asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Wasserman asked for a motion to approve.

RESOLUTION 19-25/26 MARCH VOUCHER PAYMENTS (BILL LIST):

2024-25:	$	7,200.00
2026-26:	$	66,809.29
TOTAL:	**$**	**74,009.29**

MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 19-25/26 MARCH VOUCHER LIST AS SUBMITTED:

MOVED:	Vice-Chair Dembowski
SECOND:	Director Spadavecchia
ROLL CALL VOTE:	Unanimous

POOL ATTORNEY:

Mr. Bailey, Esq. advised that he did not have a report for the month.

CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR:

Mr. Markel referred to his report enclosed within the agenda packet. Yep, mine's just a quick report. Mr. Markel advised that his report reflects the February 28th claims data for fiscal years 2024-25 and 2025-26. Mr. Markel reported that in fiscal year 2024-25, the claims frequency was 191 claims and the total incurred at that point was $1,083,717. Mr. Markel noted that there were 42 fall down claims with a total incurred amount of $573,487. Mr. Markel reported that at the same point in fiscal year 2025-26, the claims frequency is 195 claims but noted that the total incurred is $796,300. Mr. Markel noted that there have been 59 fall down claims with a total incurred amount of $497,448. Mr. Markel said frequency has increased slightly, which does not surprise him due to the harsh winter, but noted that the total incurred amount has decreased, which reflects some progress.

UNDERWRITING MANAGER:

Mr. Gallo reported that he received preliminary quotes from the incumbent carrier, Safety National (SN), and also Midwest Employers (MEC) for the workers' compensation excess coverage. Mr. Gallo said although the numbers are not final, the MEC quote is 7% less expensive than the SN quote at the expiring SIR option of $750,000. Mr. Gallo noted that the

higher quote from SN is due to them enforcing their minimum premium thresholds. Mr. Gallo advised that he will continue to have discussions with both carriers and will advise PERMA if he receives any updates on the renewal.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

MOTION:	Director Spadavecchia
SECOND:	Secretary Rosado
VOTE:	Unanimous

MEETING ADJOURNED: **2:01 pm**
NEXT MEETING: **April 2026**
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Jason Thorpe, Assisting Secretary
For
Keith Rosado, SECRETARY

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