



**North River Collaborative Board of Directors
Minutes**

Friday, December 13, 2024 - 9:00 AM

In Person with Remote Option (If Required)

198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/bpi-ukyj-aei>

Or dial: (US) +1 402-752-0232 PIN: 426 219 759#

On March 29, 2023, Governor Healey signed into law an extension of the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025. Specifically, this further extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide "ad equate, alternative" access to remote meetings.

Present: Paul Tzovolos, Marie Grable, Lori Joidon, Matt Ferron, Julie Hamilton, Jeff Szymaniak, Alan Cron, Mark Bodwell, Joe Baeta, Felicia Moschella, Ellen George

Absent: Liz Legault, Ryan Powers

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:01 by Board Chair Joe Baeta.

II. Approval of Minutes for November 1, 2024- Deferred until February 7, 2025 meeting

III. Discussion/Action Items

A. Acceptance of the FY24 Audit- Final Report and Management Letter- Paul Tzovolos thanked Ellen George and her team for the great job in the preparation of the annual audit, which had no findings. Mr. Tzovolos advised the Board that the past fiscal year consisted of planned investments in supplies and necessary repairs to move the Collaborative forward. The Auditor's management letter recommended: 1. The Collaborative continues to review and evaluate enhancements to current policies and procedures, specifically establish, implement and monitor internal controls specifically to current and future accounting standards. 2. The Collaborative should ensure a more formalized documentation of the review and approval of billing and other transactions (credits) within established billing and receivable processes on a routine basis. 3. Procurement of services needs to be formally documented. 4. A more formalized documentation and reconciliation of gross payroll being posted to the general ledger and third-party payroll provider should be maintained. Ellen George reviewed the final audited budget numbers for the Board. The actual year-end balance was \$12,615,512 with an end of year surplus of \$81,837.

Motion: Matt Ferron made a motion to accept the FY24 Audit, Final Report and management letter. Jeff Szymaniak seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

B. Acceptance of the FY24 Cumulative Surplus- Paul Tzovolos told the Board that the cumulative surplus of \$44,673 will be returned to the 10 member districts in the form of credit. Paul Tzovolos asked the Board to recommend the surplus be returned to the member districts in the form of a credit of \$4,673.30 to each member district.

Motion: Julie Hamilton made a motion to accept the cumulative surplus of \$44,673 and the disbursement by credit of \$4,673.30 to the 10 member districts. Mark Bodwell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Acceptance of the FY24 North River Collaborative Annual Report- Paul Tzovolos thanked Kelli O'Brien McKinnon for her work on the annual report. Mr. Tzovolos went on to assure the Board that the report has been screened to ensure all DESE requirements were present in the report. Chairman Joe Baeta commented that the report was well done.

Motion: Alan Cron made a motion to accept the FY24 North River Collaborative Annual Report. Matt Ferron seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

D. FY25 General Fund Revenue and Expense Projection -Ellen George reviewed the FY25 General Fund Revenue and Expense Projection for the Board. Ms. George informed the Board that the actual year to date general fund balance of \$6,744,296.71 does not take into account the deferred revenue which is for January and February. She went on to tell the Board that the expenditures are as of December 31, 2024 but the revenue is projected out two months. Ms. George reviewed the programs current status of the NRC programs: North River School is still in a deficit due to enrollment. The Learning Center is strong in enrollment but with that has come higher expenses as well. The SAILS program continues to build, and Transportation continues to hire at a consistent rate.

Motion: Alan Cron made a motion to accept the FY25 General Fund and Revenue Expense Projection. Mark Bodwell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

E. Transfer of up to \$55,000 from the Health Insurance Retirees Trust to the General Fund for the purpose of reimbursement to North River Collaborative for the payment of Retirees Health Insurance July 2024 to December 2024. Ellen George asked the Board to approve the transfer of \$55,000 from the Health Insurance Retirees Trust to the General Fund for the reimbursement of the NRC portion of the retiree's health insurance payments.

Motion: Matt Ferron made a motion to approve the transfer of up to \$55,000 from the Health Insurance Retirees Trust to the General Fund for the purpose of reimbursement to North River Collaborative for the payment of retiree's health insurance for July 2024 through December 2024. Jeff Szymaniak seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

F. Purchase of two eight-passenger Ford Transit Vans and two wheelchair Ford Transit Vans in the amount of up to \$340,000 – Paul Tzovolos explained that the pricing was initially projected high because of the purchase costs rising.

- Matt Ferron offered that his district of Hanover has noticed a tangible difference to the out of district costs which have stabilized due to NRC adding more availability with the hiring of more drivers for routes.

Motion: Matt Ferron made a motion to approve the purchase of two eight passenger Ford Transit Vans and two Ford Wheelchair Transit Vans in the amount of up to \$340,000. Jeff Szymaniak seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

G. Acceptance of Staff Resignations, Hires, Terminations, and Changes in Contract

Motion: Julie Hamilton made a motion to accept the staff resignations, hires, terminations and changes in contract. Lori Joidon seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

H. Instructional Learning Walk Information- Paul Tzovolos and Marie Grable highlighted for the Board their reflections and observations of their Instructional Learning Walks, which both stated that it was a key area of growth. Marie Grable reviewed the forms used for the walkthroughs which look at key points, teacher location and engagement. Data is compiled every three months and allows for feedback to the coordinators to help them see where they need to focus and where improvements need to be made. Paul

Tzovolos shared with the Board that the Instructional Learning Walk Through information was also shared with the Special Needs Advisory Committee to show and ensure that NRC is growth minded and invested in analyzing our programs so that they are the highest quality.

- Matt Ferron said that the data breakdown was done very well and comforting to see the investment that is being made to bring the programs to the highest standard.

IV. Informational

A. Professional Development Offerings- Paul Tzovolos reviewed the current professional development offerings

B. Information Sharing Opportunity Reminder – Paul Tzovolos told the Board that he has a TA compensation chart and would be happy to send out to other districts as well as case load information.

C. Social Work Intern Program Update – Paul Tzovolos told the Board that NRC is looking to gather more support from the districts and distinguish the program for districts. The current interns are making an impact with students and have worked with over 100 students in just one month. In addition to the Social Work Intern Program, NRC's Clinical Coordinator, Lauren Enos, has a menu of support with proactive training and a bank of resources. In addition, districts will have access to one hour per month of free PD and one hour of in-person consultation. Mr. Tzovolos advises that next year the program will be one price point of \$12,534 per intern for 2.5 days.

- Mark Bodwell told the Board that West Bridgewater has had a lot of success with this program.

V. Other Matters of Interest to Board Members:

- Matt Ferron- shared his condolences with Board Chair Joe Baeta at the passing of his father. Joe Baeta thanked everyone for their outpouring of support.

- Paul Tzovolos shared with the Board that North River Collaborative will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Collaborative next year and planning is underway for celebrating this milestone.

Motion to Adjourn: Matt Ferron made a motion to adjourn. Alan Cron seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:02

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan T. Powers

Recording Secretary

NRC Board of Directors.