

Montana Pharmacy Association
Board of Directors

Minutes
June 9, 2007
Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.

Call to Order.

Vince Colucci called the meeting to order at 7 am. Those present included: Jim Seifert, Tobey Schule, Starla Balnk, Lee Ann Bradley, Dan Jurovich, Becky Matovich, Ryan Fevold, and Jim Smith. Joining the meeting via telephone were Lori Fitzgerald and Lori Morin.

Guests included: Gene Jurovich, Peter Wolfgram, Roger Citron, Ed Kennedy, Jake Thiesse. Also, John Tilley, President of NCPA.

Vince welcomed everyone to this meeting.

Minutes of the Last Meeting.

Vince asked if everyone had received and read the Minutes of the April 10th Board meeting, noting that they were distributed after the meeting, and that copies were in the 3-ring binders that Jim gave to each Board member this morning? Affirmative.

A Motion was duly made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the April 10th Board of Directors meeting. Motion Carried.

Vince noted that it is a limited Agenda for this meeting: 1) discussion with John Tilley; 2) review the Agenda, Reports and other information for the MPA Annual Business Meeting this afternoon. Agreed.

Discussion with John Tilley, NCPA,

John thanked Vince and the MPA Board for the invitation and opportunity to get together this morning. He noted that NCPA is working on many of the issues facing pharmacy and MPA, including Part D, MTM services under Part D and others. This morning, however, he would like to discuss three issues of particular importance to community pharmacies: 1) Average Manufacturer's Price (AMP); 2) HR 971, which authorizes independent pharmacies to enter into normal business negotiations with PBMs; 3) HR 1474, which would require prompt payment of clean claims by the PDPs in Part D.

John explained that NCPA worked with a number of Montana pharmacies to sign and send a letter to Montana Senator Max Baucus on May 8th asking him to introduce or co-sponsor prompt payment legislation. He asked if the MPA Board would be willing to send Senator Baucus a similar letter? Discussion followed.

Jim Seifert had a copy of the May 8th letter and he noted that over 100 signatures were included.

Vince noted that MPA has been working with Sen. Baucus and staff from the Senate Finance Committee on these very issues for some time. They are all important. He said that his understanding is that Senator Baucus is working on a bill to make improvements in Medicare Part D. He is not sure of exactly what is being prepared or when it will be introduced? Nor is NCPA, according to John Tilley.

Tobey Schule reviewed his discussions in May with David Schwartz, from the Senate Finance Committee. He noted that payment problems have diminished in the last year, and that prompt payment may not be as serious a problem now as it was in 2006; or as serious a problems as the switch to AMP, which is supposed to happen July 1, 2007.

It was generally agreed that if the current definition of AMP is adopted that pharmacies may lose up to 38% reimbursement every Medicaid prescription dispensed. Pharmacies will not accept Medicaid at all under those conditions, which will lead to a loss of access in many areas of Montana. Becky Matovich explained that the pharmacy she and her husband own in Columbus is the only pharmacy in Stillwater County. If they decline to accept Medicaid, low income seniors and others in her county will have to travel 40 miles to the nearest pharmacy.

John Tilley said that he agrees that all of these are important issues, but that NCPA's priority is HR 1474. The bill was introduced in the House of Representatives, and at this time it has nearly 200 co-sponsors. A companion piece of legislation in the Senate would be very helpful to getting prompt payment legislation passed this session of congress, or by the end of September.

Jim Smith said that Montana's single Representative, Rep. Rehberg has co-sponsored HR 1474.

Vince thanked John Tilley for joining the MPA this morning and for all his work on behalf of pharmacy. Vince said we'd get back to him and NCPA as soon as possible. Agreed. John Tilley left the meeting. Discussion followed.

Lee Ann emphasized the importance of pharmacy speaking with 'One Voice' and asked if other national organizations were in support of HR 1474? John Tilley explained that NCPA is a member in a number of pharmacy coalitions that include all the major national pharmacy organizations. For this particular effort, NCPA and NACDS have formed a narrow coalition to work on payment issues.

Tobey said that no one organization has enough 'push' to represent the entire profession.

Dan Jurovich asked if Congressional support for HR 1474 might be obtained at the expense of other important pharmacy priorities?

Vince and Tobey volunteered to check with David Schwartz on Monday, June 11th and make a recommendation to the Board next week. Agreed.

MPA Annual Business Meeting.

Vince reviewed the handout for the Annual Business Meeting. The Agenda was reviewed. Lee Ann reviewed the Awards ceremony with the Board. Vince and Jim Seifert reviewed the transition of the Presidency from Vince to Jim Seifert.

Resolutions were discussed. Jim Seifert noted that several of them are non-substantive and he asked if they could be consolidated and acted upon in one motion? Agreed. He asked Dan Jurovich if he would take the lead of the Resolutions? Agreed.

Jake Thiesse presented the following Resolution (2007-14) from the UM students at the NW Pharmacy Convention:

Resolution 2007-14.

WHEREAS, One voice in pharmacy is necessary to effectively convey the message of our profession; and,
WHEREAS, This approach is similar to that of other successful organizations;
BE IT RESOLVED, That MPA advocate for 'One Voice' in pharmacy; and,
LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, That MPA prepare a White paper to communicate this position.

Discussion followed. Vince thanked Jake and the students for this Resolution. Agreed. Jim Seifert asked Jake if he would be willing to offer this Resolution from the floor this afternoon? Affirmative. Further, Jake offered to work with the students from Idaho and Washington on the 'One Voice' concept and White Paper. Agreed.

Other Business.

Vince stressed the importance of meeting with Senator Tester this summer. Agreed.

Vince noted that he and Lee Ann have continued to work with the State Fund on pharmacy issues, including recognition of the prescriptions written by Lee Ann.

Jim Smith reviewed the Board Manual (3-ring binders) he prepared for the Board.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

