



Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange  
SHOP Advisory Committee  
Special Meeting

Remote Meeting

Tuesday, April 21, 2020  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Grant Ritter (Chair); Pamela Russek; Kevin Galvin; Christopher McKiernan; Shelly Sweatt; Ellen Skinner; Paul Lombardo

**Other Participants:**

Access Health CT (AHCT) Staff: James Michel; Anthony Crowe; John Carbone; Andrea Ravitz; Mark Spellman; Susan Rich-Bye; Jerome Chisolm; Marlude Pierre-Louis; Marcin Olechowski  
Business Partner: Amanda Garner (Mintz + Hoke)

**The Meeting of the SHOP Advisory Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m.**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Grant Ritter called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Roll call for attendance was taken.

**II. Public Comment**

No public comment

**III. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Chair Grant Ritter requested a motion to approve the February 11, 2020 SHOP Advisory Committee Special Meeting Minutes. Motion was made by Kevin Galvin and seconded by Pamela Russek. Roll call vote was taken. Ellen Skinner recused herself from voting because of her absence for that meeting. **Motion passed.**

**IV and V: AHCT Small Business Activity Recap/During the Quarantine**

John Carbone, Director of SHOP and Product Development, presented the SHOP activity for the two months preceding this meeting. Mr. Carbone expressed his hope that the Committee members were doing well and staying healthy due to the unprecedented circumstances

As Approved by the SHOP Advisory Committee on June 15, 2020 taking place pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Carbone also expressed his words of gratitude and appreciation for the continued support of the SHOP operations and the entire Access Health CT Team to assist its customers in this time of need both on the individual and the group side of our business. Mr. Carbone commended the participating carriers for their continued support of the SHOP program. He noted that SHOP experienced a very successful month in January. Mr. Carbone told the Committee that on February 25, AHCT testified in favor of the Senate Bill 206, AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN HEALTH INSURERS TO OFFER AND SELL A QUALIFIED HEALTH PLAN THROUGH THE CONNECTICUT HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE. This legislation, if enacted, would require all carriers that offer small group plans off the exchange, to also offer those same plans on the Exchange.

Jerome Chisolm, Business Development Manager, remarked that AHCT honored Black History Month by supporting the Minority Business Awards Luncheon adding that it was very successful. Mr. Chisolm indicated that while many people are aware of the individual side of AHCT, the SHOP program remains relatively unknown and more effort needs to be directed into branding and marketing campaigns in order to make small businesses aware of the healthcare coverage offered by SHOP. Mr. Chisolm noted that many minority-owned small businesses are very receptive to providing healthcare coverage for their employees. Mr. Chisolm noted that SHOP was featured in the Hartford Business Journal on March 4.

Mr. Carbone provided insight on additional activities that included meetings with state legislators regarding SB 206 as well as receiving proposals for the service platform supporting SHOP, Stand Alone Dental Plans and any potential future ancillary products that would benefit brokers, small business owners and their employees. Mr. Carbone provided information as to work being done during the quarantine period to continue and expand seamless operations of the SHOP platform. Mr. Carbone detailed technological improvements that are being or will be implemented to make business more efficient. Mr. Chisolm commented that SHOP will continue to build relationships through conference calls and video chats with brokers and employers during the quarantine period.

## **VI. Next Steps: Post-Pandemic**

Amanda Garner, Business Partner from Mintz + Hoke, presented the SHOP marketing strategy for after the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Ms. Garner pointed out that during this difficult time, marketing of the SHOP products has been paused noting, however, that SHOP continues to host webinars for existing and prospective businesses and brokers. Ms. Garner stressed that partnerships with local chambers and associations across Connecticut remain strong with the chambers looking to host guest speakers who will provide important and useful information. Ms. Garner elaborated on the revised messaging and approach during the pandemic as well as retention, which will involve direct outreach to current and past membership. Christopher McKiernan expressed his words of appreciation for the SHOP staff members. He suggested providing Committee members with statistical data, possibly examples of business that was written and the number of lives being enrolled. Mr. Carbone responded that Mintz + Hoke is working on the broker tool kit and will provide guidance on this, and it will be available soon. Ms. Garner reported that website redesign and relaunch will establish AHCT Small Business as the subject matter expert on all things related to small group health insurance. Kevin Galvin cautioned that a large segment of the small business

As Approved by the SHOP Advisory Committee on June 15, 2020 community is not thrilled with the Federal PPP (Payroll Protection Program) and the dislike of some for the federal program does not help in improving SHOP's reputation. Mr. Carbone pointed out that, with this in mind, SHOP gathers and shares potentially helpful information but is sure to communicate that it is not SHOP's product.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Chair Grant Ritter requested a motion to adjourn. Motion was made Kevin Galvin and seconded by Shelly Sweatt. Roll call vote was taken. **Motion passed.** Meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.