

Board of Trustees

Human Resources & Labor Relations Committee

August 24, 2026

Zoom Meeting

Present: **Committee Members:** Patrick Flood, Chair; Roger Katz, Donna Loring, David MacMahon, Michael Michaud, & Richard Rosen. **Chancellor:** Dannel Malloy; **System Staff:** Carolyn Dorsey, Jeffrey St. John, Ryan Low, Susan Cameron, Amie Parker, Amond Purinton, Ryan Whitlock & Elizabeth Stickler. **Presidents:** Joan Ferrini-Mundy & Joseph McDonnell

Committee Members Absent: none

Trustee Flood, Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The Clerk performed a roll call of the Committee members present.

Executive Session

On a motion by Trustee MacMahon, which was seconded by Trustee Rosen, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Human Resources & Labor Relations Committee agreed to go into Executive Session under the provisions of:

- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-A to discuss the evaluation of personnel and the consideration and discussion of appointments, evaluations, employment, and duties.
- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-D to discuss planning for negotiations and communications with AFUM, UMPSA, ACSUM, Police, PATFA, and Service and Maintenance Units.

On a motion by Trustee MacMahon, which was seconded by Trustee Katz, and approved by a roll call vote of all Trustees present, the Human Resources & Labor Relations Committee concluded the Executive Session

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chair Flood welcomed new Trustees Richard Rosen and Roger Katz to the Committee and thanked the participants for joining the public session.

Labor Relations Update

Ryan Whitlock Sr. Director of Labor Relations, joined by Susan Cameron, Director of Labor Relations, reported that negotiations with the part-time faculty bargaining unit began May 14. The agreement, which covers approximately 800 to 900 part-time faculty members, was scheduled to expire September 1. Nine bargaining dates had been scheduled and two had been canceled. Mr. Whitlock characterized the discussions as productive but said significant gaps remained and an agreement was unlikely before expiration. The parties were scheduled to meet again later that week and had additional September sessions planned.

Mr. Whitlock also said the full Board would review bargaining priorities in September for the AFUM, UMPSA, and ACSUM agreements.

Benefits Transition Survey

Amie Parker, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented results from the employee survey concerning the January 1 transition from Cigna to Anthem for medical-plan administration and to Capital Rx for prescription benefits. She noted that the System's health plan remains self-insured. More than 6,200 employees were invited to participate, 559 responded, and 97.5% of respondents reported using their benefits during the period covered by the survey.

Ms. Parker reported that 73% of respondents experienced continuity with their medical providers, approximately two-thirds believed they had received adequate notice of the transition, and roughly 61% to 62% rated the support from human resources and benefits staff positively. About 64% reported positive access to prescriptions. Overall satisfaction was mixed, with approximately 41% satisfied and 38% dissatisfied.

The survey identified significant opportunities for improvement. Only 22% of respondents felt able to use the formulary effectively and 18% understood how to escalate unresolved problems. Forty-five percent reported an unexpected cost of at least \$100, and 61% reported some unexpected cost. Among 193 respondents who needed prior authorization, 18% described the process as smooth, while 41% described it as very difficult or reported a denial. Respondents also described mental-health provider credentialing, network, and copay concerns that in some cases reduced access to care.

Ms. Parker outlined planned actions, including a one-page escalation guide expected in early September, review of prior-authorization cases, work with vendors on mental-health network gaps and the employee assistance program, clearer open-enrollment communications, and continued monitoring of unexpected costs, escalation knowledge, and Capital Rx service. She said the System expected to resurvey employees after these improvements had time to take effect.

Trustees asked about denial rates, vendor performance, and comparisons with the prior benefit arrangement. System staff explained that some increase in denials reflected prior-plan practices that had not been applied consistently, including requirements affecting certain medications, and said the System would continue working with the vendors to improve the employee experience.

FY2027 HR/LR Work Plan

Vice Chancellor Carolyn Dorsey and CHRO Amie Parker reviewed the proposed fiscal year 2027 work plan. The plan included required reporting on management groups and the strategic plan, workforce profile and turnover analysis, peer benchmarking, the combined charitable appeal, and labor-relations updates aligned with bargaining and budget development.

The Committee discussed whether the number of scheduled meetings could be reduced from six to five or four when agenda volume is light. The work plan and meeting cadence would be revisited after the October strategic-plan discussion.

Chancellor Malloy thanked the staff who had managed the benefits transition and the follow-up work.

Adjournment

Additional information about the meeting can be found on the Board of Trustees website:
<https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/meeting-agendas-materials/human-resources-and-labor-relations/>

Kayla Flewelling for
Elizabeth Stickler, Clerk