

**Maryland Workers' Compensation
Commissioners' Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 14, 2021**

Call to Order: Chairman R. Karl Aumann called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Chairman Aumann and Commissioners Kathleen Evans, James Forrester, Allan Kittleman, Morrisann Martin, Howard Metz, Ju Oh, Maureen Quinn, Delia Schadt and Tracey Parker-Warren.

Staff members attending were Mary Ahearn, Jerome Reichmister, M.D., Amy Lackington, Scott Curtis and Stacey L. Roig, Secretary of the Commission.

The Chairman reminded all outside guests who were attending via telephone to please mute their phones and reminded them that this is a meeting of the Commissioners and not an open forum for questions, comments, etc.

A list of guests who called in to this Open Meeting is attached to the Minutes.

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the December 17, 2020 Commissioners' Meeting were reviewed and, upon motion of Commissioner Martin and second of Commissioner Parker-Warren, the Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman advised the Commissioners that a long-time member of the WCC Staff, Christel Surdokis, passed away on December 28, 2020. A Memorial Mass will be planned for a later date. The Chairman also reported that the Commission is requesting 1B status for the COVID vaccine for Commissioners and essential staff. The 2021 legislative session began on January 13, 2021 and the General Assembly is working through the logistics of holding hearings and committee meetings in a hybrid of virtual and in-person meetings. All budget hearings will be virtual and joint with both the Senate and House Committees meeting together, which will be much easier for the state agencies. It is expected that presumption and COVID bills will be introduced this year. The Commission has seen approximately 900 COVID cases thus far. The Chairman reported that between March 23, 2020 and June 8, 2020, approximately 4300 Orders were issued by the Commission. Since June 8th, when in-person hearings were resumed, approximately 15,000 Orders have been issued by the Commission. Finally, the Chairman reported that 2021 is the 25th Anniversary of Kids' Chance Maryland. The Board is hoping to be able to hold an event at year-end to celebrate the Anniversary.

Old Business: No Report

New Business: Commissioner Schadt provided information regarding an MSBA virtual event that might be of interest to the Commissioners and the workers' compensation community. Commissioner Quinn reminded the Commissioners of the need for a break for Court Reporters when hearings go into the afternoon. Commissioner Forrester announced additional retirements in the workers' compensation community.

Medical Alerts: Dr. Reichmister reminded everyone to continue with safety precautions of social distancing, washing hands frequently, wearing masks and avoiding crowds. Dr. Reichmister also provided information regarding natural immunity to COVID and the short life of the immunity. All should be vaccinated because the immunity may only last 3-8 months. Dr. Reichmister discussed a study that showed no benefit to giving plasma with COVID antibodies to COVID patients. In addition, the

seasonal flu seems to have been replaced by COVID with only 1,000 flu cases reported in the US in 2020-2021 vs. the typical 65,000 cases reported in the US at this time of year. Dr. Reichmister reported that CDC data has shown that over 50% of COVID is spread by people who are asymptomatic. Dr. Reichmister wrapped up his report with the following advice to all: Stay home, social distance, wear masks, take vitamins, use mouthwash, wash hands and do not touch your face.

Adjournment: Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and second by Commissioner Quinn and upon unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 10:11a.m.

R. Karl Aumann, Chairman

Stacey L. Roig, Secretary

Public Attendees to the Commissioners' Meeting
January 14, 2021

Name	Law Firm, Company or Other Affiliation
Antonio R. Lopez	* Schenker, Krause & Lopez
Jacqueline Proctor	* Workers' Compensation Commission
Amanda Bacon	* N/A