

Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2024

Call to Order: Chairwoman Maureen Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Chairwoman Quinn and Commissioners Kathleen Evans, James Forrester, Asha Joseph Jefferson, Allan Kittleman, Morrisann Martin, Howard Metz, Ju Oh, Delia Schadt, and Tracey Parker Warren.

Staff Members Present: Mary Ahearn, Chief Executive Officer, Theresa Cornish, Chief Operating Officer, H. Scott Curtis, Principal Counsel, Amy Lackington, Administrator, Stacey Roig, Director of IC & R, and Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary of the Commission.

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the Commission meeting on February 22, 2024, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Upon motion of Commissioner Metz and second by Commissioner Evans, the Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

Closed Session: At 9:32 a.m., upon motion of Commission Kittleman and seconded of Commission Parker Warren and upon unanimous vote, pursuant to GP §§3-305(13), LE §§9-402, 9-403, 9-406, and 9-1104, and COMAR 14.09.13.12, the Commission entered into a closed session for the purpose of discussing self-insured employers' financial information.

ICR Report: Stacey Roig, Director of the Insurance, Compliance and Reporting Division, discussed the recommendation of increasing Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.'s security deposit. Upon motion by Commissioner Parker Warren and seconded by Commissioner Evans, the motion to increase Wegmans Food Markets, Inc's security deposit was approved with a unanimous vote.

Open Session: At 9:35 a.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Kittleman and second from Commissioner Parker Warren and upon unanimous vote, the Commission re-opened the meeting.

Chair's Report: Chairwoman Quinn thanked Commission Martin for organizing the Kid's Chance fundraiser. She was very pleased to have the Commissioners present at the bowling alley. Commissioner Martin described the successful event. She shared that Kid's Chance was frustrated with the low number of candidate applicants for the educational scholarships and was asked if brochures and literature about the program could be placed in the hearing rooms. After discussion, it was decided that any literature must be reviewed by Scott Curtis prior to being made available to the public. Stacey Roig suggested that Kid's Chance, when requesting new potential candidates, should make their request for the prior ten or more years instead of the current one-year request. Commissioner Martin also expressed the frustration some of the voc practitioners shared with her regarding filing voc plans on CompHub. Mary Ahearn advised the Commissioners of the training being conducted this week for voc practitioners. Chairwoman Quinn thanked all the Commissioners and staff for having to work last week under the conditions of no electricity or heat. Commissioner Quinn reviewed the current bills: SB216 Uninsured Employer Fund penalty bill is moving with the amendment out of committee and is on 3rd reader in the Senate. HB915 Uninsured Employer Fund, to require payment within 15 days, passed in the House and is on 1st reader in the

House. HB669, Hearing Loss, has passed the 3rd reader. All references to tinnitus have been removed from the bill. Commissioner Quinn announced that Governor Moore has re-launched the Joint Enforcement Task Force on Workplace Fraud. (JETF). She also advised that the Commission is working on a text alert system to be used when there is a security lockdown. Commissioner Quinn asked the Commissioners when granting continuances, please give time for opponent responses. Commissioner Quinn announced that she wrote an article for MAJ Newsletter describing how CompHub has enabled instantaneous communication, improved access for non-parties, and has been great for the environment.

Old Business: Mary Ahearn provided the Commissioners with an updated spreadsheet/chart of all the body parts contained in CompHub. The Commissioners discussed and approved additional changes. She also advised the Commissioners that a chart/key will be posted on CompHub and the Commission website as a resource for filers. Theresa Cornish reminded the Commissioners that the vocational process is being corrected and there will be a training session this afternoon.

New Business: Commissioner Schadt and the Commissioners discussed the requests of attorneys and medical providers for the collection of fees after a case has been settled and closed. Chairwoman Quinn discussed the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court's ruling of January 2024 setting aside the "Redbook," the publication for AWP reimbursement in Pennsylvania workers' compensation claims. Stacey Roig advised the Commissioners that at the last employer compliance hearing, twenty-five businesses appeared.

Medical Alerts: Dr. Jerome Reichmister provided several medical alerts of interest to the Commissioners, including age related vision loss, poor air quality in our homes, biofilm in our tap water, radon, fungus, dangers of gas stoves and the chemicals in the new car smell. He especially spoke about the increase of heart disease and strokes with the regular use of marijuana. Dr. Reichmister advised the Commissioners that Chairwoman Quinn has requested that he do a presentation on hypertension, and he will report on that at the next meeting.

Adjournment: Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and second by Commissioner Parker Warren and upon a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Maureen Quinn, Chairwoman

Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary