## Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission Meeting Minutes Thursday, April 23, 2020

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

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

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

**Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes of the April 7, 2020 Special COVID-19 Commission meeting were reviewed and, upon motion of Commissioner Quinn and second of Commissioner Martin, the Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman explained the upcoming process of video hearings beginning at around the first week of May. Instructions and details will be posted to the website. The Commission will be using Microsoft Teams for the hearings, which will allow for secure attendance without necessarily requiring a download of the software to participate in the hearing. The Chairman reported that the backlog of cases is now at 10,000 cases with issues pending and almost 3,000 over 30 days. In 2018, the Commission had a similar backlog during the crossover of retiring Commissioners and newly appointed Commissioners and once we had all ten Commissioners, we were able to attack the backlog, we did get it down to under 1,000 in less than two months. We know that it can be done, and the video hearings will help with achieving that goal. The Chairman informed the Commissioners that staff members are still on duty keeping the work moving along. The Department of Budget and Management has issued a directive that no additional purchases of any kind my be made, even if previously budgeted; however, due to the Commission being a specially funded agency, the Chairman has requested a waiver of this directive. We are waiting on a response.

**Old Business:** No Report

**New Business:** No Report

**Medical Alerts:** Dr. Reichmister discussed the schedule of training when the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. He reminded the Commissioners and all in attendance that there are very specific guidelines established for safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. He urged everyone to heed the advice of the professionals and wear masks, clean surfaces, practice social distancing and do not touch your face. The Chairman thanked Dr, Reichmister for his COVID-19 triage service to the community through his work with LifeBridge Health.

**Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and second by Commissioner Evans and upon unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m.

 R. Karl Aumann, Chairman	Stacey L. Roig, Secretary	_	

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Michael LaFontaine, Esq. Andrew T. Nichols, Esquire

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