

Workers' Compensation Board
Meeting Minutes

May 12-13, 2016

Thursday, May 12, 2016

I. Call to order

Workers' Compensation Director Marie Marx called the Board to order at 9:04 am on Thursday, May 12, 2016, in Anchorage, Alaska.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll call

Director Marx conducted roll call. The following Board members were present:

Stacy Allen	Pamela Cline	Chuck Collins
Julie Duquette	David Ellis	Jacob Howdeshell
Linda Hutchings	David Kester	Sarah Lefebvre
Ron Nalikak	Amy Steele	Mark Talbert
Pat Vollendorf	Robert Weel	Lake Williams

Director Marx noted that Member Phillips is excused. Members Austin and Traini were absent. A quorum was established.

Director Marx welcomed David Ellis (industry) to the Board. Mr. Ellis was appointed effective March 1, 2016.

Director Marx introduced senior staff present.

IV. Agenda Approval

A motion to approve the agenda was made by member Hutchings, and seconded by member Kester. The agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

V. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to adopt the minutes from the January 15, 2016 regular Board Meeting was made by member Hutchings and seconded by member Kester. The minutes were adopted without objection.

VI. Director's Report

Budget - Administrative Officer Shaundy Petraborg provided an overview of Division staffing, the various budget components within the Division, the FY16 budget performance year-to-date, and the just released FY17 budget.

Chief of Adjudications Eklund reviewed current division staffing.

Hired hearing officer in Juneau (Katherine Setzer), and Kelly McNabb in Fairbanks. Now adjudications is fully staffed with hearing officers.

Member Weel moved that the Board approve the amended list of Board designees, and member Kester seconded. A general discussion ensued on the Governor's hiring restrictions. The motion passed unanimously.

Break 9:48am-10:01am

VII. Public Comment Period 10:00am- 11:00am

Charles McKee, Injured worker

Misty Steed, PACBLU

Sheri Ryan, Alaska Chiropractic Society

Chad Saunders, Workers' Compensation Committee of Alaska (WCCA)

Shelby Davidson, WCCA

Janice Shipman, Rehabilitation Specialist

Sandy Travis, Injured worker

VIII. Director's Report Cont.

Director Marx provided an update on the Alaska medical fee schedule and Medical Services Review Committee (MSRC).

Director Marx provided an update on the WC Director's Interpretive Bulletin regarding the new fee schedule.

Director Marx provided a short overview of proposed legislation relating to the Alaska Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission.

IX. 2015 Annual Report

Director Marx reviewed statistics from the Division's 2015 annual report, a compilation of statistics and benefit data obtained from insurers and self-insured employers pursuant to AS 23.30.155(m).

- A total of \$301.2 million in workers' compensation benefits was paid out in calendar year 2015, an increase of 2 % over the previous year.
- Medical benefits totaled \$162.5 million, up 17.8 % from the prior year.
- Indemnity benefits totaled \$73 million, up 11 %.
- Legal costs decreased 4% \$15.5 million.
- Reemployment benefits increased 3%, to \$13.5 million.
- Injury frequency increased, with 19,909 injuries reported, up 6.5% from the previous year.

Rhonda Gerharz, Chief of the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), gave an overview of the SIU's 2015 performance.

Break 11:07am-11:20am

Sue Reishus-O'Brien, Workers' Compensation Officer II, reviewed SIME statistics for 2015.

Velma Thomas, Program Coordinator, reviewed the funds and programs administered by the Division: the Benefits Guaranty Fund, the Fishermen's Fund, the Second Injury Fund, the Self-Insurance Program, and the Proof of Coverage Program.

Mark Kemberling, Reemployment Benefits Administrator, reviewed the 2015 performance of the Reemployment Benefits Program.

Amanda Eklund, Chief of Adjudications, reviewed the 2015 performance of the Adjudications Section.

Motion to adjourn was made by member Hutchings at 1:01pm. Member Weel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 1:01 pm

Friday, May 13, 2016

I. Call to order

Director Marx resumed the Alaska Workers' Compensation Board meeting at 9:05 am on Friday, May 13, 2016, in Anchorage, Alaska. The following Board members were present

Stacy Allen	Brad Austin	Chuck Collins
David Ellis	Jacob Howdeshell	Ron Nalikak
Donna Phillips	Mark Talbert	Pat Vollendorf
Robert Weel	Lake Williams	

Director Marx noted that members Cline, Kester and Steele were excused.

Members Duquette, Hutchings, and Traini were absent. Member Lafebvre attended late. Quorum was established.

At the Board's request, future telephonic board meetings will be full days, instead of half days.

II. Old Business

There was no old business.

III. New Business

Member Vollendorf moved to approve the 2017 Board hearing and board meeting calendar, with full Board meetings on January 12-13, 2017, May 11-12, 2017, and

October 5-6, 2017. The motion was seconded by member Nalikak. Motion approved unanimously.

IV. Director Marx stated that the Division is updating how board pleadings are signed to make electronic filing more efficient. Board member signatures will no longer appear on board pleadings served on parties or uploaded to case law databases. Instead, board pleadings will be signed with “/s/”. Board members only need to authorize the member’s signature on the board pleading. This can be done by any method that clearly shows the board member approves of the content of the board pleading and authorizes his or her “/s/” signature on the document. This proof of authorization will not be mailed out with the board pleading but will instead be kept in the board’s database for reference.

Director Marx reminded the Board members the next board meeting is October 6-7, 2016.

Motion to adjourn was made by member Vollendorf at 9:40am. Member Talbert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 9:40am