

Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday August 8, 2024

Call to Order: Chairwoman Maureen Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

Present: Chairwoman Maureen Quinn and Commissioners James R. Forrester, Asha Joseph Jefferson, Allan H. Kittleman, Howard L. Metz, and Tracey Parker-Warren.

Staff Members Present: H. Scott Curtis, Assistant Attorney General, Theresa A. Cornish, Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Jerome Reichmister, Medical Director, 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 July 25, 2024, were reviewed by the Commissioners. Upon motion of Commissioner Kittleman and seconded by Commissioner Metz, the minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

Closed Session: At 9:45 a.m., upon motion of Commissioner Kittleman and seconded by Commissioner Forrester 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 IC&R, advised the Commissioners of the negotiated reduced amount in Kmart's security deposit. After discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Warren and seconded by Commissioner Forrester, the negotiated reduced amount in security deposit was approved with a unanimous vote.

Open Session: At 10:00 a.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Kittleman and second from Commissioner Parker-Warren, and upon a unanimous vote, the Commission re-opened the meeting.

Chair's Report: Chair Quinn reflected on the enjoyable time at the SAWCA conference the previous week, noting the Commission's significant presence. She informed the Commissioners that the WCI Committee would address claims related to excessive heat at their upcoming conference. The Commissioners discussed the MWCEA conference in Ocean City, Maryland, and the presentation they will prepare. Amy Lackington suggested Chair Quinn remind attorneys at the program to update their contact details to have their cases considered in the Video Remote Hearing. Chair Quinn proposed that attorneys' requests to withdraw from a claim be granted when they have not been paid a large fee. She also announced the 3.11% COLA (Pursuant to L&E 9-638) adjustment for 2025, effective from July 1st. Theresa Cornish presented CompHub statistics to the Commissioners and mentioned the upcoming anniversary of CompHub's launch, promising formal statistics at the next meeting.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: There was no new business.

Medical Alerts: Dr. Jerry Reichmister, Medical Director, discussed several significant medical research discoveries. A study from Sweden indicates that blood test biomarkers can diagnose Alzheimer's disease with a 90% accuracy rate. The FDA has approved a blood test for detecting colorectal cancer by identifying DNA from cancer cells. In Brazil, patients with prolonged COVID-19 who needed hospitalization and ventilation are exhibiting irreversible lung damage. The Journal of Cardiology published research showing no significant difference between taking 81 mg and 300 mg of aspirin in preventing additional cardiac events. A study in Europe found that consuming cranberry juice and increasing water intake reduced urinary tract infections among 3,100 participants, especially women. New research suggests a correlation between impairments in hearing and vision and the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Preventive strength training focusing on the hamstrings, glutes, and quadriceps has been effective in averting ACL injuries in female athletes. Moreover, Dr. Reichmister discussed the report from Canada on the rise in cannabis overdose cases due to the ingestion of gummies in the elderly population.

Adjournment: Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and seconded by Commissioner Parker-Warren and upon a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Maureen Quinn, Chairwoman

Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary