

**Maryland Workers' Compensation  
Commissioners' Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 11, 2021**

**Call to Order:** Chairman R. Karl Aumann called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

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

A roll call of staff members attending was not taken; however, Steven Jones, Director of the Insurance, Compliance and Reporting Division, presented his report and Stacey L. Roig, Secretary of the Commission, recorded the Minutes of the closed session.

**Closed Session: At 9:17 a.m., upon motion of Commissioner Martin and second of Commissioner Forrester and upon unanimous vote, pursuant to GP §§3-305(13), LE §§9-402, 9-403, 9-405, 9-406 and 9-1104, and COMAR 14.09.13.12, the Commission entered a closed session for the purpose of discussing self-insured employers' financial information.**

Steven Jones, Director of the Insurance, Compliance & Regulation Division reported that Southern MD Electric Cooperative requires an increase in security deposit and provided the additional information requested by the Commissioners to complete the evaluation. After discussion and a motion by Commissioner Quinn and a second by Commissioner Evans, and unanimous consent, the motion was approved.

**The meeting was reopened at 9:19 a.m., upon motion of Commissioner Quinn and second of Commissioner Forrester and upon unanimous vote.**

**The meeting reconvened at 9:30 am on an open meeting line allowing the public to attend the remainder of the meeting.**

**Present:** Chairman Aumann and Commissioners Kathleen Evans, James Forrester, Allan Kittleman, Morrisann Martin, Howard Metz, Ju Oh, Maureen Quinn, Delia Schadt and Commissioner 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 February 25, 2021 Commissioners' Meeting were reviewed and, upon motion of Commissioner Evans and second of Commissioner Martin, the Minutes were approved with a unanimous vote.

**Chairman's Report:** The Chairman reported that a special workgroup meeting of the Workers' Compensation Oversight Committee was held to discuss proposed workers' compensation legislation, including the COVID-19 presumption bills. The Commission has been asked to provide information for a

follow-up meeting to be held today (3/11/21). The Commission will be serving on a team to study 911 Dispatchers. Legislation has been introduced to allow the Commission to award a fee to Claimant's Counsel, to be paid by the Claimant or Insurer on "medical only" issues that come before the Commission. There is significant opposition to the bill. The MWCEA is planning to move ahead with a September 2021 meeting in person in Ocean City, MD. The NAWCJ and WCI are also planning in person meetings in Orlando, FL in December 2021. All are subject to change depending on COVID. The IAIABC has decided to proceed with a virtual only Forum in April and the convention in September. Members of the WCC who are IAIABC Committee Chairs will be participating in both events.

**Old Business:** No Report

**New Business:** Commissioner Martin reported on three (3) Kids' Chance Events and asked the Commissioners to participate. Golf Outing on Monday, July 19, 2021. The Annual Fun Run in Ocean City is September 21, 2021 and the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala will be held on Saturday, November 13, 2021.

**Medical Alerts:** Dr. Reichmister was asked by the Chairman to provide information regarding COVID-19 and what to expect after vaccination. Dr. Reichmister reported that all must remain vigilant after receiving the vaccine because susceptibility and long-term effects of the virus after vaccination are still not fully known. The two shot regimes are showing about 50% immunity after the first shot and 95% immunity two weeks after receiving the second shot. Symptom severability and length of illness is improved; however, receiving the vaccine does not mean that you cannot get COVID and transmit it to others, even if you remain asymptomatic. Various mutations of the virus may continue to be a problem, even after vaccination. Nine studies have now been completed on susceptibility and blood types and eight of the nine studies showed a relationship of COVID susceptibility by blood type. Blood Type O is least susceptible, and Blood Type A is the most susceptible to COVID. Dr. Reichmister warned that with the warming weather and more people vaccinated there may be a decrease in cases; however, that is no cause to lessen recommendations of avoiding crowds, no gatherings, including family, social distancing, masks worn over the nose and mouth, avoid poorly ventilated spaces and wash hands frequently. COVID variants are still uncertain and double masking is recommended. Some long-term effects reported by 1/3 of the COVID patients studied are lingering symptoms of "brain fog" (like a mini stroke), shortness of breath, fatigue and hair loss. It is expected that booster shots will be necessary. Dr. Reichmister also cautioned that even after vaccination you can still get and spread the virus, so continue with precautions and quarantine for 10-14 days after the onset of symptoms of COVID. Finally, Dr. Reichmister reported that per the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the temperature monitors are not being used properly and they measure only skin temperature, which can vary based on the air temperature; or if the person is wearing eyeglasses, or the amount of light in the room where the temperature is being taken. These temperature monitors should not be counted on to provide accurate information.

Commissioner Forrester discussed COVID claims with "brain fog" as a symptom and testing for ability to continue in the job, especially in public safety.

**Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and second by Commissioner Parker-Warren and upon unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.:

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R. Karl Aumann, Chairman

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Stacey L. Roig, Secretary

Public Attendees to Commissioners' Meeting  
Thursday, March 11, 2021

<b>Name</b>	<b>Law Firm, Company or Other Affiliation</b>
Alicyn C. Campbell, Esq.	* Rollins, Smalkin, Richards & Mackie, L.L.C.
Antonio R. Lopez	Schenker, Krause & Lopez (employees of Zurich American * Insurance)
Joan P. Adelman	* IWIF/Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company