

# *Workers' Compensation Board*

## *Meeting Minutes*

January 11, 2024

**Thursday, January 11, 2024**

### **I. Call to Order**

Workers' Compensation Director Charles Collins called the Board to order at 9:02 am on Thursday, January 11, 2024. The meeting was held in Anchorage, Alaska, and by video conference.

### **II. Roll call**

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

Brad Austin	Randy Beltz	Pamela Cline	John Corbett
Jonathon Dartt	Micheal Dennis	Sara Faulkner	Bronson Frye
Steven Heidemann	Anthony Ladd	Sarah Lefebvre	Mark Sayampanathan
Marc Stemp	Robert Weel	Debbie White	Lake Williams

Member Jonathon Dartt was absent, and members Sarah Lefebvre and Bronson Frye arrived after the roll call. A quorum was established.

### **III. Agenda Approval**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by member Sayampanathan and seconded by member Cline. A unanimous vote approved the agenda.

### **IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion to adopt the minutes from the October 12-13, 2023 Board Meeting was made by member Beltz and seconded by member White. The minutes were adopted without objection.

### **V. Director's Report**

Director Collins reviewed the list of Board Designees. A motion to accept the board designees was made by member Beltz and seconded by member Weel. The motion passed unanimously.

Director Collins discussed the division's accomplishments and goals and the upcoming legislative season. Director Collins notified the Board of a scheduled public meeting regarding adopting a new edition of the AMA Guide.

Administrative Officer Alexis Hildebrand provided an overview of Division staffing.

*Break 10:02am-10:15am*

**VI. Public Comment Period 10:15 am- 11:15 am**

Jeffrey Holloway – representing Babcock Holloway Caldwell & Stires, PC

- Suggested the board adopt electronic service of documents where service by US mail is not mandated by statute or regulation.
- Voiced concerns about rising SIME costs, which are becoming cost-prohibitive, especially when multiple physicians are required.
- Asked the Board to consider a cap or Fee Schedule similar to California, and adopt a regulation to control the costs of SIME travel.

**VII. Old Business**

The Board discussed member attendance at hearings.

*Break 11:27am-11:35am*

Ken Eichler, Dr. Doug Martin, and Victoria Riordan of the American Medical Association (AMA) explained the changes in the new AMA Guide.

*Break 12:10pm-12:16pm*

**VIII. New Business**

Approve 8 AAC 45.070 relating to hearings. Acting Chief of Adjudications Janel Wright provided an overview of this proposed amendment. Member Lefebvre requested that the Division prepare a timeline chart to demonstrate how cases will proceed if this change is implemented. Member Stemp moved to approve the amendment of 8 AAC 45.070. Member White seconded the motion. Member Cline offered an amendment to the motion to change the date of issuance from 40 to 60 days. Members Stemp and White agreed with the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve 8 AAC 45.071, relating to commissioner’s designees. Member Faulkner moved to approve 8 AAC 45.071 by adding (I) but not adding (J) or (E) as proposed in the packet. Member Austin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Member Austin motioned to adjourn, seconded by member Sayampanathan.

*Meeting Adjourned 1:35 pm*