

MINUTES OF THE ILLINOIS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION

HELD ON JUNE 12, 2023 at 10:00 AM

Board Members Present In Person

Chairman Michael J. Brennan
Commissioner Deborah Baker
Commissioner Carolyn Doherty
Commissioner Kathryn Doerries
Commissioner Christopher Harris
Commissioner Stephen Mathis
Commissioner Maria Portela
Commissioner Amylee Simonovich
Commissioner Deborah Simpson

Board Members Present via WebEx

Commissioner Marc Parker

IWCC Staff Present In Person

Michele Kowalski, Secretary of the Commission
Whitney Martin, Manager Research and Education
Ron Rascia, General Counsel
Annette Roti, Confidential Assistant to the Chairman
Andrew Schafer, Law Clerk
Bridget Curtis, Law Clerk
Cole D. Garrett, Deputy General Counsel (via WebEx)

On June 12, 2023, at 10:00 AM, Chairman Michael J. Brennan called the Workers' Compensation Commission Meeting to order. Michele Kowalski took roll and verified a quorum was present. Chairman Brennan advised that draft minutes for the March 17, 2023 Board Meeting had been circulated. Upon Motion by Commissioner Baker and seconded by Commissioner Mathis, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on March 17, 2023 were unanimously approved as presented.

As to new business, Chairman Brennan advised the changes to the administrative rules are in full effect. Michele Kowalski updated the board about the digitization project and ongoing return of exhibits.

As to old business, Chairman Brennan announced that there was a flood in the Springfield office. Michele Kowalski updated the Board that the repairs are almost complete, new furniture has arrived and the office is open for hearings. Chairman Brennan proposed returning to in-person oral arguments beginning August 1st. After discussion and vote among the board members, it was determined that in-person oral arguments would commence on August 1, 2023.

Next, Chairman Brennan reiterated the need to balance caseloads and stated that some of Commissioner Simonovich's cases would be redistributed.

As to further new business, Chairman Brennan announced that Arbitrators Kane and Fruth were retiring and congratulated them both on their service. Arbitrator Caison will take over Arbitrator Fruth's docket and Arbitrator James will take over Arbitrator Kane's docket. At the recent Workers' Compensation Advisory Board

Meeting, the Board interviewed arbitrator candidates for these open positions as well as eight arbitrators up for reappointment.

Next, Chairman Brennan relayed that although there were no complaints regarding CompFile, WebEx, or individual arbitrators or commissioners, he has heard complaints about the timeliness of decisions. He thanked Commissioner Doherty and Arbitrator Mason for past decision writing workshops. There was discussion among the Board about decisions and new lunchtime trainings to be coordinated with Whitney Martin.

Chairman Brennan asked the Board if there was any other business to discuss. Commissioner Portela brought up an issue regarding procedures for amended settlement contracts. Discussion ensued and it was determined there would be investigation into how CompFile handles amended settlements and whether there is a need to send a message to the Bar.

Chairman Brennan asked the members if anyone had any new or old business to discuss. There was none.

Chairman Brennan asked if there was any member of the public on the call. There being none, he asked if there was a Motion to Adjourn. Commissioner Doherty moved to adjourn, Commissioner Doerries seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:52 AM.