

MINUTES OF THE ILLINOIS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION

HELD ON DECEMBER 3, 2021 at 10:00AM via WebEx

Present at the meeting via WebEx:

Chairman Michael J. Brennan
Commissioner Deborah Baker
Commissioner Kathryn Doerries
Commissioner Carolyn Doherty
Commissioner Christopher Harris
Commissioner Stephen Mathis (in person)
Commissioner Marc Parker
Commissioner Maria Portela
Commissioner Deborah Simpson
Commissioner Thomas Tyrrell

IWCC staff present at the meeting:

Ronald Rascia, General Counsel
Cole D. Garrett, Deputy General Counsel
Annette Roti, Confidential Assistant to the Chairman
Michele Kowalski, Secretary of the Commission
Whitney Martin, Manager Research and Education

On December 3, 2021, at 10:03 AM, Chairman Michael J. Brennan called the meeting to order. Michele Kowalski took roll and verified a quorum was present. Chairman Brennan advised that draft minutes for the Board Meeting held on September 20, 2021, and special Meeting held on October 18, 2021 had been circulated and asked for any objections to the minutes as written. Hearing no objection, Chairman Brennan called for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Baker so moved, Commissioner Parker seconded the motion, and the motion to approve the minutes of both the September 20, 2021 and October 18, 2021 Board Meetings carried unanimously.

As to new business, Chairman Brennan announced that CompFile is in the process of updating the RAF/SIF operations using the funds allocated to the digital upgrade. Chairman Brennan updated the Board that the Commission began enforcing the Red Line as of November 1, 2021 and there has been some push back from practitioners. However, Arbitrators Huebsch and Pulia reported that things were working well. Chairman Brennan conveyed that the Commission added 2 pre-trial days starting January 1, 2022 so the arbitrators would not be overwhelmed. Finally, Chairman Brennan relayed to the Board that the Commission would likely begin rotating arbitrators in the second quarter of 2022.

Chairman Brennan next asked the Board about returning to in-person oral arguments. Discussion among the Board ensued, and the consensus was not to return to in-person oral arguments at this time with the uncertainty regarding the new COVID variant and because procedures have been going well virtually.

Commissioner Tyrrell posed a question about a recent review call and Chairman Brennan reiterated that to be consistent, all testimony should be heard live and in-person.

Chairman Brennan and General Counsel Rascia discussed appropriate responses to attorney inquiries as a housekeeping matter.

There were no members of the public present via WebEx and no public comment.

Upon no further business, Commissioner Harris moved to adjourn, Commissioner Doherty seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:23AM.