



STATE OF MAINE
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD
Board of Directors' Business Meeting

May 14, 2024

A business meeting of the Maine Workers' Compensation Board of Directors was conducted remotely via Zoom and in person at the Board's Caribou Regional Office at 43 Hatch Drive, Caribou, on Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Rohde (*Executive Director/Chair*), Penny Picard, Glenn Burroughs, Ron Green, Serina DeWolfe, Paul Gendreau (*Directors*), and Richard Hewes (*General Counsel*) attended in person.

CALL TO ORDER

Executive Director Rohde called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. with 35 people participating in person and via Zoom. Executive Director Rohde reviewed the hybrid meeting format, remote participation procedures, and welcomed everyone attending in person. Board members and staff introduced themselves for the recording.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Draft Minutes of 4/9/2024 Board of Director's Business Meeting

Director Burroughs MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 9, 2024, BOARD MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN; Director Picard SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 6-0.**

II. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Budget Subcommittee

Director Green reported that the Budget subcommittee met on May 6, 2024 to finalize the annual assessment package.

Director Green MOVED TO ACCEPT THE BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION TO REDUCE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 ASSESSMENT FROM THE STATUTORY CAP OF \$14,700,000 TO AN ACTUAL ASSESSMENT OF \$11,718,260 AND TO AUTHORIZE BOARD STAFF TO RAISE \$5,116,567 FROM SELF-INSURED EMPLOYERS AND TO CHARGE INSURED EMPLOYERS A RATE OF 2.41% BASED ON AN ESTIMATED INSURED MARKET OF \$273,929,189. Director Gendreau SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 6-0.**

Executive Director Rohde thanked Deputy Director Jan Adams for her work on preparing the annual assessment materials.

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Approved June 11, 2024 VOTE 6-0-1

2. Personnel Subcommittee

Director Picard reported that the Personnel Subcommittee conducted interviews for the vacant mediator position on April 12, 2024. Three applications were considered.

Director Picard MOVED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE TO HIRE DANIEL HARRINGTON AS A MEDIATOR IN THE BANGOR OFFICE; Director DeWolfe SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 6-0.**

Executive Director Rohde congratulated Dan Harrington on the promotion from claims resolution specialist to mediator.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

1. Framework Subcommittee

The Framework subcommittee is still gathering data from injury year 2018.

2. LD 1896

The first report is due in mid-August. Data is being collected and reviewed in anticipation of completing this interim report ready for the Legislature.

3. CompCon

Deputy Director Trost is working on the 2024 legal seminar, titled CompCon, that will offer lectures and panel discussions for lawyers and other practitioners whose work involves workers' compensation law. The conference will be held at the Augusta Civic Center in September. Deputy Director Trost invited directors of the board to participate as panelists at an introductory session. The directors expressed interest and look forward to this opportunity to participate.

4. Budget

The Board's budget submission will be due on September 1, 2024. The Board would like to start the review process as soon as possible, but we will not have information regarding projected expenditures until August.

IV. GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

1. Abuse Investigation Unit

The Abuse Investigation Unit recently hired two Attorney Advocates and a paralegal.

2. Advocate Division

An advocate position in Augusta is once again open. The attorney advocate who was recently hired decided against taking the job during a personnel orientation. Shawn Walsh, director of the advocate division, is in the process of advertising for the job.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Legislation Update

The Legislature came back for veto day on Friday, May 10, 2024. Any bills passed on Friday are now waiting for the Governor's signature. There was some discussion about bills that were moved off the legislature's Appropriations Table on veto day and the possibility that they will not be signed. This would include the board's bill, LD 2176, regarding the assessment. If Governor Mills does not sign the assessment bill, it will have to be reconsidered by the legislature in a special session. The Legislature is unlikely to reconvene so LD 2176 is not likely to become law.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Plaque Presentation

Jimmy Jandreau and the Caribou staff presented a wall plaque to the Board for the Central Office conference room in recognition of all of the work that the board's staff and directors do to make the workers' compensation system work for the State of Maine.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Director Burroughs MOVED TO ADJOURN; Director Picard SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 4-2.** (*Directors Burroughs and Green opposed.*)

The meeting formally adjourned at 8:20 a.m.