

**MINUTES OF THE ILLINOIS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION
JAMES R. THOMPSON CENTER, 100 WEST RANDOLPH STREET
CHAIRMAN'S CONFERENCE ROOM
HELD ON MARCH 31, 2015 at 10:00 AM**

Present at the meeting:

Chairman Joann Fratianni
Mario Basurto
Michael Brennan
Charles DeVriendt
David Gore
Joshua Luskin
Thomas Tyrrell

Present by telephone:

Stephen Mathis

Not present at the meeting:

Kevin Lamborn
Ruth White

IWCC staff present at the meeting were:

Ronald Rascia, General Counsel
Dennie Michelle Mogensen, Deputy General Counsel

Chairman Joann Fratianni called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and noted that a quorum was present. There was a motion by Commissioner Tyrrell and seconded by Commissioner Basurto and unanimously carried to approve the minutes from meeting held on October 15, 2014.

Chairman Fratianni first addressed old business. Commissioner DeVriendt has been hearing reports from attorneys that the New Lennox and Joliet hearing sites are still jammed up with cases and that whatever was set up in Kankakee is not particularly working to alleviate the case load on New Lennox and Joliet. Chairman Fratianni expressed that we can explore splitting the call or adding another arbitrator to New Lennox/Joliet, but we are currently down a couple of arbitrators since she and Commissioner Luskin were appointed. Additionally, there may be Arbitrators going on medical leave.

Commissioner Luskin stated that despite adding a Kankakee hearing site, practitioners still prefer Joliet. Commissioner Basurto agreed that long term another Arbitrator may be the solution. The Chairman said that there may be a shift once we know whether we will get additional Arbitrators. Additionally, New Lennox may be a good training ground, instead of Chicago, for new Arbitrators. Far southern Illinois might be another area where more Arbitrators are needed.

Commissioner Luskin also suggested possibly changing zones 1 and 2, so instead of north/south, they would be east/west. He further suggested that current Arbitrators could be rotated, or treat reappointment as restarting the clock on the 2 year limitation in zones.

Chairman Fratianni next addressed new business. Commissioners Brennan and Mathis will be chairing a rules committee. Arbitrators Mason, Pulia, McCarthy and Friedman will also be on the committee. Commissioner Brennan explained that 20 people will be on the committee. It will be subdivided into 4 groups of 5 people. They will be addressing pre-arbitration, arbitration, review and miscellaneous issues within the Administrative Rules. A confidentiality agreement has been circulated and the intention is to have no more than 4 meetings before rules are ready to be reviewed by the Chairman and sent to JCAR.

The IWCC will also be undertaking an IT modernization project. According to General Counsel Rascia, on February 23, 2015, the Court ordered the release of \$3.6 million to allow for back RAF payments. Out of those funds, the IWCC will be able to allocate \$700,000-\$1,000,000 to hire an architect to put together a new IT system.

Arbitration evaluations are going to be coming up since 11 arbitrators are up for reappointment. Chairman Fratianni will be assigning the arbitrators to Commissioners for evaluation in the near future. It is anticipated that there will be 2 Commissioners assigned per 1 arbitrator in Chicago, but downstate, it will likely be 1 to 1.

The Workers' Compensation Advisory Board has some new members. The Labor members were reappointed, but only Mark Denzler and Robert Karr were reappointed from business. New appointments were Mark Flannery, Kim Maisch, Todd Maisch and Jay Shattuck.

There was a motion by Commissioner Gore, seconded by Commissioner Brennan, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 am.