

Maryland Workers' Compensation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 27, 2025

Call to Order: Chairwoman Maureen Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m.

Present: Chairwoman Quinn, Kathleen A. Evans, James R. Forrester, Asha J Jefferson, Allan Kittleman, Morrisann Martin, Howard Metz, Delia T Schadt, and Tracey Parker-Warren

Staff Members Present: Theresa A. Cornish, Chief Executive Officer, Scott Curtis, Assistant Attorney General, Stacey Roig, Director IC&R, Amy Lackington, Administrator and Elizabeth Fletcher, Secretary of the Commission.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Commission meeting on March 13, 2025 were reviewed by the Commissioners. Upon the motion of Commissioner Kittleman, and seconded by Commissioner Evans, the minutes, as amended, were approved with a unanimous vote.

Chair Report: Chair Quinn announced that Stephane Romano and James MacAlister were confirmed by the Senate earlier this week and their next step is to be sworn in at their County Courthouses.

The Commissioners addressed the ethical considerations surrounding social interactions between recall Commissioners and practicing Workers' Compensation attorneys. Scott Curtis advised that recall Commissioners, when designated as public officials, are required to submit a financial disclosure in accordance with applicable regulations.

Chair Quinn mentioned that she and Scott Curtis had attended the legislative hearings in Annapolis. She then provided an update on current Senate bills that have advanced to the House. The Uninsured Employers' Fund (UEF) Assessment and Special Monitor bill (SB219) will grant the Workers' Compensation Commission the authority to select a special monitor. This bill also increases the assessment by .5% for a maximum assessment of 2.5%. The UEF Membership and Reserves bill (SB695) requires that UEF establish reserves as well as requiring its board to expand from three to five members. Commissioner Kittleman inquired about the prescription fee guide bill hearing in the House. Chair Quinn responded that opinions were divided, and at Senator Beidle's request, she submitted a letter of information outlining the Commission's efforts to adopt a prescription fee guide in 2023. Additionally, the Budget Committees have directed the UEF and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to collaborate during the interim period to assess whether the CorVel contract can be terminated early and whether its functions, either partially or entirely, can be brought in-house. Chair Quinn also reported that the hearing for the Claims Application Form bill (SB830), which is aimed at providing greater access to other claims, was very successful.

Amy Lackington, Administrator, announced to the Commission that she will be retiring on June 30th of this year.

Chair Quinn announced that the Administrator position will be revised to include responsibilities supporting both herself and Theresa Cornish, CEO.

Closed Session: At 9:59 a.m., upon motion of Commissioner Kittleman and seconded by Commissioner Parker-Warren and upon unanimous vote, pursuant to GP §§3-305(13), LE §§9-402, 9-403, 9-406, and 9-1104, and COMAR 14.09.13.12, the Commission entered a closed session for the purpose of discussing self-insured employers' financial information.

ICR Report: Stacey Roig, Director, discussed the result of the IC&R Division's audit of excess policies issued to all MD Self-Insureds. She also discussed the issues when companies merge, and each separate entity has its own excess policy. She advised the Commission that more details would follow in the coming months.

Open Session: At 10:06 a.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Kittleman and second from Commissioner Forrester, and upon a unanimous vote, the Commission re-opened the meeting.

Old Business: Theresa Cornish provided updates on the changes that were being implemented in CompHub to resolve any existing issues relating to combination/global settlements. Commissioner Evans highlighted an additional concern about combination/global settlements being queued to the different Commissioners. Each combination/global settlement and their associated claims should be queued to one Commissioner for review, they should not be separated. Theresa Cornish assured the Commissioners that this issue is being actively reviewed for automation to minimize or eliminate the need for human intervention. She also highlighted ongoing efforts to streamline and refine the language used in the settlement instructions and forms. These improvements will extend beyond global settlements and will be applied to other processes within CompHub. Additionally, Commissioners Jefferson and Schadt discussed challenges related to document corrections that are being submitted requesting changes to the employer/insurer after (most times many hearings and years later) an award order has been issued. Theresa Cornish thanked Commissioner Schadt for sending an example for her review. She also asked the Commissioners to forward any other related issues to her for research and resolution.

She reported that the training for the newly classified Claim Reviewers is progressing smoothly, with new software available to enhance typing and data entry skills.

New Business: Commissioner Metz suggested that the formatting of Hearing Notices be reviewed to attempt to limit them to one page when there are not multiple employers and insurers and attorneys. Notices often extend into two pages unnecessarily. Most cases have one claimant, one employer, one insurer and one attorney for each party. Such easily fits on one page. Proper formatting can reduce empty space and allow all information to appear on one page without spreading into a second page. The result will be a reduction of paper use and cost savings. It was also noted that hearing notices in occupational disease claims do not include the alleged date of disablement as notice of accidental injury claims list a date of accident.

Theresa Cornish advised Commissioner Metz that she will review both issues regarding the hearing notices. She also advised the Commissioners that the new “Notices” tab was now available on CompHub and is only visible on the attorney’s side.

Chair Quinn and the Commissioners presented Commissioner Morrisann Martin with a card signed by many employees of the Commission and wished her many years of happiness on her next journey in retirement. Commissioner Martin stated that working as a Commissioner has been the highlight of her career.

Adjournment: Upon a motion by Commissioner Forrester and seconded by Commissioner Parker-Warren, and upon a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.