WORKERS’ COMPENSATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, November 17, 2017

MINUTES

In attendance: Judge Audrey Beach
Judge Denise Krass
Judge Scott Olin
Judge Tina Maria Rago
Judge Todd Seelig
Maria Ciccotelli
Danielle DeRosa
Caroline Diehl
Jennifer Etkin
Diane Fenner
Alexis Handrich
Kelly Hemple
Ian Landman
Mark Mazzanti
Eric Pearson
Christina Petrucci
Deborah Richman
Andrea Rock
Amit Shah
A. Michael Snyder
1. Meeting is called to order. Motion for approval of September 2017 meeting minutes is seconded and all are in favor.

2. Co-chairs provided update regarding candidate forum.

3. Committee Updates.

   a. CLE Committee: Maria Ciccotelli provided update concerning the CLE Advisory Committee Meeting. The Workers' Compensation Section received praise for our CLE program. The Association advised they will not present extra CLE programs for public interest attorneys. Further advised that Bench Bar was successful in terms of attendance but the Association intends on implementing a new policy concerning program topics to avoid sponsorship conflicts. Concerning the Workers' Compensation Section's January CLE program, same will be held 1/26/17 and the course title is "If I Went Back to Private Practice, How I Would Do Things Differently: A Judge's Perspective" featuring Judge Sandra Craig, Judge Francine Lincicome, Judge Tina Maria Rago, Judge Todd Seelig and Judge Erin Young.

   b. Legislative Committee: Alexis Handrich provided update. HB 1840 was introduced as the "Protz Workers' Compensation Legislative Fix," and purports to be "narrowly focused and will simply repeal the subsection invalidated by the court, and reenact the language, clarifying the guidelines to be used for IREs." The House Co-Sponsorship Memoranda also claims that they were "not proposing any substantive changes to the IRE process or the Act," but that the bill is "merely intended" to address the issue identified by the Court’s ruling. As of November, it was in the House Committee on Labor and Industry.

SB936 Drug Formulary Bill is continuing to be monitored by the Section. As of November, it was reported out of the House Labor Committee, voted upon and approved; however, was then referred back to House Labor and Industry for further consideration. The bill seeks to allow a drug formulary to be enacted into the WC Act. Concerns expressed by democrats and republicans that oppose the bill involve interference with the doctor/patient relationship and changing the burden already in place under the Utilization Review provisions of the Act. Supporters tout the bill as a fix to the opioid crises, despite the bill not being specific to that type of medication.
SB 774 Newest version of prior SB 413 which sought to revise provisions on practice and procedure of Commonwealth agencies; establishing the Office of Administrative Hearings; extensively revising provisions on judicial review of Commonwealth agency action; making editorial changes; and making an appropriation. The Section had previously opposed 413, which opposition was renewed. This bill has not seen any activity since June 2017, and remained in Senate Appropriations as of November.

SB676 UEGF Amendments to allow, among other changes, a WCJ to determine AWW absent other forms of proof based upon Department of Labor statistics for average salaries for that type of work generally in the Commonwealth. Also would permit increased annual assessment to promote the financial stability of the Fund. This version of this bill was passed out of the Appropriations Committee, and then referred to House Labor and Industry.

Budget process was completed. Only a few days left in the House and Senate until the end of the year.


d. Fundraising: Amit Shah provided update for Jeff Gross and advised our fundraising efforts are on track.

e. Charitable Events and Community Service: Jennifer Etkin advised that we raised money for the Ronald McDonald House at the Bench Bar. In conjunction with our November CLE program, we are collecting money and items for Women Against Abuse. Our firm-sponsored luncheon at St. John's Hospice will be held on 11/30/17 and we expect to feed 250-300 men. We will also be collecting donations for Toys for Tots Foundation at the December Holiday Party.

f. Events: Judge Seelig advised that the Martha Hampton Luncheon will likely be held on a Thursday in April as Friday is not available at the Society Hill Sheraton.

g. Board of Governors: Judge Rago advised that the 11/20 election will be open until 12/5. Judge Snyder is unopposed.

h. Marketing and Communications Committee: Judge Beach advised that the deadline submission for a January article is 12/15/17. Maria Ciccotelli
provided update regarding the Facebook page for Workers’ Compensation related news.

i. Diversity and Inclusion Committee: Caroline Diehl advised the internship program over the past summer was a success. Five (5) students interned with five judges and the feedback she has received thus far is that overall it was a very positive experience for everyone involved. Carolyn is now focusing her efforts on getting the interns/students from the Youth Court program to intern for Workers’ Compensation Judges.

j. Arts in the Courts: Judge Olin advised that the appraisal is complete. Subcommittee is working on adding the paintings to the Association’s insurance policy. Motion for approval of expenditure of $1,600.00 for appraisals of all eight (8) paintings is seconded and all are in favor. Motion for approval of expenditure of $700.00 to pay for conservation cleaning of all eight (8) paintings is seconded and all in favor.

k. YLD Liaison: Ian Landman provided update as to the YLD’s upcoming collection for Philabundance.

l. Of counsel: Judge Snyder discussed the Association’s prestigious Justice William J. Brennan Jr. Distinguished Jurist and PNC Achievement awards which will be presented at the Association’s Annual Meeting on 12/5/17.

m. New Business: Motion for approval of $500.00 donation to charity chosen by Co-chairs for in memoriam donation is seconded and all are in favor. Motion for approval of expenditure of $500.00 donation to Kid’s Chance is seconded and all are in favor. Motion for approval of $1,000.00 donation to Philadelphia Bar Foundation is seconded and all are in favor. Motion for approval of $3,000.00 donation to VIP is seconded and all are in favor. Motion for approval of expenditure of $600.00 in gift cards and up to $150.00 for gift basket to Association staff is seconded and all are in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.