

MONTANA SELF INSURERS' ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Minutes

Dec 19, 2024 10:00a MST

Zoom Meeting ID: 822 9271 6865

Passcode: 395312

Members Present: D Haeder (Chair) NorthWestern Corp, D. Walcheck (V Chair) Logan Health, C. Cude Rosauers, V. Evans Montana Contractor Compensation Fund and P. Strauss (Exec Dir) ex-officio and non-voting member. K. Bartsch MT Schools Group Interlocal Authority had previously provided his proxy to Evans. M. Marsh (Secretary/Treasurer) Midland Claims Service was excused.

1. Approval of 10/22/2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Attached to the meeting invitation sent on 12/14/2024 were DRAFT 10/22/2024 Board Meeting Minutes. Evans requested a spelling correction to the name of the Montana Contractor Compensation Fund.

Haeder moved and Evans seconded a motion to adopt the 10/22/2024 Board meeting minutes as amended. Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

2. Director's Report:

Financials

The November financial report was provided to the Board on 11/7/2024 and contained the October end of month account balances and statements.

The November monthly statements from our Valley Bank operations checking account, our Wells Fargo Advisors money market account, and our DADCo Savings and Investment accounts were attached to the meeting invitation sent on 12/14. An updated Financial Transactions spreadsheet, which is more current, was also attached to the meeting invitation.

Valley Bank Balance	= \$27,059.46
DA Davidson Bond Fund Balance	= \$10,202.88
DA Davidson Investment Acct	= \$27,531.90
WFA Money Market	= \$27,636.87

We issued two checks this month. The first, #1012, for \$242.75 for dues overpayment by XcelABEL is a replacement for check #1009 in the same amount. XcelABLE's corporate name is different and they could not cash the original check. They have destroyed it and it is replaced with this check, #1012 made out to

their corporate name, Ergo Links Inc. The second #1013 for \$330 renewed our National Council of Self Insurers membership. Strauss is on the Board of Directors and part of the Conference Committee for the National Council on our behalf. Earlier in the year, they clarified that the charge is \$6 per member, and is not limited to Employer members. Therefore, with 55 total members, our dues are \$150 higher than the \$180 we had budgeted. We should be able to deal with this overage within the existing budget. As an example, our Webinar seat sales are already at our projection for the year (32) and we have at least two more Webinars.

November expenses included the usual CardSetter and Squarespace (formerly Google) domain name charges, the CE Credit charges from both the Department of Labor and NAIC for the MT WC Claims Examiner and the MT Insurance Producer license credits for the 12/5 Webinar. We have another NAIC charge, totaling \$24 to apply the credit for each individual who signed up for the Insurance Producer license credit. These charges were all budgeted and are within our projected costs. We paid our WCRI Annual Membership charge, this year \$825, which represents \$25 more than we had budgeted. Finally, we paid for two stamps, to mail the NCSI and XcelABLE payments. Squarespace has notified us they will be increasing our charges from \$6 to \$7.20 – again more than we had budgeted but an amount we should be able to absorb.

As of this meeting, the December expenses will include the usual CardSetter and Squarespace fees, the \$99 charge for the University of MT Bureau of Business and Economic Research Economic Outlook Seminar in Helena on Jan 28. The Seminar will also be held in GTF (1/29), MSO (1/31), BIL 2/4), BZN (2/5), Butte (2/6), Kalispell (2/11), Sidney (3/11) Miles City (3/12). While there may be other charges yet this month, I do not expect much.

We sold 14 seats to the 12/5/2024 Webinar, Trolls, Truths and A.I. Feedback from the webinar has been very positive. The audience for this Webinar included more out of state employers than ever before, through our NCSI contacts. Our next Webinar will feature new member Lisa Fitzpatrick with XcelABLE on February 12 at 10a MST. XcelABLE is using professional sports movement technology to generate objective medical evidence for FCE's. Fitzpatrick also has a compelling personal story. We already have two sponsors for this webinar. Expenses will include the CE charges from both the Department of Labor and Commissioner of Securities and Insurance and those charges will likely come in January. Our Webinar invitation list is significantly larger than the membership list and is national in nature.

3. Membership

We have received dues payment from all members who are renewing for the July cycle. Intermountain Health had some issues with the ACH payment processing since we changed banks last year. Otherwise, I believe they remain happy with their membership.

We have added a new Associate member to the January cycle, North Shore Risk Consulting is a group of claims professionals Strauss has worked with for some time. They provide claims management audits and consulting services. Based on his knowledge, Strauss has no hesitation in recommending them based on their work and knowledge of the MT system.

The initial January dues notice to the now 14 Associate members has been sent and we have received payments from two of them already, as well as the payment from new member ExamWorks Compliance Solutions.

Associate member Health-e-Systems is a finalist for the MSF Pharmacy business, along with incumbent member MyMatrixx. Rising Medical Solutions and Enlyte/Mitchell are finalists for the medical bill review work for MSF. The incumbent is Rising and they are a member. Enlyte/Mitchell has thus far rebuffed our entreaties to bring them on as a member.

There are a couple of potential new employer members Strauss may be able to approach.

4. Legislative Issues

Strauss has started to look at the bill draft requests – there is almost no language publicly available yet for anything. In a change in direction this year, the Legislative Counsels' office has decided that the 'junque files,' the documents regarding communication and background on individual bill requests is not public information. Therefore we do not have the opportunity to as easily determine the purpose and intent of proposed changes. Also, there is almost no language available for current bill draft requests, just titles.

In addition to the usual choice of physician (LC 660, A. Olsen D-MSO) we will likely see a bill (LC 2146) from Jeannie Etchart (R-BIL) to permit PAs to be treating physicians. Our proposal to limit coverage when the employer pays for or provides transportation (LC 1353) will be sponsored by Ed Buttrey (R-GTF), who will be the Chair of the House Business & Labor Committee again. There are LC numbers relating to providing presumptive PTSD coverage for police and first responders (LC 1564 Reavis D-BIL) which will have the minority caucus support and bill titles regarding undocumented labor, telemedicine, apprenticeships and wage transparency. Again, there is no language available for any proposal at this time. There is one LC, 1906 relating to the Old Fund and a host of bills proposing to "Generally Revise WC Law."

The Board discussed the Medicaid expansion renewal proposal that will be sponsored by House Business & Labor Chair Ed Buttrey (R-GTF) and the potential impact its' defeat would have on the business community in general in the state and the health care business. Small rural hospitals can immediately be expected to have financial issues as a result of the loss of coverage, and larger systems will also see the possibility of losing staff and increasing fees, should the renewal fail. Strauss reported that every business group he is working with is supporting the renewal, currently set to sunset on June 30. We speculated that there would have to be a coalition of Democrats and 'moderate' Republicans will be needed to pass the proposal. The hard-line conservatives are currently opposed to it. With the expected need to put together a coalition in opposition to the more conservative Republicans, anything involving the principals involved is possible. While we do not anticipate an issue with WC legislation – specifically the bills we are supporting or seeking, it is possible something weird could happen.

As we have done the last two sessions, we will provide a weekly UPDATE on legislative activity in addition to the monthly UPDATE information.

In other Helena news, Eric Strauss, ESD Administrator will be leaving the post this month, moving over to the Department of Corrections. Department of Labor Administrator Sarah Swanson announced they do not plan to immediately fill the position and has asked Counsel Quinlan O'Connor to make decisions Bureau Chiefs Theresa McGowan-Srozyck and Jason Swant are not able to make, but they are expected to take on the brunt of the WC regulatory Executive level work. We have an excellent relationship with both Srozyck and Swant and look forward to working with them as closely as they are comfortable.

With the changes in the regulatory structure there may be a greater opportunity to put in place something which requires more prompt, correct or standards for medical billing. Strauss will continue to seek out those opportunities.

We will again be active with the Business Caucus put together by the MT Chamber of Commerce. We have already registered for the Business Days at the Capitol – this year during the second week of January.

5. Old Business / New Business

None.

6. Adjourn –

With the legislative session we will start meeting monthly again. As a result we are next scheduled to meet January 16 at 11a MST. Strauss reported he will be on the east coast with Opa-duties from the middle of December to the end of the year, so the kids can delay day-care until January. We do not anticipate any issues based on his location for the last two weeks of the year.

MSIA will be providing weekly Legislative UPDATES again during the session.