

**THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD****MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS****MINUTES**

**DATE:** February 1, 2022

**PLACE:** Zoom Video Conference

**TIME:** 8:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Erna Ference, Chair  
Mike Boyle, Member  
Brian Frank, Member  
Brian McConkey, Member  
Shawna Miller, Member  
Mary Phillips-Rickey, Member

**EXECUTIVE**

Trevor Alexander, President & Chief Executive Officer ♦♦♦  
Tarick Ahmad, Chief Technology Officer ♦\*  
Ron Helmhold, Chief Financial Officer ♦\*  
Wendy King, Senior Vice President, Operations & Innovation ♦\*  
Marcela Matthew, Vice President, Millard Health & Special Care Services ♦\*  
William P. Ostapek, Secretary and General Counsel ♦\*  
Roxy Shulha-McKay, Vice President, Employee & Corporate Services \*

**ALSO PRESENT**

Leslie Henkel, Board of Directors' Secretariat

♦ excused for items 11.3 and 11.4

\* excused for item 14

♦♦ excused for item 14 (part 2)

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**Board of Directors**

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. **Agenda**

The agenda as distributed was approved.

2. **Proposed Motions**

The list of proposed motions was received for information.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting of November 30, 2021**

**MOTION**

2021/01/01 It was moved that,

The Board of Directors approve the minutes of the meeting of November 30, 2021.

**CARRIED**

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes of November 30, 2021**

There was no business arising from the minutes of the November 30, 2021 meeting.

5. **2022 Meetings and Activities Schedule**

The meetings and activities schedule was received for information.

6. **Report of the Chair**

The Chair reported on:

- a recent meeting with the Minister of Labour and Immigration, and
- board recruitment activities.

7.1 **Report of the President**

The President reported on the following:

- investment and financial results,
- operations results and updates,
- technology and innovation,
- stakeholder engagement and legislative relations,
- legislation and panel implementation, and
- risk profile and emerging issues.

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**Board of Directors**

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**7.2 WCB Technology Review**

The Chief Technology Officer provided an update on WCB technology.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS****8. Policy Committee**

The committee chair provided a report on the committee's recent meeting.

**8.1 Review Date for Annual Benefit Adjustments (non-substantive)**

The topic summary was received for information.

**8.2 Policy 04-02, Part II, Application 4: Continuation of Employment Health Benefits – Accidents from September 1, 2018 to April 1, 2022 inclusive**

Bill 47 included the repeal of section 88.2 of the *Workers' Compensation Act* which required employment health benefits to continue to be provided to injured workers in specific circumstances. As previously communicated to the Board of Directors in March 2020, section 88.2 required employment health benefits to continue for one year after the date of accident. This means that the obligation to continue health benefits for eligible workers will, in all cases, end on or before April 1, 2022.

As there will no longer be any obligation under this repealed provision, Policy 04-02, Part II, Application 4 will no longer be required and can be rescinded. The change will be noted in the Policy Manual's Table of Contents and archived versions of the policy application will still be available through the Document History, published on WCB-Alberta's website.

**MOTION**

2021/01/02 It was moved that,

The Board of Directors approve rescinding Policy 04-02, Part II, Application 4. Effective Date: April 2, 2022

**CARRIED**

**9. Audit Committee**

The committee had nothing to report.

**10. Finance Committee**

The committee chair provided a report on the committee's recent meeting, noting that the committee approved an online consultation for the draft funding policy.

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## **Board of Directors**

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### **10.1 Monthly Financial Reports**

The monthly financial reports were received for information.

## **11. Human Resource and Governance Committee**

The committee chair provided a report on the committee's recent meeting.

### **11.1 2021 Strategy Map and Objectives – Results**

Despite the challenges that emerged in 2021, WCB-Alberta's stakeholders were well served. The organization helped employers manage in difficult economic times, supported workers to recover and return to work and moved the innovation and technology agenda forward, all while coping with the influx of COVID and other complex claims.

The year was noteworthy both for the number and impact of the projects undertaken. Major legislative and policy changes were implemented that reduced workers' compensation system costs by \$350 million. As WCB continued to absorb an influx of claims due to COVID, it provided \$27 million in cost relief to employers who were pushed to the limit by economic pressures (on top of \$25 million for claims in 2020). WCB grew the province's first long-COVID treatment program at Millard Health. And WCB completed the full transition of \$11.2 billion in investment portfolio assets to AIMCo.

Following are some highlights from the 2021 Strategy Map:

- 31% of workers were kept job attached through modified work as soon as they became fit for work (on a target of 30%).
- 90% of workers returned to work safely within the first four months of their short-term disability (on an 84% target).
- 71% of workers with complex claims successfully recovered and returned to work within six months of reopening their claim (on a 60% target).
- 873 workers were referred for psychological treatment within 60 days—a 103% improvement over the baseline (on a 25% target).
- 229 workers found opportunities with new employers (on a target of 180).
- 82 employers (on a target of 20)—three-quarters of which were small employers—took time to complete virtual disability management training.
- mobile applications were enhanced.
- Employee Help Desk increased their response times by 71.7% compared to 2020 (on a target of a 25% improvement).

Two targets on the 2021 strategy map were missed, both of which were impacted by the conditions of the economy and the pandemic:

- Worker (78.3%) and employer (80.1%) satisfaction with engagement fell slightly below the 2020 baseline (78.9% and 84.8%, respectively).

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- WCB aimed to deliver education to more than 1,000 employers on creating a psychologically healthy workplace and achieved 90% of its goal.

### **MOTION**

2021/01/03 It was moved that,

The Board of Directors approve the 2021 Strategy Map results as confirmation of the organization's achievement of annual corporate objectives.

**CARRIED**

### 11.2 **2022 Strategy Map and Objectives – Targets**

In November 2021, the Board of Directors received a comprehensive presentation on the objectives for 2022 and approved WCB's 2022 Strategy Map and Objectives in principle. After finalizing year-end results and project evaluations, the individual targets have been updated and WCB is seeking approval of the final objectives for the year.

There has been one significant change since the approval of the strategy map, and that is the arrival of the Omicron variant. This new COVID variant has thrown into question the timing of returning to a sense of normal and the strain it creates for internal resources due to rising claim volume. Despite the current wave, WCB remains confident in the goals set, but is prepared to revisit the scope of projects if core business service delivery is put at risk.

Because the CEO is ultimately responsible for corporate objectives, the CEO and strategy map objectives are synonymous. Therefore, approval of the 2022 Strategy Map and Objectives (with targets) also serves as approval of the CEO's 2022 objectives, as required in the Human Resource and Governance Committee Terms of Reference.

### **MOTION**

2021/01/04 It was moved that,

The Board of Directors approve the targets in the 2022 Strategy Map and Objectives.

**CARRIED**

The Chair excused senior management, with the exception of the Vice President, Employee and Corporate Services, from the meeting for items 11.3 and 11.4.

### 11.3 **2021 Annual Board Evaluation Results**

The 2021 annual board evaluation results were received for information.

### 11.4 **2021 President and CEO Evaluation**

The 2021 President and CEO evaluation process was received as information.

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### 12. **New Business**

There was no new business.

### 13. **Meeting Evaluation**

The members were asked to complete the meeting effectiveness self-assessment form.

### 14. **In Camera**

The Board of Directors held an *in camera* session in two parts. During the first part, all of senior management were excused, with the exception of the President. During the second part, the President was also excused. The Board Secretariat remained for the entire *in camera* session.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 11:15 a.m.