

**MINUTES
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BOARD
Docket No. 5643**

Open Session

The Appeals Board convened at 1:00 p.m., June 19, 2019 in Sacramento with Chair Marty Block presiding.

1. Roll Call: <u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Marty Block, Chair	x	
Dan Reeves, Vice Chair	x	
Mike Eng	x	
Michael Allen	x	
Ralph Lightstone	x	

2. Approval of the Minutes:

The May 15, 2019 Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report:

Chair Block welcomed the presiding administrative law judges (PALJ) from Field Offices throughout the state who were in Sacramento for PALJ meeting.

Chair Block reported that the meeting was not live streamed but would be videotaped and then posted to the CUIAB website. Chair Block stated livestreaming Board meetings provides transparency and allows people to see the Board at work. He reminded viewers that although the Board only meets once a month the majority of the work is done between meetings, as they adjudicate appellate cases. Chair Block reported the Board reviewed and resolved 855 appellate cases in the past month.

Chair Block reported Chief ALJ/Executive Director Gonzales and he will be attending the National Association of Unemployment Insurance Appeals Professionals (NAUIAP) Training Conference held in Indianapolis. Past experience dictates that CUIAB is ahead of the curve and out performing most of our colleagues from across the country. There are many fine offices around the country and we learn from one another. He will be doing a presentation at the conference on the Process of On-Boarding new Board Members.

Chair Block reported Member Allen and he would be going through confirmation hearings in the next couple of weeks. This is a continuing term for both. Member Allen is a now Governor's designee and Chair Block will continue as a Governor's designee should they both be confirmed.

Chair Block congratulated PALJ Madlyn Hilton and PALJ Daniel Garcia on their retirement.

Chair Block reported Chief Counsel Woo-Sam will be attending the monthly Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) meeting in June on his behalf.

4. Board Member Reports:

Vice Chair Reeves welcomed all the presiding judges and said it was a pleasure to meet them and he looked forward to working with them in the future.

Member Eng echoed Vice Chair Reeves comments and added that he was impressed with the knowledge, interest and the passion the PALJs have to represent the State of California and its constituents.

Member Eng inquired about the funds Governor Newsom mentioned that would be extended to the federal workers that were on furlough. He requested any feedback or figures that might be available regarding the numbers which may be appealed to the Board.

Executive Director Elena Gonzales asked for clarification on the information Member Eng was requesting.

Chair Block suggested Executive Director Gonzales and Member Eng should discuss to clarify.

Member Lightstone welcomed and thanked the presiding judges and all the field judges for their hard work. He commented that the judges deal with a complex body of law and the Board recognizes it takes skill to handle the sometimes emotional hearings or disputes.

Member Allen commented that it was a pleasure to talk to all the judges visiting Sacramento and wished PALJ Hilton well on her retirement.

Member Allen reported that due to workload and staffing issues the newsletter will be delayed. He is gathering articles and plans to put out the CUIAB newsletter at a later date.

Member Allen stated CUIAB is running very well and he never takes that for granted. He credited the staff for taking their jobs seriously and for wanting to do the very best for the people of California. He said his new colleagues were doing great work and he is hopeful both he and Chair Block will be confirmed soon. He thanked everyone.

5. Public Comment

No Public Comment.

6. Chief ALJ/Executive Director Report:

Chief ALJ/Executive Director Gonzales reported the PALJ meeting was very effective. They covered topics such as efficient calendaring and the new LEAN Sigma Belt Training. She noted that a second LEAN Sigma Belt Training is scheduled for September and by fall all managers will be LEAN Sigma Belt trained. This is in preparation for the rollout of the Appeals Modernization Project. Other topics covered were preparing Performance Evaluations and Quality Review by the Federal Government. She noted that Field Operations continues to maintain the high quality and performance of the ALJ's in each of their respective offices. The PALJ meetings are held to ensure consistent approach throughout the state for how each the PALJs work with the staff and the field office workloads. Lastly, they covered simpler topics such as standardizing forms for all offices.

Chief ALJ/Executive Director Gonzales reported there were no security incidents to report this month,

Chief ALJ/Executive Director Gonzales reported the percentage of cases closed within 30 days was 74.4%. She pointed out the year to date percent was 77.3% and the standard is 60%. The percentage of cases closed within 45 days is 92.9% and the year to date was 95.1% with the standard being 80%. The average age of pending cases is 19.1 days and the standard is 30 days. She noted the field offices are processing the cases in a timely fashion and are on target for the year.

7. Presiding ALJ of Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke Report:

PALJ/AO Remke echoed the comments of the Board Members. She said it was a pleasure to have the chance to meet all the presiding judges in person. PALJ/AO Remke commented it was helpful for the working environment and the cooperation between Field Offices and Appellate Operations (AO).

PALJ/AO Remke reported AO and the Board continue to perform well in exceeding the DOL guidelines and standards. The percentage of cases closed in 45-days or less is at 96.1% and for the 75-day guideline AO is at 99%. She noted AO is really on top of everything right now and the case aging average for pending cases is 16.3 days.

Chair Block commented our DOL standards and statistics are incredible. He noted other states are behind us and that many states are not meeting the DOL standards. On behalf of the Board he thanked both the Field Offices and Appellate Operations for their excellent work.

8. Chief Information Officer, Jeff Willoughby Report:

CIO Willoughby echoed Judge Remke's commentary about regarding meeting the PALJ's in person. He has spoken to many of the PALJs on the phone but putting the face to the name was great.

CIO Willoughby reported the live video streaming equipment has been ordered and he anticipates having it in place and running by the next Board meeting.

CIO Willoughby reported the Windows 10 Project coming to completion. They have swapped out over 400 computers and/or equipment. He reported approximately 150 computers are remaining to be swapped out. The Bay Area Office of Appeals is the remaining field office along with needing to clean up a few hearing facility outstations. He anticipates completion of this project in four to six weeks. He acknowledged his group worked very hard and thanked them all for their efforts.

CIO Willoughby reported the consolidation of telephone numbers into the new Telecom phone system resulted in approximate savings of over \$158,000 annually. They are pursuing disconnects for unused numbers and unused features which could lead to an additional \$82,000 in annual savings.

9. Chief Administrative Services, Robert Silva Report:

Chief Silva discussed the Monthly Overtime and Lump Sum Payout report set forth in the meeting packets.

Chief Silva followed up on a report from last month regarding a reduction of 16.9 positions attached to the Unemployment Insurance Program as a result of the October 2018 Revise. This position reduction brings with it a \$1.6 million reduction for salaries and \$1.2 million in associated benefits.

Chief Silva reported Employment Development Department (EDD) and the Department of Finance (DOF) agreed not to move forward with a May 2019 Revision because the overall EDD/UI workload variances were small enough that they felt an adjustment was not warranted. Therefore, there will not be an additional budget reduction for the UI Program as we enter the state fiscal year 2019/20. However, over the last three months the UI workload figures, specifically for CUIAB, the disposition numbers are trending at about 10% lower than the numbers that were utilized for the October 2018 Revise. He noted that if this trend continues, CUIAB could see a significant budgetary reduction with the upcoming October 2019 Revise for the 2019/20 fiscal year.

Chief Silva reported they met with EDD Fiscal Programs Division. EDD reported they intend to supply CUIAB with the 2019/20 budget allocation sometime in July. At that time, the Personnel and OE&E branch requests will have to be examined for approval within the scope of those allocations. While again monitoring the UI workload numbers for any possible impact to the October 2019 Revise. If the allocations are received early enough in July and they can prepare them to the branch requests, they are targeting the August Board Meeting to propose the 2019/20 Budget.

Member Allen asked if there were vacancies to accommodate the budgetary reductions and how was it being managed.

Chief Silva responded the 16.9 positions that CUIAB will be losing entering the 2019/20 fiscal year for the Unemployment Insurance Program have already been identified through vacancies.

Chair Block asked if the air-conditioning issue in the Bay Area Office of Appeals has been stabilized.

Chief Silva responded it is all stable and back in order. He will receive alerts from the DGS building when things of this nature happen.

Chair Block asked if productivity was impacted and if it would impact our case closure statistics.

Chief ALJ/Executive Director Gonzales stated the building which houses the Bay Area Office of Appeals was closed to the public on that day although only part of the building was impacted. The hearing rooms were not affected. The ALJs transferred the in-person hearings to telephone hearings to allow the hearings to move forward as scheduled. If a party was not available, the hearing was continued. The ALJs continued to work that day along with a few members of the support staff.

Closed Session:

The Board adjourned Open Session at 1:21 p.m. The Board commenced a Closed Session at 1:25 p.m. Closed Session was adjourned at approximately 1:55 p.m.

Open Session:

The Board reconvened in Open Session at approximately 2:00 p.m. Chair Block reported that no votes were taken in Closed Session and that there was nothing further to report.

Adjournment