

Minutes of October 7, 2021, Meeting of the Vermont Labor Relations Board

The meeting of the entire Board convened at 9:10 a.m. in the Vermont Labor Relations Board Hearing Room located at 13 Baldwin Street in Montpelier. Present were Chairperson Richard Park and Members Roger Donegan, David Boulanger, Alan Willard, Robert Greemore, and Karen Saudek. Also present were Executive Director Judith Dillon and Clerk Melinda Moz-Knight.

Board Office Move

Ms. Dillon explained that BGS has notified us that we will be moving to 6 Baldwin Street in the next “four to six weeks.” There is a shared hearing room across the hall from the office space. BGS is also outfitting for hearing space another large room, with an adjoining room, for use in the basement of 133 State Street. The Board raised questions/concerns about parking. The Board also stressed the need to maintain accessibility for the public especially when hearings are held. The building at 133 appears to be closed and the public and litigants will need to access the hearing rooms when hearings are held there.

Record Retention Schedules

As part of its preparation for the move, the Clerk and Executive Director have been working with the Secretary of State Archivist to revise its Record Retention Schedule. Proposed changes include decreasing the review and retention period for certain records from fifteen to six years, adding schedules for other types of records including administrative and financial records, changing the location of stored documents from the VLRB to the State Archives, and modifying the number and types of records stored in perpetuity. The Board agreed unanimously to pass the new retention schedules.

Changes to Board Rules of Practice

The Board discussed proposed changes to the Board Rules of Practice drafted by Judith. The use of electronic filings and recent statutory changes to the Certification provisions of the labor statutes prompted the review of the Board Rules. The Board made comments to the proposed changes and agreed to the proposed changes and recommended consolidation of the Rules. Judith will provide a revised draft incorporating the Board changes. The Board anticipates sending the Rules of Practice out for public comment.

Hearings in the Time of COVID

Because of the health risks of SARS-CoV-2 and its variants, the challenges of hearing and seeing witnesses and parties at masked in-person hearings, and the challenges of maintaining adequate social distancing and air circulation in the Board hearing room, the Board decided that all hearings and Board meetings will be held remotely until further notice. The Board will continue to monitor and consider COVID-19 case trends in Vermont and guidance from state officials when making decisions about transitions to in-person meetings and hearings.

Budget:

Ms. Dillon discussed our budget and responded to questions.

Status of Cases

Ms. Dillon provided the status of cases document to the Board and responded to questions.

Board Assignments

January 13: Park, Saudek, Donegan

January 27: Park, Boulanger, Willard

February 10: Greemore, Saudek, Donegan

February 24: Greemore, Willard, Boulanger

March 3: Greemore, Saudek, Boulanger

March 10: Greemore, Willard, Donegan

March 17: Park, Saudek, Boulanger

The next full Board meeting will be January 6th.

The public meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Melinda Moz-Knight