IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

INDICATE FULL CAPTION:

Respondent,

NORTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT; AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMPENSATION TRUST, Appellant, vs. THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION ET AL No. 70592 Electronically Filed

Jul 07 2016 03:10 p.m.

DOCKETING STRATICALING

CIVIL APPLIALS Supreme Court

GENERAL INFORMATION

Appellants must complete this docketing statement in compliance with NRAP 14(a). The purpose of the docketing statement is to assist the Supreme Court in screening jurisdiction, identifying issues on appeal, assessing presumptive assignment to the Court of Appeals under NRAP 17, scheduling cases for oral argument and settlement conferences, classifying cases for expedited treatment and assignment to the Court of Appeals, and compiling statistical information.

WARNING

This statement must be completed fully, accurately and on time. NRAP 14(c). The Supreme Court may impose sanctions on counsel or appellant if it appears that the information provided is incomplete or inaccurate. *Id.* Failure to fill out the statement completely or to file it in a timely manner constitutes grounds for the imposition of sanctions, including a fine and/or dismissal of the appeal.

A complete list of the documents that must be attached appears as Question 27 on this docketing statement. Failure to attach all required documents will result in the delay of your appeal and may result in the imposition of sanctions.

This court has noted that when attorneys do not take seriously their obligations under NRAP 14 to complete the docketing statement properly and conscientiously, they waste the valuable judicial resources of this court, making the imposition of sanctions appropriate. *See* KDI Sylvan Pools v. Workman, 107 Nev. 340, 344, 810 P.2d 1217, 1220 (1991). Please use tab dividers to separate any attached documents.

1. Judicial District Eighth	Department XXXII
County_Clark	Judge Hon. Ron Bare
District Ct. Case No. A-14-702463-J	
0	
2. Attorney filing this docketing statement:	
Attorney Robert F. Balkenbush, Esq.	Telephone <u>775-786-2882</u>
Firm Thorndal, Armstrong, Delk, Balkenbush	& Eisinger
Address 6590 South McCarran Blvd., #B Reno, NV 89509	
Client(s) North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection Dis	strict & Public Agency Compensation Trust
If this is a joint statement by multiple appellants, add the names of their clients on an additional sheet accompaling of this statement.	
3. Attorney(s) representing respondents(s):	
Attorney Charles Zeh, Esq.	Telephone <u>775-323-5700</u>
Firm The Law Offices of Charles R. Zeh, Esq.	
Address 575 Forest Street, Suite 200 Reno, NV 89509	
Client(s) The Board of Administration of the S	ubsequent Injury Account Et Al
Attorney Donald C. Smith, Esq.	Telephone 702-486-9070
-	
Firm Department of Business and Industry Di	ivision of Industrial Relations State of Nevada
Address 1301 N. Green Valley Parkway, Suite Henderson, NV 89074-6497	200
Client(s) Administrator of the NV Division of I	Industrial Relations of the NV Dept. Et Al

4. Nature of disposition below (check all	that apply):	
☐ Judgment after bench trial	☐ Dismissal:	
☐ Judgment after jury verdict	☐ Lack of juris	diction
☐ Summary judgment	☐ Failure to st	ate a claim
☐ Default judgment	☐ Failure to pr	rosecute
☐ Grant/Denial of NRCP 60(b) relief	Other (speci	fy):
☐ Grant/Denial of injunction	☐ Divorce Decree	:
☐ Grant/Denial of declaratory	☐ Original	\square Modification
Review of agency determination	☐ Other disposition	on (specify):
5. Does this appeal raise issues concerning	ng any of the followin	ng?
☐ Child Custody		NO
□ Venue		
☐ Termination of parental rights		
6. Pending and prior proceedings in this of all appeals or original proceedings presare related to this appeal: None.		
7. Pending and prior proceedings in other court of all pending and prior proceeding (<i>e.g.</i> , bankruptcy, consolidated or bifurca	s in other courts wh ted proceedings) and	ich are related to this appeal d their dates of disposition:
North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection Distri	ict and Public Agenc	y Compensation Trust vs. The

Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Association of Self-Insured Public or Private Employers, and Administrator of the Nevada Division of Industrial Relations of the Nevada Department of Business and Industry; Case No.

A-14-702463-J; the Eighth Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada in and for Clark

County; May 3, 2016.

8. Nature of the action. Brieflydescribe the nature of the action and the result below: This is an appeal from a decision made by the Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Associations of Self-Insured Public or Private Employers denying a request by the Public Agency Compensation Trust (PACT) for reimbursement of a claim made by an employee of the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD), which is an employer member of the PACT.
9. Issues on appeal. State concisely the principal issue(s) in this appeal (attach separate sheets as necessary): Whether the decision of the Board* interpreting NRS 616C.578, to deny request for reimbursement from the Subsequent Injury Account (SIA), based on undisputed facts, constitutes clear legal error as a matter of law?
*Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Associations of Self- Insured Public or Private Employers
10. Pending proceedings in this court raising the same or similar issues. If you are aware of any proceedings presently pending before this court which raises the same or similar issues raised in this appeal, list the case name and docket numbers and identify the same or similar issue raised:
This appeal has not been before the Nevada Supreme Court previously.

11. Constitutional issues. If this appeal challenges the constitutionality of a statute, and the state, any state agency, or any officer or employee thereof is not a party to this appeal, have you notified the clerk of this court and the attorney general in accordance with NRAP and NRS 30.130?
× N/A
□ Yes
\square No
If not, explain:
12. Other issues. Does this appeal involve any of the following issues? NO
☐ Reversal of well-settled Nevada precedent (identify the case(s))
\square An issue arising under the United States and/or Nevada Constitutions
\square A substantial issue of first impression
☐ An issue of public policy
\square An issue where en banc consideration is necessary to maintain uniformity of this court's decisions
\square A ballot question
If so, explain:

Assignment to the Court of Appeals or retention in the Supreme Court. Browhether the matter is presumptively retained by the Supreme Court or assign of Appeals under NRAP 17, and cite the subparagraph(s) of the Rule under whalls. If appellant believes that the Supreme Court should retain the case desporesumptive assignment to the Court of Appeals, identify the specific issue(s) s) that warrant retaining the case, and include an explanation of their import aignificance:	ned to the Court nichthe matter piteits or circum-stance
14. Trial. If this action proceeded to trial, how many days did the trial last?	N/A
Was it a bench or jury trial? N/A	
15. Judicial Disqualification. Do you intend to file a motion to disqualify or be recuse him/herself from participation in this appeal? If so, which Justice?	nave a justice
No	

TIMELINESS OF NOTICE OF APPEAL

16. Date of entry of w	ritten judgment or order appealed from	May 3, 2016
If no written judg seeking appellate N/A	gment or order was filed in the district court, e review:	explain the basis for
17. Date written noti	ce of entry of judgment or order was served	May 5, 2016
Was service ☐ Delivery	o/for-	
▼ Mail/electroni	c/fax	
18. If the time for fili (NRCP 50(b), 52(b), o	ng the notice of appeal was tolled by a post-j or 59) N/A	udgment motion
(a) Specify the ty the date of fili	pe of motion, the date and method of service ng.	of the motion, and
□ NRCP 50(b)	Date of filing	
□ NRCP 52(b)	Date of filing	
□ NRCP 59	Date of filing	
	ursuant to NRCP 60 or motions for rehearing or reconnotice of appeal. See AA Primo Builders v. Washingt	nsideration may toll the
(b) Date of entry	of written order resolving tolling motion	
(c) Date written r	notice of entry of order resolving tolling motic	on was served
Was service		
☐ Delivery		
\square Mail		

19. Date notice of appeal filed	June 3, 2016
± •	s appealed from the judgment or order, list the date each and identify by name the party filing the notice of appeal:
e.g., NRAP 4(a) or other	rning the time limit for filing the notice of appeal,
NRS 233B.150; NRAP 4(a)	
SUE	SSTANTIVE APPEALABILITY
the judgment or order appealed	authority granting this court jurisdiction to review l from:
(a) □ NRAP 3A(b)(1) □	□ NRS 38.205
□ NRAP 3A(b)(2)	NRS 233B.150
□ NRAP 3A(b)(3)	□ NRS 703.376
☐ Other (specify)	
(b) Explain how each authority	provides a basis for appeal from the judgment or order:
	ggrieved party may obtain review of any final judgment of the me Court; and that the appeal shall be taken as in all other

22.	List all parties involved in the action or consolidated actions in the district court: (a) Parties: North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District Public Agency Compensation Trust The Subsequent Injury Account For The Association of Self-Insured Public or Private Employers Administrator of the Nevada Division of Industrial Relations of the Nevada Department of Business and Industry
	(b) If all parties in the district court are not parties to this appeal, explain in detail why those parties are not involved in this appeal, <i>e.g.</i> , formally dismissed, not served, or other:
	N/A
	Give a brief description (3 to 5 words) of each party's separate claims, nterclaims, cross-claims, or third-party claims and the date of formal disposition of each m. $\rm N/A$
	Did the judgment or order appealed from adjudicate ALL the claims alleged below and rights and liabilities of ALL the parties to the action or consolidated actions below?
	▼ Yes □ No
	If you answered "No" to question 24, complete the following: (a) Specify the claims remaining pending below: N/A
	IVA

(b) Specify the parties remaining below:
(c) Did the district court certify the judgment or order appealed from as a final judgment pursuant to NRCP 54(b)?
\square Yes
□ No
(d) Did the district court make an express determination, pursuant to NRCP 54(b), that there is no just reason for delay and an express direction for the entry of judgment?
☐ Yes
□ No
26. If you answered "No" to any part of question 25, explain the basis for seeking appellate review (e.g., order is independently appealable under NRAP 3A(b)):

27. Attach file-stamped copies of the following documents:

- The latest-filed complaint, counterclaims, cross-claims, and third-party claims
- Any tolling motion(s) and order(s) resolving tolling motion(s)
- Orders of NRCP 41(a) dismissals formally resolving each claim, counterclaims, crossclaims and/or third-party claims asserted in the action or consolidated action below, even if not at issue on appeal
- Any other order challenged on appeal
- Notices of entry for each attached order

VERIFICATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that I have read this docketing statement, that the information provided in this docketing statement is true and complete to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, and that I have attached all required documents to this docketing statement.

North Lake Tahoe Fire Pro	otection Et Al	Robert F. Balkenbush, Esq.	
Name of appellant		Name of counsel of record	
Jul 7, 2016		Khill Market	
Date		Signature of counsel of record	
Nevada, Washoe			
State and county where sig	ned		
	CERTIFICATE	OF SERVICE	
I certify that on the 7th	day of July	, 2016 , I served a copy of this	
completed docketing stater	nent upon all counsel	of record:	
☐ By personally servi	ng it upon him/her; o	:	
address(es): (NOTE		ficient postage prepaid to the following dresses cannot fit below, please list names he addresses.)	
Charles R. Zeh, Esq. 575 Forest Street, Sui Reno, NV 89509	te 200		
Donald C. Smith, Esq Jennifer J. Leonescu, Department of Busine State of Nevada 1301 N. Green Valley Henderson, NV 89074	Esq. ess and Industry Divi Parkway, Suite 200	sion of Industrial Relations	
Dated this 7th	day of July	, <u>2016</u>	
		Mary Benner Signature	

FULL CAPTION:

NORTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT; AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMPENSATION TRUST, Appellants,

VS.

THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUBSEQUENT INJURY ACCOUNT FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF SELF-INSURED PUBLIC OR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS; AND ADMINISTRATOR OF THE STATE OF NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, DIVISION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, Respondent

ADDITIONAL COUNSEL FOR RESPONDENTS:

Jennifer J. Leonescu, Esq.
Department of Business and Industry Division of Industrial Relations
State of Nevada
1301 N. Green Valley Parkway, Suite 200
Henderson, NV 89074-6497

Tel: 702-486-9070

CLERK OF THE COURT

Code: NOE Charles R. Zeh, Esq. NV State Bar No. 1739

The Law Offices of Charles R. Zeh, Esq.

575 Forest Street, Suite 200

Reno, NV 89509 Phone: (775) 323-5700

Fax: (775) 786-8183

Attorneys for Respondent The Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Associations of Self-insured Public or Private Employers

EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

NORTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT and PUBLIC AGENCY COMPENSATION TRUST,

Petitioners,

VS.

THE BOARD FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUBSEQUENT INJURY ACCOUNT FOR THE ASSOCIATIONS OF SELF-INSURED PUBLIC OR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS, and ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NEVADA DIVISION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OF THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY,

Respondents.

Case No. A-14-702463-J

Department No. XXXII

NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER

TO: ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST IN THE ABOVE-CAPTIONED MATTER

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the above-entitled Court entered on May 3, 2015, its

Decision and Order affirming the decision of the Board. A copy of the Order is attached.

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Notice of Entry of Order

May 3, 2016

- 1		
1	The undersigned does hereby affirm	that the preceding document does not contain the
2	social security number of any person.	
3	Dated this 4 day of May, 2015.	THE LAW OFFICES OF CHARLES R. ZEH, ESQ.
4		$(X_{1}, X_{2}, X_{3}, X_{4}, X_{5}, X_{5},$
5		By: Charles R. Zeh, Esq.
6		
7		Attorneys for Respondent The Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Associations of Self-insured Public or Private
8		Employers
9	l [†]	
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to NRCP 5(b), I certify that I am an employee of The Law Offices of Charles R. Zeh, Esq., and that on this date I served the attached *Notice of Entry of Order*, on those parties identified below by:

√	Placing an original or true copy thereof in a sealed envelope, postage prepaid, placed for collection and mailing in the United States Mail, at Reno, Nevada: Donald C. Smith, Esq. Jennifer J. Leonescu, Esq. Department of Business and Industry Division of Industrial Relations 1301 North Green Valley Parkway, Suite 200 Henderson, NV 89074
	Personal delivery
√	Electronically filing via the Court's e-filing system. Robert F. Balkenbush, Esq., has consented to service of documents by electronic means through the Court's e-filing program on behalf of North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District and Public Agency Compensation Trust @ at the following e-mail address: rfb@thorndal.com, rbalkenbush@thorndal.com, psb@thorndal.com.
Federal Express or other overnight delivery	
	Reno-Carson Messenger Service
	Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested

Dated this 5th day of May, 2016.

An employee of The Law Offices of Charles R. Zeh, Esq.

Electronically Filed 05/03/2016 11:52:04 AM

CLERK OF THE COURT

ORDR

OKDI

DISTRICT COURT
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

CASE NO.: A-14-702463-J

DEPT. NO. 32

NORTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT and
PUBLIC AGENCY

COMPENSATION TRUST,

.0 COMPENSATION TRUST,

Petitioners,

VS.

BOARD FOR ADMINISTRATION
OF THE SUBSEQUENT INJURY
ACCOUNT FOR THE
ASSOCIATIONS OF SELFINSURED PUBLIC OR PRIVATE
EMPLOYERS, and
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE
NEVADA DIVISIONS OF
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OF
THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT

OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY,

Respondents.

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DECISION AND ORDER

Procedural and Factual Background

This case arises from Petitioner Public Agency Compensation Trust's

(hereinafter "PACT") request for reimbursement filed with the Nevada Department of Industrial Relations (hereinafter "DIR"). On May 13, 2013, the Administrator issued a recommendation to deny reimbursement because the Administrator believed that Petitioner failed to show compliance with NRS 616B.578(1), (3), and (4) for the employee's shoulder and NRS 616B.578(4) for the employee's lower back. On September 11, 2013, Petitioner, North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (hereinafter "NLTFPD"), filed a Pre-Hearing Statement. On September 19, 2013, a hearing was held before the Board for Administration of the Subsequent Injury Account for the Associations of Self-Insured Public or Private Employers (hereinafter "Board"). On May 14, 2014, the Board issued its Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Decision of the Board.

The Board found in relevant part as follows:

- 1. The injured worker was an accident prone fire fighter who suffered from four lower back injuries between august of 2002 and July of 2007.
- 2. After each of these injuries, the employee was released to full duty.
- 3. The subsequent injury occurred on November 30, 2007.
- 4. PACT designated spondylolisthesis as the pre-existing permanent physical impairment, a condition diagnosed and discovered upon treatment of the subsequent industrial injury of November 30, 2007.
- 5. There is no proof in the record that the document containing Dr. Fleming's diagnosis made it into the possession of the applicant prior to November 30, 2007.
- 6. After each of the injured worker's injuries, he was always returned to work, full duty.
- 7. Spondylolisthesis is the pre-existing condition relied upon by the applicant to justify reimbursement because it would support a rating of 6% or more PPD, according to the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of

 Permanent Impairment.

- 8. Assuming, *arguendo*, that the spondylolisthesis was present prior to the November 30, 2007 industrial injury, the Board finds that the applicant produced no proof by written record that it had knowledge that the injured worker suffered from the pre-existing condition.
- 9. The applicant also failed to show that the various ailments endured by the injured worker prior to the subsequent industrial injury were a hindrance to securing a job or remaining at the job.
- 10. The pre-existing condition of spondylolisthesis was not discovered and proven by written record until during the treatment of the injured employee's back during treatment for the subsequent industrial injury.

Petitioners have respectfully asked this Court to review the Board's decisions by means of a petition for judicial review.

Conclusions of Law

The district court's "role in reviewing an administrative decision is ... to review the evidence presented to the agency in order to determine whether the agency's decision was arbitrary or capricious and was thus an abuse of the agency's discretion." United Exposition Serv. Co. v. State Indus. Ins. Sys., 109 Nev. 421, 423, 851 P.2d 423, 424 (1993). A district court "may not substitute its judgment for that of the administrative agency as to the weight of the evidence on questions of fact." State, Dept. of Motor Vehicles & Pub. Safety v. Becksted, 107 Nev. 456, 458, 813 P.2d 995, 996 (1991). The district court "gives deference to an agency's interpretation of its statutes and regulations if the interpretation is within the language of the statute." Holiday Ret. Corp. v. State, DIR, 128 Nev. Adv. Op. 13, 274 P.3d 759, 761 (2012). Therefore, the issue before this Court is whether the decision of the Board, interpreting NRS 616B.578 and denying reimbursement from the Subsequent Injury Account, constitutes clear legal error as a matter of law.

NRS 616B.578(4) states:

To qualify under this section for reimbursement from the Subsequent Injury Account for Associations of Self-Insured Public or Private Employers, the association of self-insured public or private employers must establish by written records that the employer had knowledge of the 'permanent physical impairment' at the time the employee was hired or that the employee was retained in employment after the employer acquired such knowledge.

NRS 616B.578(3) defines "permanent physical impairment" as "any permanent condition, whether congenital or caused by injury or disease, of such seriousness as to constitute a hindrance or obstacle to obtaining employment or to obtaining reemployment if the employee is unemployed." "[A] condition is not a 'permanent physical impairment' unless it would support a rating of permanent impairment of 6 percent or more of the whole person if evaluated according to the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment..." *Id*.

In this case, Dr. Berg found the injured employee to have a 21% whole person impairment for his lumbar spine related to the November 30, 2007 incident. Dr. Berg apportioned the 21% at 50% for the pre-existing condition and 50% for the subsequent industrial injury. However, there is no evidence provided in the record to show that the employer had knowledge of the "permanent physical impairment" at the time employee was retained in employment after the employer acquired such knowledge. The Petitioners argue that perfect knowledge of a pre-existing condition is not required and that knowledge of general symptoms of the pre-existing condition is sufficient to satisfy the knowledge requirement of NRS 616B.578(4); however, Petitioners provide no Nevada case law to support this position.

"Where the language of a statute is plain and unambiguous and its meaning clear and unmistakable, there is no room for construction, and the courts are not permitted to search for its meaning beyond the statute itself." Erwin v. State of Nevada, 111 Nev. 1535, 1538–39, 908 P.2d 1367, 1369 (1995) (quoting Charlie

Brown Constr. Co. v. Boulder City, 106 Nev. 497, 503, 797 P.2d 946, 949 (1990)). This Court looks to the plain language of NRS 616B.578(3), which states in pertinent part, "a condition is not a 'permanent physical impairment' unless it would support a rating of permanent impairment of 6 percent or more of the whole person if evaluated according to the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment...." The Board found that the conditions or symptoms prior to the subsequent injury were not serious enough to support a rating of six percent; thus, these conditions did not constitute a pre-existing condition within the meaning of NRS 616B.578(3) and Petitioners cannot rely on the conditions or symptoms to show that the employer had knowledge of the permanent physical impairment.

Accordingly, the decision of the Board is AFFIRMED.

Dated this day of May, 2016.

Rob Bare

Judge, District Court, Department 32

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the date filed, I placed a copy of this Order in the attorney's folder in the Clerk's Office, or mailed or faxed a copy to:

Robert F. Balkenbush, Esq. 6590 S. McCarran, Suite B Reno, NV 89509
Attorney for Petitioners

Charles R. Zeh, Esq. 575 Forest Street, Suite 200 Reno, NV 89509
Attorney for Respondents

Sail m. Reger

Gail M. Reiger

Temp Judicial Executive Assistant, Dept. 32

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