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Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professions
Public Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2024

Board Members Present:

William Ahearn, Acting Chair
Kathleen Tucker, Public Member
Alayna McGarty, Member
Ashley Williams, Member
Amy Vercillo, Member
Kathryn Stevens, Member
Susan Egan, Member (arrived at 11:27 a.m.)

Staff Members Present:

Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Michael Egan, Board Counsel
Lauren McShane, Investigative Supervisor
Doris Lugo, Investigator
Pamely Mota, Investigative Intern

All board members and staff appeared by videoconference.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

Roll Call for Attendance

Mr. Bialas called the roll of board members. William Ahearn, Kathleen Tucker, Alayna McGarty, Ashley Williams, Amy Vercillo, and Kathryn Stevens all present by videoconference.

Board Business

- **New Board Member Kathryn Stevens:** Ms. Stevens introduced herself to the Board.
- **Public Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Vercillo, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of May

17, 2024 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote, with Dr. Williams abstaining.

- **Executive Session Minutes of May 17, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of May 17, 2024 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote, with Dr. Williams and Ms. Stevens abstaining.
- **Ratification of Decisions by Board Staff to Approve Applications:** The Board considered whether to approve the decisions made by staff on applications processed since the last meeting. A motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to approve the decisions made by staff on applications processed since the last Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Application Processing Under Application Review Policy:** Mr. Bialas presented application review data and stated that application reviews have been going well. Mr. Bialas mentioned that staff will be implementing changes to the LMHC application process after a recent study of the process with a consulting firm.

Hearing on Denial of Application

- **Jennifer Harrington, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Harrington appeared for the continuation of her hearing on the denial of her application because she did not complete a course in psychopathology within her master's degree program under 262 CMR 2.02 and 2.04(3)(a)(3). After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Vercillo, seconded by Dr. Williams, to allow Ms. Harrington to continue with the licensing process because, as an applicant with a master's degree of at least 48 credits, she was permitted to complete a psychopathology course outside of her degree program. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Noelia Gonzalez, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Gonzalez appeared for the continuation of her hearing on the denial of her application because she did not complete a pre-master's degree practicum under 262 CMR 2.04(3)(c) and her pre-master's degree internship was too short under 262 CMR 2.04(3)(d) and 262 CMR 2.02. She produced additional documentation to show that she completed "tutored professional practice" that included 234 practicum hours and completed over 600 internship hours.

After a brief discussion, the Board directed Ms. Gonzalez to submit a letter from her school detailing her supervision hours in the "tutored professional practice" that she is submitting as her practicum.

The Board continued Ms. Gonzalez's hearing.

LMHC Application Review Interviews

- **Lucia Mayers**

- **Interview of Colleen Evans:** Ms. Evans and Ms. Kristen Bowles appeared to discuss Ms. Evans's reference for Ms. Mayers. They explained that Ms. Mayers worked on improving her professionalism and communication skills while under Ms. Evans's supervision, including using supervision appropriately and being thoughtful when responding to clients. Ms. Mayers improved in these areas. For this reason, Ms. Evans initially submitted a positive reference for Ms. Mayers' application. Later, in April 2024, Ms. Evans and Ms. Bowles discovered that Ms. Mayers had charged clients for "texting sessions," contacted clients inappropriately once that was revealed, and disclosed confidential information. Ms. Mayers was then terminated from her employment at Ms. Bowles' practice.

Ms. Bowles explained further that Ms. Mayers did not understand the gravity of the situation. Ms. Mayers was not always open to feedback in supervision.

- **Interview of Lucia Mayers:** Ms. Mayers appeared to discuss Ms. Evans's reference for her application. Ms. Mayers explained that she was pushed to take on clients for productivity reasons. She has taken a continuing education course on ethics and boundaries. Ms. Mayers stated that this was an isolated incident that she will not repeat – she only had one texting session at a client's request – and she wants to improve. Ms. Mayers did not discuss texting sessions in supervision and, although she did discuss "slowing down," she was never directed to trainings or techniques on how to do that. Ms. Mayers is not working but does have a job offer at a private practice.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to deny Ms. Mayers' application because she has engaged "in [a] practice or conduct which would be grounds for refusing to issue a license under section one hundred and sixty-nine." G.L. c. 112, § 165(2). The motion passed by a roll call vote, with Dr. Vercillo and Ms. Tucker voting no.

Monitoring Interview

- **Melinda Galbato, 2020-000599-IT-ENF, Approval of Proposed Supervisor:** Mr. Bialas explained that Ms. Galbato will be interviewed at the next meeting. The Board directed Mr. Bialas to invite Ms. Galbato's proposed supervisor to the interview and to request an updated resume from Ms. Galbato.

LMHC Application Review

- **Carolina Polanco Rosario:** The Board reviewed Ms. Rosario's application. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Ms. McGarty, Ms. Stevens, and Kristin Woodbury to review Ms. Rosario's accredited degree program and determine any specific required

coursework that she must complete. After that review, the application should be placed on a meeting agenda for further consideration.

Dr. Egan arrived at 11:27 a.m.

LMFT Application Review

- **Laura McMaster:** The Board reviewed Ms. McMaster's application. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Dr. Williams, to allow Ms. McMaster to continue with the licensing process if Frank Gomez approves Ms. McMaster's education. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Requests

- **NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Requests:** The Board reviewed two NCMHCE ESL accommodation requests. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Egan, seconded by Dr. Williams, to allow the following candidates 50% extra time and the use of a word-for-word translation dictionary:
 - Rose Yona
 - Yu-Hsin Hung

The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring

- **Estelle Lakritz, 2021-000549-IT-ENF, Submission of Continuing Education:** The Board reviewed Ms. Lakritz's submission of continuing education to satisfy the terms of her consent agreement. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Egan, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to accept the submission. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Comments from Professional Associations

Jami Osborne from the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association stated that she is pleased by the study of the LMHC application process with a consulting firm and would like to stay current on changes so she can advise applicants.

Executive Session (closed under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, § 7, ¶ 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, § 1B; specifically, the Board will discuss and evaluate a petition to terminate suspension, examination accommodation requests, and an application that involve medical records and information of patients)

At 11:39 a.m., a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Dr. Vercillo, to exit the public meeting and (1) enter into a closed executive session under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, § 7, ¶ 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, § 1B; specifically, the Board will discuss and

evaluate a petition to terminate suspension and examination accommodation requests and an application that involve medical records and information of patients; then (2) enter into investigative conference under G.L. c. 112, § 65C to review new cases; and then, after the conclusion of investigative conference, (3) not return to the public meeting and adjourn. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The Board entered executive session at 11:39 a.m.

Board maintains separate minutes of executive session.

Investigative Conference (Closed Session under G.L. c. 112, § 65C)

During the investigative conference, the Board took the following actions:

Cases

AMH-2023-0016 (JP):	Refer to office of investigations
INV7620 (AS):	Dismiss
INV7744 (AA):	Dismiss
INV8031 (PL):	Dismiss
AMH-2023-0029 (SL):	Dismiss
INV8303 (CD):	Dismiss
AMH-2023-0037 (SH):	Refer to board counsel
INV8780 (MB):	Dismiss with advisory letter; open complaint for continuing education violation
AMH-2023-0036 (GC):	Review case next month after board counsel review

Adjournment

At 1:35 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Stevens, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Approval

The above minutes were approved at the public meeting held on July 19, 2024.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

List of Documents Used by the Board at the Public Meeting:

- Agenda for Meeting of June 21, 2024
- Public Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2024
- Executive Session Minutes of May 17, 2024
- Applications Reviewed Under Application Review Policy: January 1, 2024 through June 20, 2024 and May 1, 2024 through May 31, 2024
- Documents from LMHC Application of Jennifer Harrington
- Documents from LMHC Application of Noelia Gonzalez
- Documents from LMHC Application of Lucia Mayers
- Melinda Galbato, 2020-000599-IT-ENF, Submission of Proposed Supervisor
- Documents from LMHC Application of Carolina Polanco Rosario
- Documents from LMFT Application of Laura McMaster
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Rose Yona
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Yu-Hsin Hung
- Estelle Lakritz, 2021-000549-IT-ENF, Submission of Continuing Education