



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professions
Public Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2024

Board Members Present:

William Ahearn, Acting Chair (left the meeting at 1:13 p.m., returned to the meeting at 1:33 p.m.)
Kathleen Tucker, Public Member
Kristen Woodbury, Member (left the meeting at 2:01 p.m.)
Amy Vercillo, Member (left the meeting at 1:47 p.m.)
Kathryn Stevens, Member
Susan Egan, Member
Alayna McGarty, Member (left the meeting at 2:01 p.m.)
Ashley Williams, Member (left the meeting at 2:01 p.m.)
Cynthia Belhumeur, Public Member (arrived at 10:25 a.m.)
Frank Gomez, Member (arrived at 12:03 p.m.)

Staff Members Present:

Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Michael Egan, Board Counsel
Lauren McShane, Investigative Supervisor
Doris Lugo, Investigator
Ellen D'Agostino, Investigator

All board members and staff appeared by videoconference.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

Roll Call for Attendance

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

Board Business

- **Public Meeting Minutes of July 19, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Vercillo, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of July 19, 2024 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Executive Session Minutes of July 19, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Stevens, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of July 19, 2024 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **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 Dr. Vercillo, 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.

Discussion

- **Barriers to Entry Project Review of LMHC Application Process**
 - **Dea Biancarelli of Accenture Consulting:** Ms. Biancarelli described a project with Board staff to remove waste in, and streamline, the LMHC application process using Lean Six Sigma principles. Accenture gathered feedback from stakeholders before meeting with staff.

Ms. Belhumeur arrived at 10:25 a.m.

The changes staff are implementing will reduce the number of steps and time to complete the licensure process.

- **Unified Recovery and Monitoring Program (URAMP)**
 - **Jonathan Dillon of Bureau of Health Professions Licensure:** Mr. Dillon described a new voluntary, non-disciplinary program for licensees affected by mental illness or substance use issues. URAMP consists of an advisory committee, a rehabilitation evaluation committee, and program staff. Those who wish to enter the program, either voluntarily or after a complaint has been filed against them, are evaluated by the rehabilitation evaluation committee before being admitted. Mr. Dillon and other staff described the conditions licensees in the program must meet. Mr. Dillon asked for the Board's feedback on the structure of the program that he expects will launch by the end of the year.

Hearing on Denial of Application

- **Noelia Gonzalez, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Gonzalez appeared for the continuation of the hearing on the denial of her application. Ms. Gonzalez produced a letter from her school detailing her supervision hours in the “tutored professional practice” that she is submitting as her practicum. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to allow Ms. Gonzalez to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

LMHC Application Review

- **Aliyan Turner:** The Board reviewed Ms. Turner’s application, including a reference from her supervisor. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to allow Ms. Turner to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

LMFT Application Review

- **Laura McMaster:** The Board reviewed Ms. McMaster’s application, including her education. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Belhumeur, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to allow Ms. McMaster to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Hearing on Denial of Application

- **Yesenia Garcia Velez, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Velez appeared for a hearing on the denial of her application. Mr. Bialas explained that she must obtain signed documentation verifying that she satisfies the Board’s pre-master’s degree education and experience requirements, and that the Board cannot accept documentation intended for the Board of Psychologists. After a brief discussion, the Board continued the hearing.

NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request

- **Chie Mitsui:** The Board reviewed Ms. Mitsui’s request. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Dr. Vercillo, to allow Ms. Mitsui 50% extra time and the use of a word-for-word translation dictionary. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring

- **Jessica Soto Sierra, 2021-000229-IT-ENF, 6th, 7th, and 8th Quarterly Monitoring Reports and Petition to Terminate Probation:** The Board reviewed Ms. Soto Sierra’s reports and petition. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Tucker, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to accept the reports and to interview Ms. Soto Sierra and her supervisor at a future meeting regarding the petition. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- **Charlene Kelly, 2020-000430-IT-ENF, 8th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Petition to Terminate Probation:** The Board reviewed Ms. Kelly's report and petition. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Tucker, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to accept the report and to accept the petition after Ms. Kelly submits proof of completion of two continuing education units on the topic of ethics. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Jaqueline Dupont, 2021-000408-IT-ENF, 3rd Quarterly Monitoring Report:** The Board reviewed Ms. Dupont's report. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Dr. Williams, to direct Mr. Bialas to ask Ms. Dupont's supervisor to submit a revised report that includes information about Ms. Dupont's clinical practice, specifically areas that are deficient and areas in which Ms. Dupont has improved. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

The meeting was in recess beginning at 11:48 a.m. and resumed at 12:03 p.m.

Mr. Gomez arrived at 12:03 p.m.

LMHC Application Review Interviews

- **Xiaoyuan Yuan**
 - **Interview of Former Supervisor Brian Jones:** Mr. Jones appeared to discuss his reference for Ms. Xiaoyuan. He explained that she saw clients against his wishes in locations and at times when he was not available to supervise her. Ms. Xiaoyuan also saw clients more than once a week without permission. These issues caused problems with his practice's insurance claims. He discussed these issues with Ms. Xiaoyuan during supervision sessions, but the problems continued. Mr. Jones also explained his practice's afterhours call procedures and trainings.
 - **Interview of Xiaoyuan Yuan:** Ms. Xiaoyuan appeared to discuss her application, specifically Mr. Jones's reference. Ms. Xiaoyuan discussed seeing a client on a weekend and that she did not know she could only see clients during business hours. She also explained that she saw a client multiple times in the same week because she thought that was best for the client before Ms. Xiaoyuan went on a leave. Ms. Xiaoyuan saw a client once in Maryland, and Mr. Jones told her to stop, but she did not know that this rule also applied to other states. She did not mention these issues during her supervision sessions with Mr. Jones, but they were detailed in her billings. Ultimately, she did not bill clients or insurance for these sessions.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to allow Ms. Xiaoyuan to continue with the licensing process if she agrees to a conditional licensure agreement requiring one year of biweekly

supervision with quarterly reports to the Board from a Board-approved supervisor. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring Interview

- **Kathleen Brennan, 2021-000311-IT-ENF, 4th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Petition to Terminate Supervision**
 - **Interview of Kathleen Brennan and Supervisor Laura Delaplain:** Ms. Brennan and Ms. Delaplain appeared to discuss Ms. Brennan's report and petition to terminate supervision and probation. Ms. Brennan explained that she has been on probation for more than two years and has submitted four supervision reports from two different supervisors. She "has always tried to do the right thing" and does not believe she needs supervision to continue. Ms. Brennan sees 5-6 patients through her own private practice and 8-10 patients through her employer.

Ms. Delaplain explained that she discussed boundary issues with Ms. Brennan, and Ms. Brennan slowly built up a caseload. Her recordkeeping is satisfactory.

Mr. Bialas and the Board noted that Ms. Brennan has been supervised for approximately 17 months.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to deny Ms. Brennan's petition to terminate her supervision. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Mr. Belhumeur, to deny Ms. Brennan's petition to terminate her probation. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Comments from Professional Associations

Jami Osborne from the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association asked about the status of the Board's proposed regulation changes.

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 examination accommodation requests that involve medical records and information of patients)

At 1:13 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Gomez, seconded by Dr. Williams, 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 examination accommodation requests that involve medical records and information of patients; then (2) enter into quasi-judicial session under G.L. c. 30A, § 18 to review a final decision and order on summary suspension by default; then (3) enter into investigative conference under G.L. c. 112, § 65C to review new cases; and then, after the conclusion of

investigative conference, (4) not return to the public meeting and adjourn. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The Board entered executive session at 1:13 p.m.

Dr. Ahearn left the meeting at 1:13 p.m.

Board maintains separate minutes of executive session.

Quasi-Judicial Session (Closed Session under G.L. c. 30A, § 18)

The Board entered quasi-judicial session at 1:25 p.m.

During the quasi-judicial session, the Board took the following action:

Final Decision and Order on Summary Suspension by Default

AMH-2023-0022 (SP):	Determined sanction for final decision and order
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Investigative Conference (Closed Session under G.L. c. 112, § 65C)

At 1:30 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Belhumeur, seconded by Ms. Tucker, to exit quasi-judicial session and enter into investigative conference under G.L. c. 112, § 65C to review new cases. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The Board entered investigative conference at 1:30 p.m.

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

Cases

AMH-2023-0036 (GC):	Review case at meeting next month
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Dr. Ahearn returned to the meeting at 1:33 p.m.

AMH-2023-0018 (CS):	Dismiss
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Dr. Vercillo left the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

AMH-2023-0017 (TH):	Refer to office of prosecutions
INV7777 (SB):	Dismiss
AMH-2023-0023 (JS):	Dismiss

AMH-2023-0030 (SS):

Invite respondent to a
meeting for an interview

Ms. McGarty, Ms. Woodbury, and Dr. Williams left the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

AMH-2023-0033 (KL):

Refer to office of
prosecutions
Dismiss

INV9137 (JK):

Adjournment

At 2:12 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Tucker, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Approval

The above minutes were approved at the public meeting held on September 20, 2024.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

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

- Agenda for Meeting of August 16, 2024
- Public Meeting Minutes of July 19, 2024
- Executive Session Minutes of July 19, 2024
- Applications Reviewed Under Application Review Policy: January 1, 2024 through August 15, 2024 and July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2024
- Board Read Out: Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Accenture, PowerPoint presentation
- Unified Recovery and Monitoring Program, Department of Public Health, PowerPoint presentation
- Documents from LMHC Application of Noelia Gonzalez
- Documents from LMHC Application of Aliyan Turner
- Documents from LMFT Application of Laura McMaster
- Documents from LMHC Application of Yesenia Garcia Velez
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Chie Mitsui
- Jessica Soto Sierra, 2021-000229-IT-ENF, 6th, 7th, and 8th Quarterly Monitoring Reports and Petition to Terminate Probation
- Charlene Kelly, 2020-000430-IT-ENF, 8th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Petition to Terminate Probation
- Jaqueline Dupont, 2021-000408-IT-ENF, 3rd Quarterly Monitoring Report

- Documents from LMHC Application of Xiaoyuan Yuan
- Kathleen Brennan, 2021-000311-IT-ENF, 4th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Petition to Terminate Supervision, 4.5.24 and 4.18.24 Letters from N. Protasenia re: K. Brennan Supervision