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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
September 20, 2024

Board Members Present:

William Ahearn, Acting Chair (arrived at 12:45 p.m.)
Kathleen Tucker, Public Member
Kristen Woodbury, Member (left the meeting at 11:21 a.m.)
Amy Vercillo, Member (left the meeting at 11:32 a.m., returned to the meeting at 11:50 a.m.)
Kathryn Stevens, Member
Susan Egan, Member (left the meeting at 11:13 a.m., returned to the meeting at 11:17 a.m., left the meeting at 12:49 p.m.)
Alayna McGarty, Member
Frank Gomez, Member (arrived at 10:18 a.m., left the meeting at 10:47 a.m., returned to the meeting at 10:49 a.m., left the meeting at 12:51 p.m.)

Staff Members Present:

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

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. Kathleen Tucker, Kristen Woodbury, Amy Vercillo, Kathryn Stevens, Susan Egan, and Alayna McGarty all present by videoconference.

Board Business

- **Public Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Vercillo, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to approve the Public Meeting

Minutes of August 16, 2024 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- **Executive Session Minutes of August 16, 2024:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of August 16, 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 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.
- **Meeting Schedule for 2025:** The Board reviewed a proposed schedule of Board meeting dates for calendar year 2025. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Dr. Egan, to approve the proposed schedule. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring Interviews

- **Zachary Etter, Conditional Licensure Agreement, Petition to Terminate Agreement**
 - **Interview of Zachary Etter and Supervisor Tim Dowling:** Mr. Etter and Mr. Dowling appeared to discuss Mr. Etter's petition to terminate his conditional licensure agreement. Mr. Etter explained that he has learned more about "what the job is," and that Mr. Dowling provided "great supervision." His documentation has improved, and he has his own consulting company. Mr. Dowling stated that Mr. Etter has been a pleasure to supervise and has "good ethics."

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Vercillo, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to terminate Mr. Etter's conditional licensure agreement. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Mr. Gomez arrived at 10:18 a.m.

Discussion

- **LMHC and LMFT Post-Master's Degree Experience Attestation Forms Audit Process:** Mr. Bialas discussed a proposed process to require randomly selected LMHC and LMFT applicants to provide post-master's degree experience forms that detail, among other things, precise numbers of experience and supervision hours. Specifically,

each month, five LMHC applicants and one LMFT applicant would be randomly selected to provide these forms.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to approve the proposed process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

LMHC Application Review – Reciprocity

- **Hopeton Shaw:** The Board reviewed Mr. Shaw's application, specifically his education. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to ask Mr. Shaw to provide a statement of the courses he completed matched to each of the required content areas in the regulations.

LMHC Application Reviews

- **Maria Florencia Lopez Allende:** The Board reviewed Ms. Allende's application, specifically her education. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to ask Ms. Allende (1) whether she has more credits to present for licensure; (2) whether she has earned a master's degree, and (3) whether she wants to withdraw her application.
- **Emily Wilson:** The Board reviewed Ms. Wilson's application, specifically her education. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to deny the application because Ms. Wilson's master's degree is not in a Related Field, and she did not complete coursework in Special Treatment Issues and Professional Orientation. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Kara Vanasse:** The Board reviewed Ms. Vanasse's application, including her education and documentation of the Board's denial of a previous application submitted by her that she did not disclose on her current application. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to allow Ms. Vanasse to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed by a majority vote, with Ms. Tucker voting no.
- **Christopher Shutzer:** The Board reviewed Mr. Shutzer's application, including his education. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to deny Mr. Shutzer's application because he did not complete coursework in Special Treatment Issues, Clinical Skills, and Professional Orientation, and his master's degree is not in a Related Field. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Mr. Gomez recused himself from the following application and left the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

- **Glavielinys Cruz:** The Board reviewed Ms. Cruz's application, specifically her education. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. McGarty, to allow Ms. Cruz to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Mr. Gomez returned to the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

- **Nicole Kemezis:** The Board reviewed Ms. Kemezis's application, specifically her education. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to inform Ms. Kemezis that she must complete a qualifying course in Psychopathology to get licensed.

LMFT Application Reviews

- **Sydney Tanigawa:** The Board reviewed Ms. Tanigawa's application, specifically documentation of her pre-master's education and experience. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to ask Ms. Tanigawa to provide a pre-master's education and experience form signed by a representative of her school that clearly indicates what Ms. Tanigawa completed, and what she did not.
- **Graciela Gutierrez:** The Board reviewed Ms. Gutierrez's application, specifically her education. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to ask Ms. Gutierrez to provide a statement of the courses she completed matched to each of the required content areas in the regulations.
- **Timothy Cordell:** The Board reviewed Mr. Cordell's application, specifically his education. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Gomez, seconded by Ms. Stevens, to deny Mr. Cordell's application because the master's degree he completed was only 54 credits, and he did not complete coursework in Research and Professional Studies. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request

- **Gilda Garcia:** The Board reviewed Ms. Garcia's request. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Stevens, to allow Ms. Garcia 50% extra time and the use of a word-for-word translation dictionary. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Correspondence

- **8.31.24 Email from N. Caples re: Supervision in Practice Owned by Supervisee:** The Board reviewed an email asking whether unlicensed counselors may own their own practices and hire supervisors to supervise their hours for the LMHC license. After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to respond that experience hours earned in a private practice should be earned while the unlicensed counselor works for a practice and does not own it.

Monitoring

- **Kathleen Brennan, 2021-000311-IT-ENF, Approval of Proposed Supervisor:** The Board reviewed Ms. Brennan's proposal that Judith Mackenzie supervise her for the remainder of her probation because her current supervisor is retiring. After a brief

discussion, a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to approve Ms. Mackenzie as Ms. Brennan's proposed supervisor. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Dr. Egan left the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

- **Jennifer Lawless (Wagner), 20130822MH010-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Suspension:** The Board reviewed Ms. Lawless's petition to terminate the suspension on her LMHC license.

Dr. Egan returned to the meeting at 11:17 a.m.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Tucker, seconded by Dr. Vercillo, to direct Mr. Bialas to inform Ms. Lawless that she should complete the course specified in her agreement, petition the Board to terminate her suspension, and then, if the Board allows her to reinstate her license, complete the normal reinstatement procedures, including passing the NCMHCE again. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Ms. Woodbury left the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Comments from Professional Associations

Midge Williams from the Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association (MaMHCA) discussed application documents, supervision, and the Board's proposed regulation revisions.

Jami Osborne from MaMHCA asked for clarity about unlicensed practice.

Christopher Shutzer asked about the denial of his application.

Andrea Kremer from the New England Association for Family and Systemic Therapy (NEAFST) asked about the appointment of someone to the vacant LMFT seat on the Board.

Executive Session (closed under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1) and 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 the good moral character of applicants as required for licensure and an application and examination accommodation requests that involve medical records and information of patients)

At 11:32 a.m., a motion was made by Ms. McGarty, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to exit the public meeting and (1) enter into a closed executive session under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1) and 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 the good moral character of applicants as required for licensure and an application and examination accommodation requests that involve medical records and information of patients; then (2) enter into investigative conference under G.L. c. 112, § 65C to conduct a case interview and 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 11:32 a.m.

Dr. Vercillo left the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Ms. Woodbury returned to the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Dr. Vercillo returned to the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Dr. Ahearn arrived at 12:45 p.m.

Ms. Woodbury left the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

Ms. Woodbury returned to the meeting at 12:48 p.m.

Board maintains separate minutes of executive session.

Investigative Conference (closed session under G.L. c. 112, § 65C)

The Board entered investigative conference at 12:48 p.m.

Dr. Egan left the meeting at 12:49 p.m.

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

Case Interview

Mr. Gomez recused himself from the following matter and left the meeting at 12:51 a.m.

AMH-2023-0030 (SS):	Interviewed respondent; dismiss with advisory letter
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Cases

AMH-2023-0036 (GC):	Review case at meeting next month
AMH-2023-0016 (JP):	Interview respondent
AMH-2023-0020 (RB):	Refer to the Office of Prosecutions
AMH-2023-0006 (RC):	Dismiss

Adjournment

At 2:00 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Dr. Vercillo, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Approval

The above minutes were approved at the public meeting held on October 18, 2024.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

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

- Agenda for Meeting of September 20, 2024
- Public Meeting Minutes of August 16, 2024
- Executive Session Minutes of August 16, 2024
- Applications Reviewed Under Application Review Policy: January 1, 2024 through September 19, 2024 and August 1, 2024 through August 31, 2024
- Proposed Board Schedule for Calendar Year 2025
- Zachary Etter, Conditional Licensure Agreement, Petition to Terminate Agreement
- Documents from LMHC Application of Hopeton Shaw
- Documents from LMHC Application of Maria Florencia Lopez Allende
- Documents from LMFT Application of Emily Wilson
- Documents from LMHC Application of Kara Vanasse
- Documents from LMHC Application of Christopher Shutzer
- Documents from LMHC Application of Glavielinys Cruz
- Documents from LMHC Application of Nicole Kemezis
- Documents from LMFT Application of Sydney Tanigawa
- Documents from LMFT Application of Graciela Gutierrez
- Documents from LMFT Application of Timothy Cordell
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Gilda Garcia
- 8.31.24 Email from N. Caples re: Supervision in Practice Owned by Supervisee
- Kathleen Brennan, 2021-000311-IT-ENF, Submission of Proposed Supervisor
- Jennifer Lawless (Wagner), 20130822MH010-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Suspension