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**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Occupational Licensure
Board of Registration of Allied Mental Health
and Human Services Professions**

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OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE

Public Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2022

Board Members Present:

Jacqueline Gagliardi, Member
Cynthia Belhumeur, Public Member
Amy Vercillo, Member
Frank Gomez, Member
Ashley Williams, Member (left meeting at 1:14 p.m.)
Kristen Woodbury, Member
Susan Egan, Member (arrived at 10:07 a.m., left meeting at 12:45 p.m.)

Staff Members Present:

Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Lynn Read, Board Counsel
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.

Board Business

- **Public Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2022:** After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2022 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Executive Session Minutes of February 18, 2021:** After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Belhumeur, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of February 18, 2022 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. Woodbury, seconded by Ms.



Belhumeur, to approve the decisions made by staff on applications processed since the last Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Dr. Egan arrived at 10:07 a.m.

- **Application Processing Under Application Review Policy:** Mr. Bialas reported on the 2022 to date application data concerning applications reviewed under the Board's Application Review Policy. Mr. Bialas explained that the deficiency rate for LABA applications was higher than usual last month because the application reviews were outpacing transcript retrieval.

LMHC Application Reviews – Hearings on Applications

- **Lea Rojas Otero:**

Ms. Rojas Otero appeared for a hearing on the denial of her application. Mr. Bialas announced that the hearing will be recorded.

Ms. Read discussed the reasons for the Board's denial of Ms. Rojas Otero's application, specifically that her master's degree is not 60 credits.

Ms. Rojas Otero explained that she was educated in Puerto Rico, and that her master's degree converts to either 44 credits or 48 credits.

Ms. Rojas Otero also presented testimony from her former supervisor, Sarah Weafer, who asked the Board what Ms. Rojas Otero can do at this point to get licensed. Mr. Bialas and Ms. Read explained that Ms. Rojas Otero can get 60 credits in the required areas, get licensed in another state, work in that state for three years as a mental health counselor, and then apply in Massachusetts.

After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, to deny Ms. Rojas Otero's application because she does not have 60 credits under 262 CMR 2.04(1) and (2). The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- **Jennifer Beardslee:**

Ms. Beardslee appeared for a hearing on the preliminary denial of her application. Mr. Bialas announced that the hearing will be recorded.

Ms. Read discussed the reasons for the Board's preliminary denial of Ms. Beardslee's application, specifically that she does not have acceptable coursework in Counseling Theory, Social and Cultural Foundations, and Clinical Skills under 262 CMR 2.04(3) and her pre-master's degree experience was supervised by a school psychologist, which is not an approved supervisor under 262 CMR 2.02 and 2.06.

Ms. Beardslee argued that she satisfies the coursework and pre-master's degree experience requirements, but the Board requested more information from her and directed Mr. Bialas to schedule the continuation of Ms. Beardslee's hearing for the meeting on April 15, 2022.

- **Meghan Singleton:**

Ms. Singleton appeared for a hearing on the denial of her application. Mr. Bialas announced that the hearing will be recorded.

Ms. Read discussed the reasons for the Board's preliminary denial of Ms. Singleton's application, specifically that she does not have acceptable coursework in Psychopathology and Professional Orientation under 262 CMR 2.04(3).

Ms. Singleton explained that the courses "The Challenges Kids Face" and "Legal and Ethical Issues in Child Advocacy" that she completed satisfy the Psychopathology and Professional Orientation content areas.

After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Mr. Gomez, seconded by Ms. Gagliardi, to approve Ms. Singleton's application. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Discussion

- **Private Practices as Clinical Field Experience Sites:**

Ms. Read discussed the analysis and conclusion by legal staff at the Division of Occupational Licensure that the Board cannot prohibit pre- and post-master's degree experience hours from being earned at private practices.

The Board then discussed proposed changes to 262 CMR 2.02 and 262 CMR 3.03 to allow pre- and post-master's degree experience hours to be earned at private practices. The Board heard comments regarding the changes from Jami Osborne of MaMHCA, Stefanie Frank from Thriveworks, and Deb Spragg from Lesley University.

After a brief discussion, the Board directed Mr. Bialas to place the topic on the agenda for the meeting on April 15, 2022.

Dr. Egan left the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

LMHC Application Review

- **Carissa Degenais:** The Board reviewed Ms. Degenais' application, including her pre-master's degree experience obtained under the supervision of a licensed creative arts therapist (LCAT) in New York State. The Board assessed Ms. Degenais' argument that the LMHC in Massachusetts and LCAT in New York are equivalent under 262 CMR 2.02.

After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Gagliardi, to approve Ms. Degenais' application. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring Interview

- **Lynn Oski, 2019-000401-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Stayed Suspension and 5th Quarterly Monitoring Report**
 - **Interview of Lynn Oski and Supervisor Nychele Clark:** Ms. Oski appeared with Ms. Clark and her attorney Susan Devlin to discuss her petition to terminate stayed suspension. Ms. Oski explained that she has learned in supervision that some clients require types of assistance that she cannot offer and the value of using electronic records to ensure compliance. Ms. Clark agreed with Ms. Oski, and added the Ms. Oski now understands the importance of consulting with other mental health professionals when she faces ethical issues. Ms. Oski and Ms. Clark stated that Ms. Oski's biggest challenge going forward will be remaining vigilant – Ms. Oski mentioned using checklists to help.

After a brief discussion, the Board expressed concern that Ms. Oski has not improved her ethical judgment and directed Ms. Oski to provide a letter of reflection on her progress in supervision. The Board will review Ms. Oski's petition again at its next meeting.

NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request

- **Tahereh Nadim:** The Board reviewed Ms. Nadim's request, including supporting documentation. After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to allow Ms. Nadim 50% extra time and the use of a word-for-word translation dictionary. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Monitoring Reports

- **Jessica Soto-Sierra, 2021-000229-IT-ENF, Approval of Proposed Supervisor and CEs:** The Board reviewed Ms. Soto-Sierra's submission of Ruth Cabrera and Stacey Pimentel as proposed supervisors and proposed continuing education. After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Mr. Belhumeur, to approve Stacy Pimental as supervisor and the proposed continuing education, provided all courses are approved by NBCC or MaMHCA. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Anna Cardoso, 2021-000360-IT-ENF, Approval of Proposed Supervisor:** The Board reviewed Ms. Cardoso's submission of Pamela Watkins and Victoria Mauro as proposed supervisors. After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to approve both proposed supervisors. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting

Ms. Spragg asked for clarification on the date under the regulations by which LMHC applicants who submit a certificate of graduate studies as part of their education must have started that

certificate program. Mr. Bialas explained that they must have started the program by July 1, 2017.

Executive Session (Closed 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, to review sensitive medical and personal information)

At 1:15 p.m., a MOTION was made by Ms. Belhumeur, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to exit the public meeting and 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, to review sensitive medical and personal information in continuing education extension requests and a monitoring report, then enter into investigative conference under G.L. c. 112 § 65C to discuss settlement offers, and then, after the conclusion of the investigative conference, not return to the public meeting and adjourn. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

See separate minutes of Executive Session.

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

The Board entered investigative conference at 1:31 p.m.

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

Settlements

2021-000408-IT-ENF (JD):

Gave direction to prosecutor

2020-001171-IT-ENF (BS) and 2021-000840-IT-ENF (BS):

Gave direction to prosecutor

Adjournment

At 1:39 p.m., a MOTION was made by Mr. Gomez, seconded by Ms. Gagliardi, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

The above minutes were approved at the public meeting held on April 15, 2022.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

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

- Agenda for Meeting of March 18, 2022
- Public Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2022
- Executive Session Minutes of March 18, 2022
- Applications Reviewed Under Application Review Policy: January 1, 2022 through March 17, 2022
- Documents from LMHC Application of Lea Rojas Otero
- Documents from LMHC Application of Jennifer Beardslee

- Documents from LMHC Application of Meghan Singleton
- Draft Changes to 262 CMR 2.02 and 262 CMR 3.03
- Documents from LMHC Application of Carissa Degenais
- Lynn Oski, 2019-000401-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Stayed Suspension and 5th Quarterly Monitoring Report
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Tahereh Nadim
- Jessica Soto-Sierra, 2021-000229-IT-ENF, Submission of Proposed Supervisors and CEs
- Anna Cardoso, 2021-000360-IT-ENF, Submission of Proposed Supervisors