



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Board of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professions
Public Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2023

Board Members Present:

William Ahearn, Acting Chair
Cynthia Belhumeur, Public Member
Kristen Woodbury, Member
Jennifer Paine, Member (left meeting at 12:56 p.m.)
Frank Gomez, Member
Susan Egan, Member
Amy Vercillo, Member (left meeting at 11:29 a.m., returned at 11:52 a.m.)
Jacqueline Gagliardi, Member
Ashley Williams, Member (arrived at 10:16 a.m.)

Staff Members Present:

Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Sheila York, Board Counsel
Lauren McShane, Investigator Supervisor

All board members and staff appeared by videoconference.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Roll Call for Attendance

All members were in attendance.

Board Business

- **Public Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2022:** After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Belhumeur, seconded by Dr. Egan, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2022 as drafted. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- **Executive Session Minutes of December 16, 2022:** After a brief discussion, a MOTION was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Paine, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of December 16, 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. Gagliardi, 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 stated that application processing data will be available next month. He also reported that application reviews and processing have been going well in the new eLX system at DPH.
- **Welcome to the Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Professions Licensure:** James Lavery, Director of BHPL, and Lauren Nelson, Acting Deputy Director, welcomed the Board to DPH.

Dr. Williams arrived at 10:16 a.m.

Board members introduced themselves to Mr. Lavery and Ms. Nelson and asked questions about board member trainings and new processes.

Hearings on Denials of Applications

- **Ellen Disch, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Disch appeared for a hearing on the Board's denial of her application because she does not have 60 credits. Ms. Disch explained that she was educated in the Netherlands, has been working in the field for seven years, and is a competent therapist. She believes her graduate education was not "converted" well by the foreign education evaluation service. Ms. Paine expressed concern that the Board was unable to analyze the new information Ms. Disch submitted before the hearing, and that her education was focused on children and not more broadly on counseling for all populations.

After a brief discussion, the Board directed Ms. Disch to obtain a new foreign education evaluation and continued the hearing to a later date.

- **Katherine Arno, Applicant for LMHC:** Ms. Arno appeared for a hearing on the Board's denial of her application because she does not have sufficient coursework in Professional Orientation. Ms. Arno explained that she completed a course in Professional Orientation and provided the syllabus of that course to the Board.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Paine, seconded by Ms. Woodbury, to allow Ms. Arno to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

LMHC Application Review

- **Elizabeth Quincy:** The Board reviewed Ms. Quincy's application. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Woodbury, seconded by Ms. Gagliardi, to deny Ms. Quincy's application because she does not have 60 credits under 262 CMR 2.04. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request

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

Monitoring

- **Anna Cardoso, 2021-000360-IT-ENF, 3rd Quarterly Monitoring Report:** The Board reviewed Ms. Cardoso's report. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Gagliardi, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to accept the report. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Catherine Stavrakas, 2020-000400-IT-ENF, Approval of Proposed Supervisors:** The Board reviewed Ms. Stavrakas's submission of two proposed supervisors. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to accept 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

Midge Williams from MaMHCA requested updates on: (1) a report about creating a board for only LMHCs; (2) more detailed disciplinary reporting on the Board's website; (3) creating regulations for foreign education evaluations; (4) reorganizing board member seats based on the proportion of each license type regulated by the Board; (5) approval of videoconferencing for experience hours in the regulations; and (6) approval of the new regulations. Ms. Williams said that she will send these requests in an email to Mr. Bialas for follow up.

Jeremiah Gibson of NEAFAST asked whether the Board can create a junior-level LMFT license. The Board told him to consider speaking with his state legislator about that.

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 information)

At 11:29 a.m., a MOTION was made by Ms. Paine, seconded by Ms. Belhumeur, 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, to review sensitive medical information in NCMHCE accommodation requests; 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.

Dr. Vercillo left the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

Board maintains separate minutes of Executive Session.

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

The Board entered investigative conference at 11:51 a.m.

Dr. Vercillo returned to the meeting at 11:52 a.m.

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

Cases

2022-000831-IT-ENF (KR):

Dr. Williams recused herself from consideration of the case. The Board will consider the case at a future meeting after board members file disclosures of appearance of conflict of interest.

2022-000757-IT-ENF (SH):

Dismiss

2022-000861-IT-ENF (LW):

Invite respondent to a meeting for an interview

2022-000864-IT-ENF (AS):

Invite respondent to a meeting for an interview; refer to Office of Investigations to get additional information

Case Interview

2022-000559-IT-ENF (DJ):

Interviewed respondent; refer to Office of Prosecutions

Ms. Paine left the meeting during the interview at 12:56 p.m.

Adjournment

At 1:33 p.m., a motion was made by Dr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Gomez, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

The above minutes were approved at the public meeting held on February 17, 2023.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

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

- Agenda for Meeting of January 20, 2022
- Public Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2022
- Executive Session Minutes of December 16, 2022
- Documents from LMHC Application of Ellen Disch
- Documents from LMHC Application of Katherine Arno
- Documents from LMHC Application of Elizabeth Quincy
- NCMHCE ESL Accommodation Request of Veronika Lovecka
- Anna Cardoso, 2021-000360-IT-ENF, 3rd Quarterly Monitoring Report
- Catherine Stavrakas, 2020-000400-IT-ENF, Submission of Proposed Supervisors