



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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Board of Social Workers
Public Session Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2023

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE: Quanesha Fuller
Scune Carrington
Yvonne Ruiz
Tamara Lundi
Charlene Zuffante

STAFF: Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Sheila York, Board Counsel
Marine Jardonnet, Board Counsel
Lauren McShane, Investigator Supervisor
Doris Lugo, Investigator

All board members and staff appeared by videoconference.

The meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m.

Board Business

- **Roll Call Vote for Attendance:** Mr. Bialas called the roll of board members. Quanesha Fuller, Scune Carrington, Yvonne Ruiz, Tamara Lundi, Charlene Zuffante all present by videoconference.
- **Public Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2023:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Ms. Carrington, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2023. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Executive Session Minutes of January 24, 2023:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Carrington, seconded by Ms. Zuffante, to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 24, 2023. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- **Board Appointments:** Mr. Bialas notified the Board that board members serving on a term that has expired or that is about to expire my apply for reappointment by submitting a cover letter and resume to Mr. Bialas for transmission to the Governor’s Office.

Hearing on the Denial of Application

- **Joanne Werther, Applicant for LICSW:** Ms. Werther appeared with Frederic Reamer for a hearing on the denial of her application because she failed to show that she will conduct her professional activities in accordance with generally accepted professional standards pursuant to G.L. c. 112, § 131. Specifically, the Board based its decision on its prior interview with Ms. Werther and her discipline in Maine for having a romantic relationship with a former client.

Ms. Werther explained that, in her previous appearance before the Board, she mistakenly described the Maine Board’s discipline as “lenient”; rather, it was “meticulous and thorough.” The Maine Board never interrupted her right to practice there, and she has not had ethical problems since then. Ms. Werther also clarified that the intimate relationship started with her former client after all client relationships with the former client and her former spouse had ended. Mr. Bialas referred Ms. Werther and the Board to her consent agreement with the Maine Board that says otherwise. Ms. Werther concluded by noting that she believed at the time that her situation was an exception to the ethical rules. She later learned that she committed a violation and is wiser now.

Dr. Reamer then testified in support of Ms. Werther’s application. For background, he explained that he has chaired the NASW Code Committee and has worked as an expert on 135 disciplinary cases for both licensing Boards and licensees. Ms. Werther sought him out for ethical help without being forced by the Maine Board, and they met for 21 sessions. In sessions, Ms. Werther did not minimize the impact of her actions, and the Maine Board did not believe she was a threat even with its “contemporaneous evidence” of ethical violations. The social work profession, he explained, is about helping people address their mistakes, Ms. Werther has done that, and the Board should allow her to be licensed in the spirit of proportional justice.

After a brief discussion, the Board continued the hearing until the next meeting.

Mr. Bialas announced the suspension of the public meeting until 11:15 a.m.

The public meeting resumed at 11:19 a.m.

Monitoring Interview

- **Courtney Chapman, 2020-001724-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Suspension**
 - **Interview of Courtney Chapman:** Ms. Chapman appeared to discuss her petition to terminate suspension. Ms. Chapman explained that her suspension was for boundary violations with a former client, which included having lunch with

the former client. She has completed continuing education on how to terminate clients properly, learned more while working in a position that does not require a license, modified and limited her social media presence, and learned how to terminate clients appropriately in ongoing weekly individual and group supervision sessions.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Carrington, seconded by Ms. Lundi, accept Ms. Chapman's petition. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote, with Ms. Fuller abstaining.

Correspondence

- **2.2.23 Letter from R. Gewirtz and B. Burka of National Association of Social Workers – Massachusetts Chapter re: Supervision as Continuing Education:** Barbara Burka and Brianna Silva from NASW appeared to discuss NASW's proposal to allow LICSWs to receive continuing education credit for supervision. Mr. Bialas explained that, because NASW has filed a bill in the Legislature to require this, the Board will delay consideration of NASW's proposal until the Board knows whether the bill will become law. Ms. York also explained that regulation changes can take months before becoming effective.

Application Review – Reference

- **Heather Colangelo, Applicant for LICSW:** The Board reviewed Ms. Colangelo's application, including a reference. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Fuller, seconded by Ms. Lundi, to allow Ms. Colangelo to continue with the licensing process if she provides documentation of 13.39 more supervision hours. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Application Review – Discipline in Another Jurisdiction

- **Molly Kunka, Applicant for LICSW:** The Board reviewed Ms. Kunka's application, including her disclosure of prior discipline in Connecticut for unlicensed practice. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Zuffante, seconded by Mr. Carrington, to allow Ms. Kunka to continue with the licensing process. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Discussion

- **Licensee Discipline at the Department of Public Health:** Ms. York explained that she will provide a document to the Board to discuss at the next board meeting regarding levels of discipline boards use at DPH.
- **Discussion about Association of Social Work Boards Appearance re: Release of Examination Passage Data:** The Board discussed ASWB's upcoming appearance to discuss its release of examination passage data by certain demographic categories. The

Board directed Mr. Bialas to request ASWB's presentation for the Board to review in advance, to ask Board members to submit questions for ASWB in advance, and not to allow questions from the public during the meeting with ASWB, but possibly to schedule a public forum with ASWB later when the public may ask questions.

Monitoring

- **Aimee Monette, Conditional Licensure Agreement, 4th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Request for Release from Conditional Licensure Agreement:** The Board reviewed Ms. Monette's report and request to be released early from her conditional licensure agreement. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Fuller, seconded by Ms. Lundi, to accept the report and deny the request. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- **Brenda Morrill, Conditional Licensure Agreement, Approval of Proposed Supervisor:** The Board reviewed Ms. Morrill's proposed supervisor Billie J. Anderson-Pachulski. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Carrington, seconded by Ms. Zuffante, to deny Ms. Morrill's request because Ms. Anderson-Pachulski works with the organization where Ms. Morrill is employed. 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

Mr. Bialas stated that he will place the creation of a Board subcommittee to review pending cases on next month's agenda.

Executive Session (Closed Session under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1), individual character rather than competence, and G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, § 7, para. 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, § 1B, to review sensitive medical information)

At 12:25 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Ms. Lundi, to exit the public meeting and enter into a closed executive session under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1), individual character rather than competence, and under G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, § 7, para. 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, § 1B, to review sensitive medical information in a request to approve a reporting employer and therapist for a consent agreement. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The Board entered executive session at 12:25 p.m. The Chair announced that the Board would not resume public session after closed session.

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

The Board entered investigative conference at 12:54 p.m.

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

Settlement

2021-001024-IT-ENF (RA):

Gave direction to prosecutor

Discussion of OTSC

2022-000645-IT-ENF (JC):

Gave direction to prosecutor

Adjournment

At 1:27 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Ms. Zuffante, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

The meeting adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

The above Minutes were approved at the public meeting held on April 25, 2023.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

List of Documents Used During the Public Meeting:

- Agenda for Meeting of March 28, 2023
- Public Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2023
- Executive Session Minutes of January 24, 2023
- LICSW Application of Joanne Werther
- Courtney Chapman, 2020-001724-IT-ENF, Petition to Terminate Suspension
- 2.2.23 and 9.28.22 Letters from R. Gewirtz and B. Burka of National Association of Social Workers – Massachusetts Chapter re: Supervision as Continuing Education
- LICSW Application of Heather Colangelo
- LICSW Application of Molly Kunka
- Association of Social Work Boards Documentation re: Release of Examination Passage Data
- Aimee Monette, Conditional Licensure Agreement, 4th Quarterly Monitoring Report and Request for Release from Conditional Licensure Agreement
- Brenda Morrill, Conditional Licensure Agreement, Submission of Proposed Supervisor