

**Board of Registration of Dispensing Opticians
Public Session Minutes**

Date: January 3, 2024 Time: 10:00 a.m.

A public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Dispensing Opticians (“the Board”) was held via Videoconference and Conference Call pursuant to section 40 of chapter 2 of the acts of 2023, signed into law on March 29, 2023.

Board Members Present:

William Carleton, Board Chair
Mark Davini, Board Secretary
Jesse Ellis
Deborah Black
Alicja Prachanronarong

Staff Present:

Sheila York, Chief Board Counsel
Lauren McShane, Chief Investigator
Thomas F. Burke, Executive Director
Margaret McKenna, Board Staff

Housekeeping:

- Board Chair William Carleton called the meeting to order at 10:01 am and established a quorum via calling attendance: Jesse Ellis, Deborah Black, Alicja Prachanronarong, Mark Davini, and William Carleton. All members participated remotely via Cisco Webex.
- Mr. Burke advised members of the public to mute their volume and utilize the raise hand function to address the Board. He asked that members of the public turn off their cameras during the meeting and when not directly addressing the Board.

Board Minutes:

- Public Meeting Minutes from December 6, 2023: **Mr. Ellis moved to accept the minutes and Dr. Davini seconded. The motion to accept the December 6, 2023 minutes passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.**

Board Business:

- **Report from Executive Director, Thomas Burke:** No report.
- **Social Security Numbers and Department of Revenue License Actions**
The executive director presented a policy for the Board’s consideration that puts in place guidelines for the collection of social security numbers (SSNs) for initial applications and the reporting of SSNs to the Department of Revenue in the processing of license suspensions and reactivations pursuant to Department of Revenue notices.

After discussion, Dr. Davini moved to adopt the policy and Ms. Black seconded. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.

Application Review:

- At 10:43 a.m., the Board was scheduled to meet with applicants for licensure and reviewed applications and additional documentation. Below is a list of the candidates for review and the motion and roll call vote for each:

Daniel Wetherell – After review of Mr. Wetherell’s application, Ms. Black moved to approve him for licensure. Mr. Ellis seconded. Motion passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.

Jason Gomez-Lopez – Tabled.

Discussion:

- **Reynolds Community College – Cooperative Education Program Agreement CEPA** – The Board met with Dean Kristina Green to discuss the revised draft of the Reynolds Community College Cooperative Education Program Agreement (CEPA). In response to the Board’s concerns about whether students who work under a CEPA agreement may be supervised by a dispensing optician who also supervises one or two apprentices, Board Counsel stated that the regulation referenced by the Board applies to apprenticeship programs. The supervised work that a student under a CEPA agreement receives is distinct from on-the-job apprentice training. Counsel noted that the Board may require as part of the CEPA agreement that a dispensing optician supervise only one student at a time. Board Counsel raised concern that the draft CEPA proposed by the Reynolds Community College seeks to allow its students not only to receive supervised work experience but also clinical training hours that would be included as part of their accredited education program. The Board inquired whether students from Reynolds Community College could collaborate with Ben Franklin Cummings to provide clinical experience at Ben Franklin Cummings clinic but acknowledged it may not be feasible for an out-of-state educational system to establish such an agreement. Some members felt that allowing an optician to supervise two apprentices and one student simultaneously via the CEPA may be overly burdensome. Board counsel noted that language limiting the student/apprentice ratio could be added to the CEPA and the Board could revisit the CEPA in the future to consider possible revisions.

After discussion, Dr. Davini moved to approve the Reynolds Community College CEPA agreement with the addition of language that the school will not place a student into a CEPA with a licensee who already has two apprentices. Ms. Black seconded. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.

- **Dispensing optician apprenticeship policy – introductory discussion**

The executive director noted that the previous policy approved jointly by the Board and the Division of Apprentice Standards (DAS) is no longer in effect. Upon the Board’s instruction, discussions on a new policy will occur at regularly scheduled meetings.

The Board agreed with counsel that the new policy should include relevant information about apprentice requirements. The Board stressed that the new policy should use DAS a resource in preserving the integrity of apprenticeship training in Massachusetts. No vote was taken.

Open session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance meeting

Director Brian Diener of the Optical Training Institute thanked the Board for its work.

The Board instructed Mr. Burke to include discussion of Plano lenses and prescription requirements on the next meeting agenda.

Cases, Investigative Conference, Settlement Offers [Closed session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112 §65C]: Investigative Matters and Settlement Offers- [Closed Session Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112, § 65C]:

At 12:00 p.m., Mr. Ellis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Prachanronarong to adjourn the public meeting and to enter into closed session to conduct investigatory conferences, pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C, and at the conclusion of the closed session, not return to the public meeting. Motion passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.

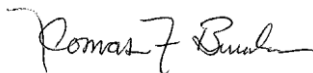
During the closed session, the Board took the following action:

- **CASE 2023-0531**– Closed, no action.

Adjournment:

At 12:32 p.m. Dr. Davini moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Prachanronarong seconded. Motion passed by a roll call vote: Ms. Black: “Yes”, Mr. Ellis: “Yes”, Dr. Davini: “Yes”, Mr. Carleton: “Yes”, Ms. Prachanronarong: “Yes”.

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas F. Burke
Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Meeting agenda for January 3, 2024
- Draft public meeting minutes from December 6, 2023
- Applications for D. Wetherell and J. Gomez-Lopez (protected personal data redacted)
- Revised Reynolds Community College proposed CEPA agreement

- Reynolds Community College Opticianry Course Curriculum
- Reynolds Community College Opticianry Program Guide and Student Handbook