



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lieutenant Governor

KATHLEEN E. WALSH
Secretary

ROBERT GOLDSTEIN, MD, PhD
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000
www.mass.gov/dph

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Bureau of Health Professions Licensure
Board of Registration of Hearing Instrument Specialists
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

Public Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2023

A public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Hearing Instrument Specialists (the Board) was held remotely with video and audio conference as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, signed into law on July 16, 2022.

Mr. Antonell noted a quorum of members present via video or phone and called the meeting to order at 10:24 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Eugene Antonell, Chair
Stanley Zoll
Dana Mario
Rony Soto

STAFF PRESENT

Lisa Guglietta, Board Executive Director
Eboni Lewis, Board Associate Executive Director
Heather Engman, Esq., Chief Board Counsel

ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Antonell took attendance by roll call and a quorum of board members was recorded with the following members present via video conference: *Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A motion was made by Eugene Antonell to approve the agenda, seconded by Dana Mario and VOTED (roll call); **to approve the April 21, 2023 agenda.**

in-favor: Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto

opposed: none

CONFLICT OF INTEREST and OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Attorney Engman stated that the meeting was being recorded.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Guglietta reported that since the Board's last met in August 2022 the Board had successfully transitioned to the Department of Public Health's Bureau of Health Professions Licensure (BHPL). In addition, the Board has a new licensing system and the application process is online. Ms. Guglietta reminded members that all Board business must be conducted through their state email accounts and requested that members check their email on a regular basis. Board meetings are now held on Webex and are recorded. The Board currently has the following vacant seats: public member and hearing instrument specialist.

BOARD ELECTION

Mr. Antonell asked for nominations for Board Chair. Stanley Zoll nominated to re-elect Eugene Antonell. There were no other nominations. Thereafter a motion was made by Stanley Zoll to elect Eugene Antonell as Chair, seconded by Dana Mario and VOTED (roll call); **to elect Eugene Antonell as Chair of the Board.**

in-favor: Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto

opposed: none

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

The Board discussed the draft public meeting minutes of 8/15/22. Thereafter, a motion was made by Stanley Zoll, seconded by Dana Mario and VOTED (roll call);

to approve the public meeting minutes of August 15, 2022 as drafted.

in-favor: Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto

opposed: none

2023 MEETING DATES

The Board confirmed the Board Meeting dates of July 21, 2023 and October 20, 2023.

DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the August 2022 letter and supporting documentation from Mary Ellen Curran Rancourt, AuD, CCC-A questioning "free" hearing tests for Nations Hearing, Hearing Care Solutions and other groups. Thereafter a motion was made by Dana Mario, seconded by Stanley Zoll and VOTED (roll call); **to record this correspondence as read and filed.**

in-favor: Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto

opposed: none

The Board had an initial discussion of the FDA Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids Ruling and Parameters. Dana Mario stated that due to confusion there was a need to clarify the boundaries

for each degree of hearing loss. Attorney Engman stated that the Board will need to issue a sub-regulatory guidance document and in the long term will need to make statutory changes to comply with federal law. Eugene Antonell stated he was concerned about an increase in liability for practitioners. Attorney Engman suggested that for the next meeting Board members prepare a list of concerns and issues for both the public and licensees. Attorney Engman will follow up with the Executive Director after the meeting. An email will be sent to members before the July meeting regarding what actions state licensing boards can/should take in light of the federal law.

NEW BUSINESS

Stanley Zoll inquired about the status of the hearing instrument specialist applicant from Connecticut discussed at the last meeting. The applicant was asked by Board staff to provide the office address in Massachusetts where she would have her apprenticeship. The applicant has not proceeded in the application process to date.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:25 a.m. a motion to close the public meeting was made by Stanley Zoll, seconded by Dana Mario and VOTED (roll call);

in-favor: Antonell, Zoll, Mario, Soto

opposed: none

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Guglietta, Executive Director
Board of Registration of Hearing Instrument Specialists

Documents used by the Board during open session:

- *Posted agenda 04/21/2023*
- *Draft public meeting minutes of 8/15/22*
- *Letter and supporting documentation from Mary Ellen Curran Rancourt, AuD, CCC-A*
- *FDA News Release – FDA Finalizes Historic Rule – August 16, 2022*
- *Hearing Instrument Specialists 2023 Board Meeting Schedule*