

## **Board of Registration of Optometry**

### **Public Session Minutes**

Meeting Held by Phone/Video Conference

DATE: January 18, 2023 TIME: 10:00am

**A public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Optometry (“the Board”) was held via Videoconference and Conference Call pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, signed into law on February 12, 2022.**

#### **Board Members Present by Phone/Video:**

Rhonda Willinger, OD

Jeanette Sewell, OD

Everett Sabree, OD

Bruce Rakusin, OD

#### **DPH Staff Present by Phone/Video:**

Sheila York, Board Counsel

Thomas F. Burke, Executive Director

Lauren Nelson, Acting Deputy Director

Lauren McShane, Chief Investigator

#### **Board Members Not Present by Phone/Video:**

Marianne Sarkis, Ph.D.

Meeting called to order at 10:06 AM by Dr. Sabree

#### **Meeting called to order:**

- Teleconference Procedures

Mr. Burke briefly reviewed procedures for use of Microsoft Teams.

#### **Board Business:**

- Review of Public Session Minutes: December 18, 2022

**Dr. Rakusin moved to accept the minutes as written. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.**

#### **Discussion:**

- Board Meetings
  - Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022: Meeting via Electronic Means

The Executive Director, Mr. Burke, reminded the Board that the extension granted for meeting via electronic means will expire on March 31, 2023. As a result, Board members should plan to meet in person after April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Director will advise the Board on any changes. No vote was taken.

- Email contact for future meetings

Mr. Burke advised Board members to utilize their state issued email accounts and to register for the new file transfer system. No vote was taken.

- Compliance Monitoring S. Tittl – 2019-000649-IT-ENF 4238-OP-TPA

The Board discussed the terms of Dr. Steven Tittl’s consent agreement. Mr. Burke reminded the Board that Dr. Mark O’Donoghue is the approved monitor and that the licensee, Dr. Tittl, was granted probationary status in 2022 to resume his practice in Massachusetts.

**After discussion, Dr. Sewell moved to direct the executive director to request reports from the monitor and report back to the Board at the subsequent meeting. Dr. Rakusin seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.**

- Glaucoma Certification Procedures
  - DEA Registration

The Board discussed the use of schedules III-VI medications in the diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma. The Board agreed that most optometrists will utilize only schedule VI medications, but acknowledged that DEA registration is required to prescribe medications in schedules III-V. The Board instructed staff to post notice on the Optometry Board website regarding the need for DEA registration. No vote was taken.

- Draft Telepractice Policy

The Board discussed revisions to the draft telepractice policy that includes a general statement supporting optometrists who provide telehealth services and highlights general standards to follow. The Board requested that the revised policy address the location of the patient who will receive telehealth services, public safety and confidentiality, disclosure of the patient’s right to in-person treatment and standard of care. The Board also requested that the policy address the role of optometry staff in the use of telehealth services. Ms. York offered to consult with Dr. Gary Chu, O.D. of the New England College of Optometry and report back to the board at the following meeting. She agreed to present a revised draft to the Board. No vote was taken.

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

Dr. Wayne Zahka of the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists (MSO) requested that the Board address the issue of glaucoma certification at the subsequent meeting.

**Cases, Investigative Conference, Settlement Offers [Closed session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 112 §65C]:**

- None

**Adjournment:**

**At 11:19 a.m., Dr. Sewell moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.**

Respectfully submitted,



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Thomas Burke, Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for January 18, 2023 board meeting
- Public Session Minutes for December 18, 2022
- Consent Agreement and correspondences for Dr. Steven Tittl
- SB2984
- Proposed language on DEA registration
- Draft Telepractice policy