

Board of Registration of Optometry

Public Session Minutes

Meeting Held by Phone/Video Conference

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

A public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Optometry (“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 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 McShane, Chief Investigator

Margaret McKenna, Board Staff

Board Members Not Present by Phone/Video:

Marianne Sarkis, Ph.D.

Meeting called to order at 10:04 AM by Dr. Sabree

Meeting called to order:

- Teleconference Procedures

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.

- Roll Call Vote for Attendance

Board chair Dr. Sabree established a quorum via calling attendance: Everett Sabree, Jeanette Sewell and Rhonda Willinger. All members participated remotely via Webex by Cisco.

Board Business:

- Review of Public Session Minutes: August 16, 2023

Dr. Sewell moved to accept the public session 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”.

- Review of Executive Session Minutes: August 16, 2023

Dr. Sewell moved to accept the executive session 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”.

- Review of Public Session Minutes: September 20, 2023

Dr. Sewell moved to accept the public session 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”.

Board Elections:

Dr. Sewell nominated Dr. Sabree as the Board chair and Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Dr. Sabree nominated Dr. Willinger as Board secretary and Dr. Sewell seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Discussion:

- Prescriber training course requirement pursuant to M.G.L. c. 94C, s. 18(e)

The Board reviewed the general notice on the prescriber training course requirement posted on the Board website.

After discussion, Dr. Rakusin motioned to ratify the prescriber training course notice. Dr. Sewell seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

- Telepractice Policy

Tabled.

- Petition to terminate probation for S. Tittl

The board reviewed a petition to terminate probation for Dr. Tittl. The Board noted that, if reinstated, Dr. Tittl does not have glaucoma certification in Massachusetts and cannot prescribe schedules III-V. The board instructed Mr. Burke to notify Dr. Tittl he must apply for glaucoma certification in order to prescribe schedules III-V medications.

After discussion, Dr. Sewell moved to terminate the probation as of 10/20/2023, Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

- Optometrists as supervising mentors to apprentice opticians

In discussion, Ms. York noted that the rules and regulations for the Board of Registration of Dispensing Opticians permit optometrists to serve as supervising mentors for apprentice opticians. After discussion, the Board in Optometry instructed the executive director to

include the Dispensing Opticians rules and regulations for discussion at the subsequent meeting.

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

- None

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 10:44 a.m. Dr. Sewell made a motion, seconded by Dr. Willinger to adjourn the public meeting and 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 roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

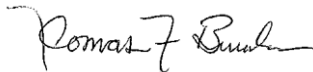
During the closed session, the Board took the following action:

- FINV6745/ CASE-2023-0112 – Dismissed.

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. Sarkis – “Not Present”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Burke, Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for October 18, 2023 board meeting
- Telepractice policy
- S. Tittl – Petition to terminate probation
- S. Tittl – Quarterly probation report
- S. Tittl – Monitoring reports