

Board of Registration of Optometry

Public Session Minutes

Meeting Held by Phone/Video Conference

DATE: December 20, 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

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.

Jeanette Sewell, OD

Meeting called to order at 10:05 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, Bruce Rakusin and Rhonda Willinger. All members participated remotely via Webex by Cisco.

Board Business:

- Review of Public Session Minutes: November 15, 2023

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

- License renewal period update

Mr. Burke reported that approximately 900 licensed optometrists have submitted their license renewal applications and staff mailed instructions to optometrists who have not registered their accounts. Licensees with renewal questions should contact staff by email. He noted that

the prescriber training course is available through the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists and Boston University. Considering Dr. Rakusin's departure from the Board, he requested that a new board member assist with reviewing glaucoma certification applications by means of dual licensure.

Correspondence:

- Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) – recent accreditation actions and decisions

Read and filed.

- The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE) statement on DEA training

Read and filed.

- L. Pierre – CE Extension Request

Dr. Willinger moved to grant Dr. Pierre a 60-day extension to complete the required continuing education hours for the current renewal period. Dr. Rakusin seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present”; Dr. Sewell – “Not Present”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

Discussion:

- E. Pallante Glaucoma Certification

The Board reviewed an application for glaucoma certification via dual licensure for an optometrist who was licensed in another jurisdiction when she received her Massachusetts license.

After discussion, Dr. Willinger moved to permit the optometrist to proceed with glaucoma certification via dual licensure because she applied for licensure in Massachusetts within one year of her license expiration in another jurisdiction. Dr. Rakusin seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present”; Dr. Sewell – “Not Present”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

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

- Dr. Wayne Zahka, executive director for the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists (MSO), reported that approximately fifty optometrists complete the glaucoma certification at MSO. He requested guidance on future MSO course offerings for glaucoma certification and will present a proposal at a subsequent meeting.

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 11:05 a.m. Dr. Rakusin 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 – “Not Present”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

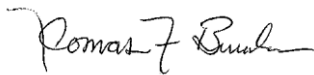
During the closed session, the Board took the following action:

- CASE-2023-0184 – Referred to investigations.

Adjournment:

At 11:20 a.m., Dr. Rakusin 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 – “Not Present”; Dr. Rakusin – “yes”.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Burke, Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for December 20, 2023 board meeting
- Public session minutes for November 15, 2023
- Correspondence from the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE)
- Correspondence from The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE)
- Correspondence from L. Pierre
- E. Pallante Glaucoma Certification application