

Board of Registration of Optometry

Public Session Minutes

Meeting Held by Phone/Video Conference

DATE: April 21, 2021 TIME: 10:00am

Board Members Present by Phone/Video:

Everett Sabree, OD

Rhonda Willinger, OD

Jeanette Sewell, OD

Marianne Sarkis, Ph.D.

DPL Staff Present by Phone/Video:

Jennifer Romeo-Porcaro, Board Counsel

Thomas F. Burke, Associate Executive Dir.

Bruce Hopper, Chief Legal Counsel

Board Members Not Present

Bruce Rakusin, OD

Pursuant to Governor Charles D. Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, dated March 12, 2020, all board members and staff appeared by videoconference.

Meeting called to order at 10:02 AM by Dr. Sabree

Meeting called to order:

- Teleconference Procedure

Dr. Sabree welcomed members of the public. Dr. Sabree instructed all present that questions must be directed to Board chair.

Board Business

- Review of Minutes: March 31, 2021
Dr. Sewell moved to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2021 meeting. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Discussion:

- POLICY: Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents and Glaucoma Certification (TPA + GC)
 - Education and exam requirements – Policy review

Attorney Romeo-Porcaro reported to the Board that the final sentence of section two, “Methods of Obtaining Certification” must be stricken from the policy because the statute is silent on a specific look back date and the acceptance of completion of national examination requirements as satisfactory evidence of certification. The Board questioned the statute's requirements regarding the impact on current and future licensees. The Board discussed the NBEO examinations as evidence of glaucoma training and certification within the policy. The Board inquired whether the Board may exercise discretion through

regulatory parameters of reading the statute. Attorney Romeo-Porcaro stated that a strict reading of the statute would prohibit a look back date for licensees and future licensees. However, Attorney Romeo-Porcaro would further review the statute on this subject.

After discussion, Dr. Willinger moved to accept the policy. There was no second motion. The motion did not pass.

- Conflict of Interest – Accreditation

Attorney Romeo-Porcaro advised the Board that the administration of the certification course for glaucoma and orals by the Massachusetts Society of Optometry (“MSO”) through an accredited school or college of optometry does not appear to constitute a conflict of interest, but rather to be read in a harmonious relationship, likely created to reach a central level of education. Dr. Zahka of MSO reported that he has contacted faculty to serve as instructors. He stated that the cost of the course is refundable if the registered candidate has another viable path toward certification.

- Review of Course Goals, Objectives and Curriculum

The Board reviewed the outline of the 40-hour post-graduate certification course and requested changes to module 10 in the curriculum. Specifically, the Board advised MSO to alter the title of “Practice Management” in module 10 to reflect better the incorporation of oral anti-infectives into the curriculum. The Board agreed that the course modules may be offered in both synchronous and asynchronous presentations. In response to further Board questions, MSO reported that candidates are not required to achieve a passing score of 70% on quizzes at the conclusion of each module, but a passing score of 70% must be achieved as the final passing grade. In review of the final examination, the Board stated that the exam must be offered in a synchronous format following the completion of the didactic and clinical curricula. In response to questions regarding the grading of the exam, Attorney Romeo-Porcaro advised that the administrator (MSO) assigns grades based on a reading of the statute. In conclusion, the Board instructed MSO to develop a form for documenting completion of the clinical hours, whereby a licensee could be supervised under an independent optometrist to obtain the clinical hours **Dr. Sarkis moved to accept the course goals, objectives and curriculum with changes. Dr. Willinger seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.**

Correspondence:

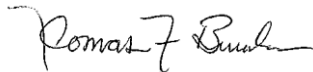
- EyeSight 20/20 Glaucoma and Oral Medications Course

The Board reviewed a letter from a Massachusetts optometrist inquiring whether the offering of the above-mentioned course would fulfill the didactic portion of the 40 hours required for glaucoma and oral certification for Massachusetts optometrists. After discussion, the Board agreed that the course is not acceptable because it is not administered by the MSO. In response to a request from Attorney Romeo-Porcaro, the Board took the following motion: **Dr. Sewell moved to delegate Board counsel and staff to respond to this request and any further correspondences on this topic. Dr. Willinger seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.**

The Board took commentary from members of the public regarding the legality of the statute and the impact on current and future licensees regarding the statutory requirements.

At 11:20 a.m., Dr. Sewell moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Sarkis seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “yes”; Dr. Sabree – “yes”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Burke, Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for April 21, 2021 board meeting
- Draft Minutes of March 31, 2021 board meeting
- Draft Policy/Advisory on Topical and Oral Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents and Glaucoma Certification (TPA+GC)
- Draft Certification Course for Glaucoma and Orals
- MSO Cover Letter
- Glaucoma Certification correspondence.