

Board of Registration of Optometry

Public Session Minutes

1000 Washington 1st Floor Room 1C, Boston, MA 02118

DATE: June 16, 2021 TIME: 10:00am

Board Members Present by Phone/Video:

Rhonda Willinger, OD

Jeanette Sewell, OD

Everett Sabree, OD

DPL Staff Present by Phone/Video:

Jennifer Romeo-Porcaro, Board Counsel

Thomas F. Burke, Executive Director

Board Members Not Present

Bruce Rakusin, OD

Marianne Sarkis, Ph.D.

Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Dr. Sabree

Meeting called to order:

- Evacuation Procedures

Mr. Burke discussed safety procedures in the event of emergency.

Board Business

- Review of Executive Session Minutes: May 19, 2021

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

- Review of Public Session Minutes: May 19, 2021

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

Discussion:

- Legislation to move Board to Department of Public Health

Attorney Romeo-Porcaro reported that the Governor has filed pending legislation to relocate the Board of Registration in Optometry to the Department of Public Health (“DPH”). She anticipates the Board move to DPH will occur within an eighteen-month timeframe, if passed.

- Board meetings going forward

Mr. Burke reported that the end of State of Emergency means Board meeting will be conducted in-person contingent upon an extension of the waiver to the Open Meeting Law. He and Ms. Romeo-Porcaro will instruct the Board on pending extension to the waiver. Mr. Burke inquired if Board would meet prior to the next scheduled meeting in August 2021.

- **POLICY/ADVISORY: Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents and Glaucoma Certification (TPA+GC)**

Attorney Jennifer Romeo-Porcaro reported to the Board that the Policy/Advisory obtained final approval for posting on the Board's website. Mr. Burke stated that there will not be an additional type class and documentation of certification will be recorded electronically in database. Mr. Burke is working to designate glaucoma certification in license record. He will report his findings to the Board. He noted that optometrists will receive a certificate upon approval for certification. Ms. Romeo-Porcaro will follow up with the Department of Public Health on their regulations to permit optometrists to prescribe glaucoma medications.

- **Course and Exam**

Dr. Zahka of the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists ("MSO") reported that there will be a quiz at the conclusion of each course module and a final exam at the conclusion of the didactic course. The exam will be offered three weeks after the last module/quiz and consist of one hundred multiple-choice questions. The exam will be open book and a 70% pass rate is required. The Board discussed whether the exam should be taken individually or in a group setting.

Dr. Willinger moved to require that the final exam be administered individually with questions randomized. Dr. Sewell seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – "yes"; Dr. Sarkis – "Not Present."; Dr. Sabree – "yes."; Dr. Rakusin – "Not Present."; Dr. Sewell – "no".

The Board inquired whether the final exam might count toward hours of continuing education credit. No vote was taken.

- **20 hours of supervised clinical education**

The Board reviewed the Advanced Clinical Program instructions and spreadsheets for clinical patient encounters. The Board agreed that both applicants and preceptors must be certified and attest to good standing before engaging in supervised clinical education. At the conclusion of clinical education, MSO will distribute certificates that may be submitted with Board applications for certification.

Dr. Sewell moved to revise the clinical log sheet to include credential attestation for both preceptor and applicant and additional edits. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion

passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Dr. Sewell moved to revise the advanced clinical log sheet to include a minimum of ten patients. Dr. Sabree seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Dr. Sewell moved to accept the twenty-hour Advanced Clinical Program instructions and spreadsheets with edits. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

- **Application Review**

The Board struck the words “by examination” so that application reads “year of original license issuance” for Massachusetts optometrists and added a signature line with date, and added a signature and date line. Under the Postgraduate Residency Program option, the Board changed the instruction to read, “(t)hose completing the residency program before Jun 30, 2011 **or** did not complete the residency program in ocular disease, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Board.” The Board delegated Dr. Sewell to review postgraduate residency applications with staff on a case-by-case basis.

Dr. Sewell moved to approve the draft application for certification. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Dr. Sewell moved to delegate herself to review postgraduate residency applications. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

- **Current License v. Endorsement Request**

The Board discussed whether licensed Massachusetts optometrists in other jurisdictions may be considered for glaucoma certification under a “dual licensure” designation. No vote was taken.

- **Status of policies created for the state of the emergency**

The Board instructed counsel to review policies created during the state of emergency and draft a revised policy for Board review.

Correspondence:

- AP – Read and filed.

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

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

At 12:03 p.m., Dr. Sewell moved to enter into Investigative Conference [Closed Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A § 18D]. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

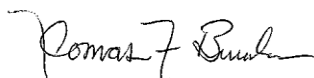
During investigative conference, the Board voted to take the following action:

- 2020-001692-IT-ENF – return to OI for further investigation

Adjournment:

At 12:14 p.m., Dr. Sewell moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Willinger seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Willinger – “yes”; Dr. Sarkis – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sabree – “yes.”; Dr. Rakusin – “Not Present.”; Dr. Sewell – “yes”.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Burke, Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for June 16, 2021 board meeting
- Draft Minutes of May 19, 2021 board meeting
- Draft Policy/Advisory on Topical and Oral Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents and Glaucoma Certification (TPA+GC)
- Draft Course Exam for Glaucoma and Orals
- Draft 20 hours of supervised clinical education spread sheets
- Draft Glaucoma Certification Application
- Correspondence