

Board of Registration for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
Meeting Held by Video Conference and Phone
DATE: August 3, 2021 TIME: 9:30 a.m.

Public Session Minutes

A regularly scheduled open public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Dispensing Opticians (“the Board”) was held remotely by video conference and telephone pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021: An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency signed into law on June 16, 2021.

Board Members Present by video or phone:

Nicole Laffan
Sarah Young-Hong
Donna Noonan
Kristin Bresnahan
Gabrielle Simone

Staff Present by video or phone:

Thomas Burke, Executive Director
Charles Kilb, Board Counsel

Meeting called to order at 9:35 am.

Board Business:

- Approve Public Session Minutes
 - Minutes of 6/1/21 meeting
The Board reviewed the draft of the public session minutes of the June board meeting.
Dr. Laffan moved to approve the minutes. Dr. Simone seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”
- Approve Executive Session Minutes
 - Minutes of 6/1/21 meeting
The Board reviewed the draft of the executive session minutes of the June board meeting.
Dr. Laffan moved to approve the minutes as amended. Dr. Simone seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”
- Report from Executive Director, Thomas Burke
 - Mr. Burke introduced Charles Kilb as Board counsel for this meeting. He announced that Jennifer Romeo-Porcaro will no longer serve as Board counsel. Mr. Burke reviewed Covid-19 guidance for healthcare providers based on the Commonwealth’s Public Health mask order, which states that fully vaccinated providers may remove masks in non-clinical settings or outdoors. Fully vaccinated staff should use clinical judgment to determine if treatment would be more effective without wearing a mask as long as patient and staff agree. Mr. Burke notified the Board that the passage of Article 87 legislation became effective on July 19, 2021. As a result, the Board of Registration of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and twelve other licensing Boards will transfer resources and staff to the Department of Public Health over the next

eighteen months. In addition, the agency name has changed to the Division of Occupational Licensure (“DOL”).

Compliance Monitoring

- F.M. The Board received required documents associated with the consent agreement for case number 2019-000634-IT-ENF. Dr. Laffan instructed the director to remind FM of the terms of consent agreement.

Dr. Laffan moved to accept the reports. Ms. Young-Hong seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”

Correspondence

- LBS. Dr. Laffan noted that Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP’s) may be employed by private companies. SLP’s must maintain licenses and follow the Board’s ethical standards as they relate to scope of practice. Dr. Laffan instructed Mr. Burke to provide a response on this matter. This response will be limited to SLP’s only.

No formal vote taken, though all members agreed with this resolution by unanimous consent.

Discussion

- Draft Audiogram Policy
 - The matter was tabled.
- Academy of Doctors of Audiology
 - The matter was tabled.

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

- Additional Correspondence
 - MM. Although the Board’s regulations do not address cognitive screenings performed by SLP’s, the American Academy of Audiology (“AAA”) finds that cognitive screenings may help some patients with hearing-aid assessment. Members of AAA are not required to provide screenings, however the provision for cognitive screenings is based on AAA best practices. The Board agreed that patients may benefit from such screenings.
- Providing Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Services by Electronic Means
 - The Board discussed whether to consider revisions to the temporary telepractice policy in light of the lifting of the state of emergency on June 15 and continued increase in Covid-19 infections. Although the training exemptions in the temporary policy would end ninety days following the end of the state of emergency, Mr. Kilb, reminded the Board that any changes it may consider are not contingent upon the state of emergency as those policies were based on existing powers of the Board pre-state of emergency. After discussion, the Board instructed staff to include the temporary and permanent telepractice policies on the agenda at the subsequent meeting to review training requirements. Sarah

Young-Hong offered to send guidance to Director Burke. **Additionally, Dr. Laffan moved to delegate a member (NL) to work with Board staff on updating the policies. Sarah Young-Hong seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”**

Closed Session: Investigatory Conferences, pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C.

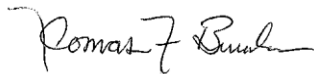
At 10:40 a.m., Dr. Laffan moved to exit open session and enter into closed session to conduct investigatory conferences, pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C, not return to the public meeting. Ms. Noonan seconded the motion. **The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”**

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

- 2019-001459-IT-ENF – Referred to prosecutions.

At 11:05 am, Dr. Laffan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Young-Hong seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Ms. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas F. Burke
Executive Director

Documents Used in the Open Meeting:

- Agenda
- Public and Executive Session Minutes of 6/1/2021board meeting
- FM compliance monitoring
- Correspondences
- Audiology Assistant Training Guide