

Board of Registration for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
Meeting Held by Video Conference and Phone
DATE: October 6, 2020 TIME: 9:30 a.m.

Public Session Minutes

An public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“the Board”) was held via Videoconference and Conference Call due to the Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.

Board Members Present by video or phone:

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

Staff Present by video or phone:

Michael Hawley, Executive Director
Lynn Read, Board Counsel

Meeting called to order at 9:31

Board Business:

- Introduction of New Board Member, Gabrielle Simone:
The Board welcomed Gabrielle Simone. Dr. Simone is an audiologist at Oticon Medical.
- Approve Minutes
 - Minutes of 9/1/2020 meeting

Having reviewed the above minutes, Dr. Laffan moved to approve the minutes of the 9/1/2020 public meeting as written. Dr. Bresnahan seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Abstain” and Dr. Simone – “Abstain.”

- Report from Executive Director, Michael Hawley
 - Mr. Hawley reported that Board staff have continued to be busier than usual due to the increase in telepractice related inquiries as well as increased complexity in handling application related documentation that is now being submitted electronically as well as via postal mail. The overall number of applications received is not substantially different than it was at this time last year.
- Report from Board Counsel, Lynn Read

- Ms. Read indicated that all of her discussion points related to discussion topics listed later in the agenda.

Compliance Monitoring.

- F.M. The Board received required documents associated with the consent agreement for case number 2019-000634-IT-ENF.

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

Discussion

- Covid-19 related issues:
 - *Order Ending Extension of Renewals for Licenses Expiring On and After July 11, 2020* – Mr. Hawley reported that these renewals are being processed as they come in.
- *Telepractice Policy review* – The Board reviewed a draft of the temporary policy for telepractice, modified by board counsel to reflect changes voted on at the September meeting of the Board. These changes included the change of the 90-day requirement for in-person evaluations after the termination of the state of emergency to a 90-business day requirement. They also included a relaxation of the requirement for students whose therapy is pursuant to an IEP. The board agreed that the temporary policy should be modified further to include language about assistants and clinical fellows. Licensed supervisors of clinical fellows and graduate students clinicians should follow the ASHA guidelines regarding percentages of telepractice available here: <https://www.asha.org/Certification/COVID-19-Guidance-From-CFCC/> **After discussion, Dr. Laffan moved to adopt proposed refinements to the policy language and to delegate to Board counsel the task of amending the policy and reviewing changes with the Board Chair prior to submitting to administration for approval to post. Ms. Noonan seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”**
- Potential Statutory Changes.
The board briefly discussed thoughts about possible changes to the statutes. Board counsel mentioned the possibility of changing the definition of audiology in the statute to be more reflective of modern practice and to bring it into synch with the Board’s regulations.
- Review current regulations for potential changes: The Board briefly discussed the possibility of changes to the regulations, especially relating to telepractice. The Board agreed that, given the changes brought about by the pandemic, it would be advisable to wait before introducing changes to the regulations. Tabled.

Open Session for Matters not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting.

The Board discussed the bills before the Massachusetts legislature introducing provisional licensure for clinical fellows. Board counsel agreed to seek a legislative update on the status of those bills to provide at the next board meeting.

Motion to adjourn. At 11:13, Dr. Laffan moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Bresnahan seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Yes” and Dr. Simone – “Yes.”

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Hawley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Hawley" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Hawley
Executive Director

Documents Used in the Open Meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes of 9/1/2020 board meeting
- Edited SP Sept 2020 Telepractice Temporary Policy