

Board of Registration for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
Meeting Held by Video Conference and Phone
DATE: December 4, 2023 TIME: 9:30 a.m.

Public Session Minutes

A public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (“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 video or phone:

Nicole Laffan
Sarah Young-Hong
Kristin Bresnahan
Gabrielle Simone

Staff Present by video or phone:

Thomas Burke, Executive Director
Sheila York, Board Counsel
Monique Brown, Board Staff
Margaret McKenna, Board Staff

Board Members Not Present:

Donna Noonan

Housekeeping

- Meeting Called to Order at 9:33 am. Board chair called meeting to order.
- Roll Call Vote for Attendance
Board chair, Nicole Laffan, established a quorum via calling attendance: Nicole Laffan, Kristin Bresnahan, Sarah Young-Hong and Gabrielle Simone. All members present participated remotely via Cisco Webex.

Mr. Burke advised members of the public to disable the audio and video features unless they are addressing the Board. They were encouraged to utilize the hand function to address the Board.

Board Business

- Approve Public Session Minutes
 - Minutes of 10/2/23 meeting
The Board reviewed the draft of the public session minutes of the October 2, 2023 Board meeting. Dr. Laffan requested that the motion to approve the minutes be amended to reflect that Ms. Young-Hong motioned to approve the October 2, 2023 minutes and Ms. Noonan seconded the motion. **Dr. Laffan moved to accept the minutes. Ms. Young-Hong seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Dr. Simone – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Not Present.”**
- Report from Executive Director, Thomas Burke
Mr. Burke noted that the 2024 meeting dates have been distributed to the board members via electronic mail. He requested that board members contact him with any concerns or questions.
- Report from Board Counsel
Ms. York reminded the board members of the conflict-of-interest law when conducting official board business. If a member believes that he or she has a personal, financial, or business relationship with any entity or individual in a matter under review, the member should first consult with board counsel.

Correspondence

- **G. DeSarno – requirement of the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC)**
The Board instructed the Executive Director to provide a response. The correspondence was read and filed.

Board Discussion

- **Policy – Delegation of Authority for Staff Actions Relative to Monitoring Licensure Conditions – VOTE**

Mr. Burke presented a proposed policy to the board for the Delegation of Authority for Staff Actions Relative to Monitoring Licensure Conditions. He explained that the goal of the policy is to standardize monitoring procedures and formalize actions that the probation monitor – currently the executive director – may take in consultation with board counsel. The policy would authorize the executive director, for example, to issue notices of violation to the monitored licensee and provide opportunity to cure. If the monitored licensee does not come into compliance, the matter will come before the board for potential disciplinary action. Mr. Burke noted that within one year, the DPH probation monitoring unit may assume responsibility for tracking monitoring. The director will provide further updates.

After brief discussion, Dr. Laffan moved to approve the policy. Ms. Young-Hong seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Dr. Simone – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Not Present.”

- **Renewal attestation with out-of-state discipline**

The Board reviewed a renewal application for a licensee who reported out-of-state discipline for a continuing education violation. The Board concluded that the licensee met Massachusetts continuing education requirements and that there was no violation of board rules and regulations.

Following discussion, Dr. Laffan moved to allow the licensee to continue the renewal application process. Dr. Simone seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Dr. Simone – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Not Present.”

- **ASHA standards for speech-language pathology assistant certification**

The Board reviewed the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) policy on certification maintenance for speech-language pathology (SLPA) and audiology assistants (AA). According to ASHA guidelines, assistants who hold certification must complete an assessment module in the final year of each 3-year maintenance interval. The board instructed the executive director to contact a representative from ASHA to determine if maintenance certification is required for Massachusetts SLPA's and AA's.

The board also reviewed an ASHA document on continuing education requirements for speech-language pathology and audiology assistants in other states. After discussion, the board expressed an interest in having future discussions on whether to establish continuing education requirements for SLPA's and AA's. Ms. York reminded the board that changes to continuing education requirements would require amending current regulations. She noted that the board may take up the matter at a future date. No vote was taken.

- **Update on proposed amendments to regulations for speech-language pathologist provisional licensees**

Mr. Burke reported that the amended regulations for the speech-language pathologist provisional license have been submitted for final review. When the final review is completed, Ms. York stated that she would work with the board to set a date for the public hearing. She noted that the public hearing date must be published in the newspaper three weeks prior to the date of the hearing. The hearing does not need to occur on a regularly scheduled meeting date and notice will be published on the board website.

Open session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting: None.

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

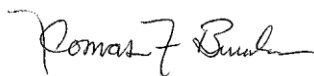
At 10:21 a.m. Dr. Laffin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Young-Hong to adjourn the public meeting and enter into closed session to conduct investigatory conferences pursuant to G.L. c. 112, §65C, and at the conclusion of the closed session, not return to the public meeting. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Dr. Simone – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Not Present.”

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

- CASE-2023-0139, INV7129 – Tabled.
- 2022-000754-IT-ENF – Provided guidance to the prosecutor.

At 11:01 a.m., Dr. Laffan moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Simone seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote: Dr. Laffan – “Yes”; Ms. Young-Hong – “Yes”; Dr. Bresnahan – “Yes”; Dr. Simone – “Yes”; Ms. Noonan – “Not Present.”

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas F. Burke
Executive Director

Documents used in the open meeting:

- Agenda for 12/4/23 board meeting

- Public session minutes of 10/2/2023 board meeting
- Correspondence from G. DeSarno
- License renewal application for H. Churcher
- Policy on the Delegation of Authority for Staff Actions Relative to Monitoring Licensure Conditions
- ASHA guidance on Support Personnel Excluding School Settings