

MARYLAND BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE

4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION

JANUARY 12, 2021

1:00 p.m.

GOOGLE MEET

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Thomas Ingegno, L.Ac., DACM, Chair, Sheryl Hongsermeier, L.Ac., RN, Vice Chair, Brandie Armijo, L.Ac., LPN, BSN, DACM, Sherrie Black, L.Ac., RN, Esq., Peter Marinakis, L.Ac., Ph.D., Barbara Huston, Consumer, Bonnie Miranda, Consumer

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

Penny Heisler, Executive Director, Cynthia Dobbins, Administrative Officer, and David Finkler, AAG

VISITORS:

Lynn Vance, MAS, Sheri De Petro, MAS, Denise Tyson, MAS, Hunter Thomson MUIH, Sherry Rojas, MUIH, Emily Herman, MAS, Shaun Dumas, Ricardo Morales, Janice Campbell, MUIH, Lourdes Martinez, Lillian Reese, Kimberly Link

CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

Dr. Ingegno called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 10, 2020 MINUTES

Dr. Marinakis moved to approve the Minutes with minor corrections and Dr. Armijo seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

1. OLD BUSINESS

A. COMAR 10.26.02

No report. The AELR Committee has placed all regulations on hold through mid-February due to the 2021 Legislative session.

2. NEW BUSINES

A. Point Injection Therapy Seminars

Dr. Ingegno welcomed Dr. Dumas who is interested in providing a point injection therapy seminar in Maryland. Dr. Dumas stated that his program teaches different injectable forms including Chinese herbs, homeopathics, vitamins, and saline but that he and Dr. Morales could tailor the program to fit Maryland's scope of practice. The course runs 60 hours over 6 days. Dr. Ingegno informed Dr. Dumas that he is welcome to submit his curriculum and a list of injectable forms to the Board for approval.

Lynn Vance from the Maryland Acupuncture Society (MAS) stated that MAS would also be interested in providing point injection therapy seminars in Maryland. The program would include 14 hours didactic training and 7 hours of in-person clinical training. Course instructors will be required to have liability insurance and MAS will obtain NCCAOM - PDA approval. Dr. Ingegno thanked Ms. Vance for MAS's efforts and welcomes their proposal.

B. COVID Update

Kimberly Link from the Department of Health informed the Board that the COVID Emergency Order is still in place and that renewal dates continue to be extended. She stated that the State is still in Phase 1A of its vaccine distribution plan and is concentrating on distributing vaccines to health care workers, nursing homes, and first responders. All health care workers that are licensed, registered, or certified by a state health occupation board are currently eligible to get vaccinated. Practitioners should contact their local health departments to sign up for a vaccine, if they are not affiliated with a hospital system. Health care workers who are affiliated with a hospital system will be vaccinated at their hospital. She asked the Board to manage their expectations during this difficult time.

C. Legislation 2020

The Board reviewed several proposed Bills that affect the Health Occupational Boards:

HB 28 - Implicit Bias Training and the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities

The Bill will require that all Maryland licensed health care practitioners complete an implicit bias training course as a basis for their first renewal after October 1, 2021. After a lengthy discussion, it was determined that the Board believes this training is necessary in today's climate and will assist in bringing awareness to unconscious discrimination and improve practitioners' attitudes toward minority groups. Ms. Black moved to send a Letter of Support on the Bill and Dr. Marinakis seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

HB 224 - Department of Information Technology – Study of a Common Information Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards

The Bill will require that a study be conducted on the current information technology platforms used by health occupations boards and make recommendations on the feasibility and cost

of developing a new, common platform. The Department will be absorbing the cost of the study. Dr. Armijo moved to take no position on the Bill and Ms. Black seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the Motion.

SB 72- Open Meetings Act – Requirements for State Agencies and Local Boards of Elections (Maryland Transparency Act of 2021)

The Bill will require State agencies to make publicly available on their websites an agenda and all meeting materials in advance of each open meeting and live video or audio streaming of each portion of a meeting. After a brief discussion, Ms. Miranda moved to take no position on this Bill and Ms. Black seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the Motion.

D. Executive Director Update

Ms. Heisler gave a report and the status of renewals and new applications. There are currently 1276 active acupuncturists licensed in Maryland. She stated that 285 licensees renewed on time for their November 2020 renewal and 75 opted to lapse in accordance with the Emergency COVID Order's extension of expiration dates. For the May 2020 renewal, 288 licensees renewed on time and 58 opted to lapse. There have been 45 new initial applications approved and 24 inactive requests since July 1, 2020. There were a total of 108 new initial applications processed in FY 2020.

E. Election of Officers

Dr. Ingegno stated that the election of officers usually occurs in the month of May in even years, but because of COVID 19, he felt that the continuity of the Board was more important to maintain a smooth operation.

Dr. Ingegno moved to nominate Dr. Armijo as Chair. Dr. Marinakis seconded the motion. Dr. Armijo accepted the nomination. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

Dr. Ingegno asked Ms. Hongsermeier if she was interested in serving a second term as Vice Chair. Ms. Hongsermeier declined. Dr. Armijo moved to nominate Ms. Black as Vice Chair and Dr. Ingegno seconded. Ms. Black accepted the nomination. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

Ms. Black moved to close the meeting at 1:50 PM to go into Administrative Session in accordance with the Maryland Open Meetings Act § 3-305(b)(2) "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business" and Ms. Huston seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.