

The open session emergency meeting of the Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists was held on January 6, 2021, teleconference. The meeting came to order at 6:05 p.m.

Staff Present

Dr. Candace G. Robinson, Executive Director
Bethan Haaga, AAG Board Counsel
Oluremi Dean, Discipline & Compliance Officer
Lillian Reese, Legislative & Regulations Coordinator

Absent Members

Dr. Stacey Samuels Cole, AUD
Mr. John Rouse, CON

Present Board Members

Mr. Kim Keller, HAD
Mr. James Sciabarrasi, HAD
Dr. Jennifer Mertes, AUD, Chair
Ms. Ellen Stein, CON
Ms. Jill Silverman, SLP
Mr. Richard Brisbane, HAD
Dr. Carrie Nieman, ENT
Dr. Barbara McLendon, AUD
Dr. Tinita, Kearney, SLP
Ms. Carolyn Stine, SLP
Dr. Tam Nguyen, ENT

Absent Staff

Zoann Mouzone, Administrative Specialist III
Monica H. Wright, Office Secretary III

Visitors

- C’Rai Shannon Weeden, SLP – President, Maryland Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Sofie Roller, AUD – President, Maryland Academy of Audiology
- Alicia Spoor, AUD – Legislative Chair, the Maryland Academy of Audiology (MAA)
- Jennifer Kinkaid, AUD – Audiology Associates, Inc./Member at Large of the MAA
- Melissa Segev, AUD – Audiology Associates, Inc./Member at Large of the MAA
- Caleb McNiece, AUD – Talbot County Public Schools
- Corrine Richards, AUD – Audiology Asssociates, Inc./Past President of the MAA

Agenda Review and Approval for January 6, 2021

Dr. Tinita Kearney made a motion to approve the agenda with amendment to the number of the ASLP-IC bill. Ms. Ellen Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Regulatory Review

HB0161/SB0379 Health Occupations - Registration of Audiology Assistants – a discussion ensued regarding the pre-filed bill for adding registration of Audiology Assistants to our Board. Mr. Kim Keller made a motion to accept the bill with amendments. Ms. Carolyn Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The first amendment that was brought forward was to have Audiology Assistants be “licensed” vs. “registered.” The Board’s concern was that if Audiology Assistants are not licensed, they would not be held to some of the statutes under Health Occupations Article Title 1 and 2. A couple of examples of some of the statues that those “registered” would not be held to would be 2-311 (display of licenses) and 2-308 (d) (continuing education requirements) and 2-308 (c)(3)(ii) (requirement to show evidence of compliance with continuing education requirements for renewal of licensure). Dr. Spoor, legislative chair for the Maryland Academy of Audiology, was under the impression that

“licensure” meant that someone is autonomous in practice and thus, the reason behind calling Audiology Assistants “registrants.” It was also clarified by Board Counsel Haaga, that “license” vs. “registration” is whatever the statute defines it as. This does not have any bearing on what an Audiology Assistant’s scope of practice is or what their specific requirements for supervision, continuing education, etc. will be as defined in their own discipline’s regulation chapter, which will follow after Audiology Assistants are added to and regulated by our Board, should the bill pass. Ms. Carolyn Stine made a motion to keep the bill as written to have Audiology Assistants registered. There was not a second motion, so that motion died. Dr. Barbara McClendon made a motion for the bill to reflect that Audiology Assistants should be “licensed,” not “registered.” Dr. Tinita Kearney seconded the motion. Six (6) Board members of the quorum voted in favor of the motion. One (1) Board member of the quorum voted against the motion. Three (3) Board members of the quorum abstained. The motion passed.

The second amendment that was brought forward was to add the terms “Hearing Aid Technician” and “Cochlear Implant Technician” to proposed 2-402.4 (B). Ms. Carolyn Stein made a motion to include these terms. James Sciabarrasi seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

HB224/SB262 – Department of Information Technology – Study of A Common Information Technology Platform for Health Occupations Boards – Dr. Mertes reported that we voted to support this study at during last legislative session 2020; however, it did not pass in both chambers. It has been reintroduced this legislative session and the bill is written exactly the same. It is a study on our current licensing platform, in an effort to identify areas for improvement of such. Mr. Kim Keller made a motion to support the bill. Mr. Richard Brisbane seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

HB0028/SB0005 - Public Health – Implicit Bias Training and the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities. Due to time constraints, this bill will be discussed and voted on at our next open session meeting.

Correspondence & F.Y.I

NONE

Next Board Meeting – January 21, 2021

Adjournment

Mr. Kim Keller made a motion to adjourn the emergency regular session of the Board meeting. Ms. Ellen Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The regular emergency session meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mertes, Au.D.
Board Chair