

The regular session meeting of the Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists was held on March 19, 2020, via teleconference. Regular Session Board meeting came to order at 4:08 p.m. Present for the quorum via Conference Call were Dr. Jennifer Mertes, Dr. Tinita Kearney, Dr. Carrie Nieman, Mr. John Rouse, Mr. George Sheckells, Ms. Carolyn Stine, Mr. Kim Keller and Ms. Ellen Stein.

Staff Present

Candace G. Robinson, Executive Director
Bethan Haaga, AAG Board Counsel
Zoann Mouzone, Administrative Specialist III
Monica Wright, Office Secretary III
David Bruce, Investigator

Absent Members

Dr. Stacey Samuels Cole
Dr. Tam Nhu Nguyen
Mr. John Cummins
Ms. Jillian DeLuca

Absent Staff

None

Visitors

Ms. Lillian Reese, Legislative Coordinator

Agenda Review and Approval for March, 2020

Dr. Tinitia Kearny made a motion to approved agenda. Ms. Ellen Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes Review and Approval for March, 2020

Ms. Ellen Stein made motion to approve February minutes. Ms. Carolyn Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Regulatory Review

On 3/10/20, Dr. Robinson testified on HB 1112, the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC). AHSA was surprised about our letter of concern. The Maryland chapter of Otolaryngology also testified with some concerns as to how the bill was written regarding the laws of the compact superseding those of other states. West Virginia is currently the only state that has passed the bill as written. Ten States are needed to pass the bill before it would go into effect.

Executive Director’s Report – Dr. Candace G. Robinson

Dr. Robinson reported that she conducted five preliminary interviews through teleconference for the Deputy Director Position. Dr. Robinson asked if anyone from the Board would be interested in sitting on the panel for formal interviews; no Board members volunteered. She is trying to secure a male panel member and awaiting his willingness to do so.

She also reminded Board members that the financial disclosure to the ethics commission yearly report is due by April 30th, 2020 . Kim Bennardi with the office of appointments informed Dr. Robinson that as of March 3, there were still eight board members that have not done so yet. Dr. Robinson offered help to direct them toward the website or office for doing so if needed.

Dr. Robinson reported that there has been a new Board Audiology member appointed. We are waiting for them to be sworn in. They were unable to do so due to the pandemic and closure of the Circuit Courts required to do so.

Treasurer's Report - Dr. Candace Robinson

Dr. Robinson reports that the budget is \$214,393.38 as of the end of February, 2020. Per our Board meeting on February 20, 2020, the per diem increase was researched. Dr. Robinson gave a breakdown to the Board members for the difference in cost to increase the per diem for monthly Board meetings vs. in addition to providing such for additional committee meetings. Ms. Ellen Stein made a motion to increase the per diem from 50 dollars to 75 dollars for Board meetings only. Ms. Carolyn Stein seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Dr. Robinson also reported that although the ASLP- IC will have to be revisited during the next legislative session, if the compact goes through we could lose some licensees, which could impact our budget. Lillian Reese also stated that if the compact goes through the Board can charge a compact fee and it will need to be put in the regulations.

The DOiT study for our licensing platform is not going anywhere right now, as it was not approved by both chambers. It will also have to be introduced at the next legislative session. If passed and the study indicates that a new licensing platform will be instituted for our Board, the costs of such are unknown at this time.

Dr. Mertes stated that we have not been charging the licensees the correct fees for new licenses. Dr. Robinson informed the Board that as the legislation determines our budget, it may account for past renewal fees being set lower. She will meet with fiscal officer, Linda Beyer, to determine the procedure for setting those fees.

Chair Report- Dr. Jennifer Mertes

Dr. Mertes informed us that Donna Siedel's contractual position at the Board ends at the end of June. She queried the Board regarding having Donna continue with her role being that of helping with the process of changing statutes and/or regulations. Lillian stated that she would have to be involved with the process. A legislative committee needs to be established with a working committee to enable the Board to work towards this goal. The Board asked that Donna Seidel provide us with a plan for each step of the process and how long each step would take, so that the Board could determine the cost of such before approving to have Donna Seidel continue in this role.

Dr. Mertes informed the Board that the licensing committee will be putting forward the people that have a complete application for a license, to be approved at the Board meetings. The list of applicants was presented to the Board. Mr. George Sheckells made a motion to approve the list to issue them licenses. Mr. Kim Keller seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Correspondence & F.Y.I

Dr. Robinson stated there is a CEU list that needs approval. Ms. Carolyn Stine made a motion to approve the recommended CEU'S by the CEU committee. Mr. George Sheckells seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Dr. Robinson stated that we need clarification as to what is acceptable for licensure applications for college degree official transcripts, affidavits from other licensing Boards, and certification from

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AHSA. Board counsel Bethan Haaga stated that we do not have to change the regulations if these forms can be provided an electronic format. Dr. Robinson will provide the Board with examples of the electronic formats, e.g., official electronic copies emailed to staff members from either the university, the licensing Board or from ASHA, respectively.

Dr. Robinson informed the Board about the email blast that she is sending out regarding the upcoming renewal for licensees expiring 5/31/2020.

Next Board Meeting – April 16, 2020

Adjournment

Ms. Ellen Stein made a motion to adjourn the regular session of the Board meeting. Dr. Tinita Kearny seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The regular session meeting was adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mertes, Au.D.
Chair