

The regular session meeting of the Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists was held on August 20, 2020, via teleconference. The regular session Board meeting came to order at 4:03 p.m.

Staff Present

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

Absent Staff

None

Visitors

Ms. Angela Mezzomo -MHSA
Ms. C'Rai Weeden Shannon

Present Members

Dr. Jennifer Mertes, Chair
Dr. Stacey Samuels Cole, Vice Chair
Mr. George Scheckells, HAD
Dr. Tinita Kearney, SLP
Mr. John Rouse, CON
Dr. Barbara McLendon, AUD
Ms. Carolyn Stine, SLP
Mr. Kim Keller, HAD
Mr. Richard Brisbane, HAD
Ms. Jill Silverman, SLP
Ms. Ellen Stein, CON
Dr. Carrie Nieman, MD
Dr. Tam Nguyen, MD
Ms. Carolyn Stine, SLP

Absent Members

None

Agenda Review and Approval for August, 2020

Dr. Tinita Kearney made a motion to approve the agenda with amendments to add the two letters of correspondence. Mr. Kim Keller seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Minutes Review and Approval for July, 2020

Ms. Ellen Stein made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. George Scheckells seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Regulatory Review

Dr. Robinson stated that she reached out to MAA, MSHA and The Hearing Society of MD to offer the chance to provide feedback to the Board for suggested changes to the statutes and regulations. Dr. Mertes reviewed the feedback received from MSHA and addressed that the timeline for submitting additional changes to the statutes for the 2021 legislative session has passed; however, we have and will continue to consider adding an SLP-A and AUD assistant on the board, which would be proposed in changes to our statutes during the 2022 legislative session. This will also give the Board time to review and adopt the proposed ASHA certification requirements that are to roll out this Fall. Dr. Mertes also addressed that, as we have not yet submitted our proposal for regulation changes, the

feedback from MSHA on such will be reviewed and the next proposal will be shared with MSHA prior to the Board's vote on the final submission. Dr. Mertes also thanked Ms. Angela Mezzomo for representing MSHA and for providing such valuable feedback as the Board goes through this process.

Board Counsel Report

None

Executive Director's Report - Dr. Candace G. Robinson

Dr. Robinson stated that Kim Bennardi, Director of Appointments, informed her today that there will be another hearing aid dispenser applying for the remaining open Board position. She also reported that Mr. Sheckells administered the hearing aid dispensing practical exams at his office today and it was a success with 4/5 passing.

Dr. Robinson reported receiving an inquiry from a licensee regarding volunteering in the office. It was determined that it could be a conflict of interest to have a licensee in the office and that volunteering would be more acceptable in the form of helping with any participation at conferences, etc. Further, a volunteer such as a student in a SLP or AUD program would be more appropriate in the interest of confidentiality of our licensees.

Dr. Robinson announced that we have successfully hired a new Compliance Officer, Ms. Oluremi "Remi" Dean and gave a brief summary of what she will be doing in the office and her start date will be on September 23, 2020.

Dr. Robinson, requested a vote regarding the statement reviewed by the Board to put on each application and the website regarding applications being in one week before the upcoming Board meeting in order to ensure review and if complete, approval sought at that Board meeting. Mr. George Sheckells made a motion to have Dr. Robinson add the statement to the applications and on the website. Dr. Tinita Kearney seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

A vote to determine if verifications or just "look ups" are required from other states was also discussed. Mr. Kim Keller made a motion that we are not going to accept look ups via online to serve as verifications. Ms. Jill Silverman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Two letters of correspondence received by a speech-language pathologist and placement coordinator at the same office regarding the lengthy amount of time they perceived it takes for the Board to approve applications. A discussion ensued regarding allowing "completed" pending applications to practice in Maryland before being approved by Board at Board meetings. Our Board Counsel Bethan Haaga will look into the allowance of what we can accept as a "completed" file for those who already hold a license in another state; however, new applicants would not be allowed to do so.

Dr. Robinson discussed the request to date the start of a license to practice as a limited licensee to be the date indicated on the application if it fell after the time of the Board meeting in which the application was approved. This was in an effort to have limited licensees not lose time in completing their clinical requirements, if they were able to get their applications in early to the Board for approval. Mr. George Sheckells made a motion to align the issued date of the employment date on application, if it is reported as after the Board approves the application. Ms. Jill Silverman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Dr. Robinson received an inquiry from a limited license applicant to complete their clinical fellowship year (CFY) via 100% telehealth. Board Counsel Bethan Haaga indicated that there wasn't anything in our statutes or regulations negating such, as long as appropriate supervision is provided via telehealth as it would be not via telehealth.

Budget Report - Dr. Candace Robinson

Dr. Robinson reported stated she does not have updated numbers from our fiscal officer, as 2020 has not yet been closed.

Dr. Robinson reviewed the proposal by Amanda Azuma, Deputy Chief, Central Services Division, to install monitors 65" monitors in rooms, 105, 106 and 110 at Patterson Avenue for projecting meetings and presentations. The cost will be shared by the Boards and the high estimate given was \$3k and it would include the appropriate cables to connect to all laptops and Chromebooks. Although this does not require a vote, the Board felt it was a good investment.

Chair Report- Dr. Jennifer Mertes, - Chair

None

License Coordinator update:

License number count per Profession-

Ms. Zoann Mouzon reported as of August, 2020 there were 4242 active SLPs, 229 active SLP-LL, 73 active SLP-A, 516 active AUD, 1 active AUD-LL, 111 active HAD and 21 active HAD-LL, for a total of 5,193 active licensees.

Application for Board approval-

Mr. George Sheckells made a motion to approve all licensees approved by Board staff. Ms. Jill Silverman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Review for Committee List of CEU'S

Ms. Carolyn Stein made a motion to approve all CEU's. Mr. Kim Keller seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Correspondence & F.Y.I

Dr. Robinson discussed the letters of correspondence received concerning the length of time requiring for approving licensing applications above, in the Executive Director's report.

Next Board Meeting – September 17, 2020

Adjournment

Mr. Kim Keller made a motion to adjourn the regular session of the Board meeting. Mr. George Sheckells seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The regular session meeting ended at 5:51 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mertes, Au.D.
Chair