

Board of Professional Counselors & Therapists
Minutes - Open Session – December 19, 2025, via Google Meets 10:00 EST
Approved by the Board on January 17, 2026

<u>Board Members in Attendance:</u>	<u>Board Staff & Members of the Public in Attendance:</u>
Elizabeth Guroff, MA, LCMFT	Alexandria Langston -BDCOMM
Ingrid Mazziotta, LCADC	Grecia Whitehead -BDCOMM
Karen Katrinic, MS, LCMFT	Janice Isaac -BDCOMM
Kimberly Poole-Sykes, LCPC	Katrina Hunter -BDCOMM
Lisa Connors, PhD., LCPC	Olanrewaju Adebona -BDCOMM
Mary Blackwood, LCMFT	Sandra Boxley -BDCOMM
Sharita Sivels-Stevens, LCPC	Sharon Rendon-Hoyt -BDCOMM
Terri Johnson, LCADC	Shelly-Ann Barnes -BDCOMM
Stacey Nelson, LCPC, LCPAT, ATR-BC	Tomiloba Olaniyi-Quadri -BDCOMM
Winnie Moore, LCPC	Wendy Morton -BDCOMM
	Victoria Stinson -BDCOMM
	Lillian Reese -BDCOMM – Legislative Liaison
	Melia Ritchie -MDH, Board Counsel
	Rhonda Edwards -MDH, Board Counsel
	Amy Sims -MDH-
	Beth Schlein

	Howard Ashkin
	Michael Paddy
	Zakiyyah Holmes -MDH-

I. Call to Order / Attendance

- Chair, Sharita Sivels, called the meeting to order beginning at 10:10AM
- Attendance was taken, roll call of Board Members was performed, and a quorum was present, which the Chair noted.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes and Agenda - Open Meeting November

- Review and Approve Open Session Minutes from November 21, 2025, meeting, and Karen Katrinic made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 21, 2025, meeting.
- Review and Approve the Agenda for Open Session Minutes November, 21 2025. Winnie Moore motion to approve the minutes. Karen Katrinic, seconded the motion.

III. Review and Approve Agenda for December 19, 2025

- Review and Approve Open Session Minutes from December 19, 2025, meeting, and Sharita Sivels has a motion to approve the agenda for today.
- Kimberly Poole-Sykes made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 19, 2025, meeting.
- Review and Approve the Agenda for Open Session Minutes January 17, 2026. Elizabeth Guroff made motion to approve the minutes for the Kimberly Poole-Sykes seconded the motion to approve the minutes. Winnie Moore motion to approve the minutes. Karen Katrinic, seconded the motion.

IV. Board Business & Reports

- Board Chair, Sharita Sharita Sivels -BDCOMM- All we're going to move down to our reports for today. chair report. I just want to say thank you everyone for having me here today. I'm happy to be chairing the board and excited for this year coming in 2026. So, that's all the reports I have for today. We're going to move down to our board council,...
- **Board Counsel, Melia Ritchie and Rhonda Edwards:** Melia Ritchie - MDH-: I have nothing to report.

- **BOPCT Deputy Director Victoria Stinson / Report for the Executive Director**
- I'm going to be reporting this morning in absence of our executive director. The first announcement is the announcement of new committees. In our November board meeting, we announced our new committees. We have a legislative and regulations committee, a credentialing committee, discipline review committee, and a case resolution committee.
- **New Committee Members** - The names and listings of all committees and the committee members are listed on the DRC agenda at the bottom should you wish to look at them.
- **Dept. of Budget & Management Request** - The next thing I would like to report is the response letter to the Department of Budget and Management. The executive director and board have finalized and submitted a formal response to DBM to address the budget reconciliation financing act asking for a proposed one-time transfer of 500,000 from the OPCT special fund balance for FY27 to offset general fund need in the behavioral health administration.
- **Relocation to the 5th Floor** - The next announcement is we have an update to relocation to the fifth floor. The board and board staff continue to make progress on the relocation to the fifth floor and an initial expenditure of approximately \$8,000 has been allocated for necessary upholstery and workspace furnishings to ensure a functional and professional work environment for the staff. We don't have a current timeline on that yet, but I think a timeline will probably be provided sometime in 2026.
- **Contractual to Merit Positions** - Conversion of employees from contractual to merit. The board is advancing its efforts to convert eligible contractual employees to merit positions. Administratively, this transition supports the workforce stability, continuity of operations, and long-term institutional knowledge. So, we're happy to say that we were able to do that for two employees in the compliance division. Also, we have begun interviewing new contractual investigators and they will support the enforcement and compliance functions. They also will be able to help reduce the case backlog and strengthen the board's investigative capacity as well. BOPCT website updates.
- **Frequently Asked Questions** - an administrative assistant by the name of Brea and she has been assigned basically to get a lot of new questions or develop new questions that are not currently on our website. I've been working with her to do that, but it is underway. and we know that these updates basically are intended to improve the clarity and enhance public access to information and reduce a lot of common inquiries by providing

timely and accurate guidance to applicants and licenses. So, we definitely have been working on that one as well. I may have to ask the board's assistance with that as well.

- **Appointment to the Behavioral Analyst Advisory Committee** -Also lastly, not sure not least, the board will vote on the approval of Amanda Getsel for the appointment to the Behavioral Analyst Advisory Committee. Board Chair Sharita Sivels -BDCOMM, we need to vote today. A motion to approve the appointment of Amanda Gozal to the behavior analysis advisory committee. Any objections: None heard, Elizabeth Guroff, second the motion to approve. All in favor of the approval of the appointment of Amanda Gossell to the Behavior Analysis Advisory Committee. Any objections? All right. Hear Seeing none, we will go ahead and approve her.
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- **Legislative and Regulations Committee** – Elizabeth Guroff, No Report
- **Credentiailling Committee – Kimberly Poole-Sykes**
- Kimberly Poole-Sykes -BDCOMM-: We reviewed 25 credentialing applications, and we continue to meet monthly. At the next meeting we are required to report on the # of applications which are currently being processed. In the month of December, we have processed 148 applications.
- **Disciplinary Review Committee –Stacey Nelson** I'm happy to report that the disability review committee continues to meet and since our last meeting, we reviewed 22 cases.
- **Counseling Compact Updates: Lisa Connors** – No Report
- **Other/Miscellaneous**

New Business: None

Old Business: Old

V. Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be January 17, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. (virtual)

VI. **Adjournment**

- **Sharita Sivels, Motion to Adjourn**
 - **Elizabeth Guroff, Second Motion to Adjourn**
- The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 AM.**



Kimberly Poole-Sykes

Board Secretary