



MARYLAND  
Department of Health

MARYLAND BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS

4201 Patterson Avenue,

Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Website: <http://www.health.maryland.gov/bswe>

Phone Number: 410-764-4788

Toll Free: 1-877-526-2541

Fax: 410-358-2469

State of Maryland  
Board of Social Work Examiners  
Open Session Virtual Meeting  
4201 Patterson Ave, Baltimore 21215  
MINUTES  
December 13, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Open Session was called to Order at 10:30 am

**ADJUSTMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

No adjustments were made.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board:** Susan Coppage, Board Chair; Adrienne K. Ekas, Vice Chair; Leslie Iampieri, Board Secretary, Jamie Wilson, Board Member; Kevin Meenan, Board Member, Kori Olszewski, Board Member; Tonya Hill, Board Member; Shannon Webb, Board Member; and Barbara Tunstall, Board Member, Carla Paisely, Board Member (absent), Vernon Smith, Consumer Member

**Board Staff:** Rhonda Edwards, Board Counsel in for Carla Boyd; Karen Richards Executive Director, Kara Brooks Tyson, Director of Compliance; Gail Wowk, Director, of Planning and Continuing Education, Stacie Rigby, Continuing Education Associate; Marianne Graham, Social Work Supervisor; Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator; Ulysses Preston, Health Investigations Administrator; Adam Yates, Health Occupations Investigator, Kellie Peay, Administrative Asst.; Jacqueline Monroe-Moore Administrative-Fiscal, Pamela Price-Murray, Licensing Coordinator; Lee Nguyen, Database Specialist II; Glendia Cook, Licensing Coordinator; and Brenda McCoy, Staff Social Worker (absent); Gloria Hammel, Director of Certification and Licensing (absent)

**Additional Staff:** Zakiyyah Holmes, Administrator, Health Boards & Commissions

**Community:** Heather Gardner, LCSW-C, Garnering Change Psychotherapy, LLC; Meghan Co, LCSW-C, Bracha Poliakoff, Social Worker and Continuing Education Provider; Lisa Kay, LICSW, LCSW-C, LCSW; Tawna Lee, LMSW

**MINUTES**

Minutes were Approved from November 08, 2024

## **BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

**Susan Coppage, Chair**

- Susan Coppage welcomed members of the public, staff, and Board members.
- Annual Meeting for ASWB
  - Susan, Adrienne, and Marianne attended the meeting in San Diego, California
  - Adrienne is now a Board Member for ASWB and will be serving on the Board for two years.
  - Delegates voted on new Officers for the ASWB Work Group - there was also a vote for two new statues
  - Marianne attended the Administrator meeting - there was the largest group - (34)
  - It was interesting hearing from Administrators from other state Boards
    - Many states haven't started Background checks
    - Many states had questions around the ASWB EXAM
    - Several state legislatures are looking at removing the exam for licensure
- Karen Richards and Adrienne Ekas discussed the Licensure Policy Workgroup updates
  - final Draft of Legislative report was completed first week of December
- In order to make an informed decision regarding legislation around removal of the exam, board members had a discussion around surveying licensees
  - Adrienne believes that getting feedback from the Public (Social Workers) would be helpful
  - Karen reported that the Board has identified a researcher from UMBC to assist with the survey - researcher's recommendation is to send to a proportional amount of licensees as the Board has over 19,000 active licensees which is a very large and difficult sample size to manage.
  - Barbara made a motion to proceed with the Survey - vote was unanimously approved

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

**Karen Richards, Executive Director**

- Staff updates - vacancies are filled
  - Introduced Adam Yates Health Occupation Investigator and will hire two new staff members soon.
  - Actively recruiting for two new positions - another Board Investigator for the Compliance and Investigative Unit and an Administrative Officer for the Continuing ED Unit
- On December 1st, as a result of Senate Bill 242 - The Board's Sunset Review, the Board had to submit a report on Licensing application and Complaints.
  - Reminder - the Sunset Review legislation extended Board to 2030
- Discussion of work done for the Transparent Government Act of 2024 (HB581/SB472)
  - had to submit information via a spreadsheet regarding all levels of licenses, fees, regulations etc.
  - This is for a statewide catalog of all license and credential types

## **Committee Reports**

### **Statutes and Regulations Committee**

**Kevin Meenan, Committee Member**

- Kevin Meenan stated that the Committee met on Thursday, December 12, 2024, for ongoing meetings and discussions regarding Definitions of Clinical Practice Independent and Non-Clinical Practice. There is a copy of those drafts of the Revisions in the open session drive.
- Kevin Meenan made a motion for approval of the draft. Barbara Tunstall voted and Jamie 2nd the goal will be to discuss Independent Practice more specifically "definitions" regarding the

Independent Practice. Motion pass for the Draft

### **Continuing Education Committee Education Report**

**Adrienne Ekas, Committee Chair**

- Secretary signed the Regulation for Sponsorship (CEU'S)
- Susan Coppage said - Lillian Reese will give an overview of the Bill
  - Lillian Reese- Board of Delegate authorization  
Position on Bill
- There was a discussion around having the Executive Committee make decisions on bills
- The Continuing Education Committee had discussion around Authorized Sponsors during conducting CE workshops around Ethics
  - Gail Wowk will send email to Sponsors about how helpful it would be if they talk about the Maryland Code of Ethics and our Practice Act
  - There is often a concern that Ethics training overly focuses on the NASW code of ethics rather than the Board's COMAR Code of Ethics

### **Questions Or Comments**

- Barbara questioned who would brief the Board members on legislation
  - Stat and Regs committee will review and discuss bills
  - With important input from Lillian Reese
- Rachel Doyle asked questions about how the survey would capture disenfranchised social workers who are not being heard. She also questioned why MD would not license her by Endorsement if she has only done clinical supervision
  - Karen reported that the Board will work with researchers to make survey sample representative and fair
  - Karen also reported that clinical supervision could be counted and she will follow up with Ms. Doyle on this issue
- Marianne Graham provided additional information regarding the Endorsement process.
- Karen Richards and Marianne Graham encouraged members of the public to reach out to the Board directly with questions

**The Open Session was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.**

