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Division of Professional Licensure
Board of Registration of Social Workers

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PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

Public Session Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Room 1D
1000 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02118

ATTENDANCE: Melanie Robinson Findlay, Chair
Carla Saccone, Vice Chair
Jeffrey Trant
Dana Zais
Shaynah Barnes
Richard Powers

STAFF: Brian Bialas, Executive Director
Bruce Hopper, Deputy General Counsel
Erin Murphy, Associate Executive Director
Doris Lugo, Investigator

Pursuant to Governor Charles D. Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, dated March 12, 2020, all board members and staff appeared telephonically.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9 a.m. by Ms. Robinson Findlay.

Ms. Saccone informed that Board that she will be resigning after this meeting. The Board thanked her for her service.

Public Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2020

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Mr. Trant, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.



Public Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2020

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Ms. Zais, to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Investigative Conference Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2020

Ms. Robinson Findlay recused herself from discussion of the next item.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Zais, seconded by Ms. Saccone, to approve the Investigative Conference Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

3.19.20 Email from D. Ryzcko of ASWB re: Exam Cancellations

The Board discussed an email from ASWB regarding exam cancellations and other issues caused by COVID-19.

- **Therapy and Supervision by Videoconference and Telephone:** After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to approve the following:

Because of the current declared state of emergency in Massachusetts and during the state of emergency only, the Board will permit the practice of social work and supervision for all license levels to be conducted by HIPAA-compliant videoconference or telephone.

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Expired Exam Authorizations:** After discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Zais, seconded by Ms. Saccone, to allow all applicants with exam authorizations that expire while test centers are closed an additional 90 days to examine after test centers reopen.

The motion passed unanimously.

Catherine Neville Request to Meet with the Board via Skype or Telephonically

Executive Session (Closed under G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, s. 7, para. 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, s. 1B)

At 9:40 a.m., a motion was made by Ms. Zais, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to enter into a closed executive session under G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c. 4, s. 7, para. 26(c) and G.L. c. 214, s. 1B to review sensitive medical and personal information in a request from an applicant. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

At 9:49 a.m., a motion was made by Ms. Barnes, seconded by Ms. Saccone, to exit executive session and return to open session. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

A motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to deny Ms. Neville's request to appear other than in person to discuss her application. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on ASWB Exam-Use Policy

Mr. Trant discussed ASWB's policy that, beginning in summer 2021, will permit only state boards that require applicants to have at least a bachelor's degree in social work to use the national social work examination. To comply with the policy, the Board will have to change the requirements for the LSW license, but not, according to the ASWB, the LSWA license. Mr. Hopper and Mr. Bialas will investigate the issue further and will report to the Board next month.

Executive Order and Guidance on Teletherapy

The Board discussed Governor Baker's "Order Extending the Registrations of Certain Licensed Health Care Professionals," dated March 17, 2020, specifically how it allows Massachusetts-licensed social workers to use teletherapy with college student patients who return home to another state because their colleges in Massachusetts have shut down in-person learning.

Executive Order Extending Registrations of Certain Licensed Professionals

The Board also discussed as an unanticipated matter Governor Baker's "Order Extending the Registrations of Certain Licensed Professionals," dated March 18, 2020. The Board determined that the extension likely will not affect social workers because social workers will not renew until October.

3.22.20 and 3.23.20 Emails from B. Burka of NASW-MA re: Questions for Board

The Board next discussed as unanticipated matters two emails from NASW-MA asking questions for the board to consider in light of the COVID-19 situation. The Board answered the questions based on the Board's earlier discussions during the meeting.

LICSW Application Reviews

The Board generally discussed the approval of experience for LICSW applicants but took no action on any applications.

Monitoring Reports

- **Stephen Hoy, 20141015SW010-IT-ENF 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Quarterly Monitoring Reports:** After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Zais, seconded by Ms. Saccone, to accept the reports. The motion passed unanimously.

Ratify Case Decisions of Investigative Conference Subcommittee

Ms. Robinson Findlay recused herself from discussion of the next item.

A motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Ms. Zais, to ratify the decisions of the investigative conference subcommittee contained in the Investigative Conference Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Saccone, seconded by Ms. Zais, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

The above Minutes were approved at the open meeting held on April 28, 2020.



Brian Bialas, Executive Director

List of Documents Used During the Public Meeting:

- Public Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2020
- Public Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2020
- Investigative Conference Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2020
- 3.19.20 Email from D. Ryzcko of ASWB re: Exam Cancellations
- Executive Order Extending the Registrations of Certain Licensed Health Care Professionals, dated March 17, 2020
- Executive Order Extending the Registrations of Certain Licensed Professionals, dated March 18, 2020
- 3.22.20 and 3.23.20 Emails from B. Burka of NASW-MA re: Questions for Board
- Stephen Hoy, 20141015SW010-IT-ENF 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Quarterly Monitoring Reports