



ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

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Minutes Board Meeting April 14, 2023

The Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy met on Friday, April 14, 2023, at the Alabama Attorney General's Office located at 501 Washington Avenue in Montgomery. Members present were Mr. Douglas Cooke (Board Chair), Dr. Karly Downs (Board Vice Chair), Dr. Tim Nichols (member), Dr. Samuel Jones (member), and Mrs. Raven Pyle Livingston (member). Also attending was Ms. Laura Howell (Legal Counsel).

This special called meeting was advertised on the Secretary of State's Open Meetings website, <https://www.openmeetings.alabama.gov/>, in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:35a.m. by Chairman Cooke.

Chairman Cooke called member roll, reported that a quorum of the members was present to conduct business, with Dr. Jones attending via Zoom, and welcomed everyone in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Proposals – Administrative Services Contract

Ms. Howell announced that the Board needed to seek a new contract for administrative services, because the old one had expired during Covid, and the Board had been operating on an emergency services contract that was set to expire. She presented a draft request for proposals for the Board's consideration and discussion of the services needed. The Board discussed the process for setting terms of the ultimate contract, including the potential for renewal, and the Board's administrative services needs that needed to be set out in the request. Upon motion from Dr. Nichols (seconded by Dr. Downs), the Board voted unanimously to accept the request for proposals as drafted, and to submit the proposals to Purchasing on April 19, 2023.

Upon discussion of the abbreviated timeline for evaluating any proposals received, the Board also discussed the need to appoint a committee to review proposals and make recommendations to the Board at the June 2 regular meeting of the board. Upon discussion, Dr. Nichols moved to create a review committee, and Mrs. Livingston seconded. The Board unanimously voted to create a committee. Dr. Downs and Dr. Jones volunteered to serve on the committee, and upon Chairman Cooke's motion for the same (seconded by Dr. Downs), the Board voted unanimously to have Dr. Downs and Dr. Jones serve with Ms. Howell on the committee to review any proposals received on May 31, 2023.

Internship/Accreditation Requirements

Chairman Cooke reported that at the last Board meeting, the Board had voted on and approved a change to the regulations concerning an ambiguity in the hours requirements for marriage and family therapy interns, to require 500 internship hours in order to obtain intern status, regardless of a program's accreditation requirements. Following the meeting, the Board had received a question concerning the hours requirements while the change to the regulation was approved by the Board, and the change has been submitted to the Legislature, but not yet finalized. Discussion was held on the question of the requirement's enforceability prior to finalization of the new regulation. Upon motion from Mrs. Livingston, seconded by Dr. Jones, the Board voted unanimously to indicate its intention to stand by the regulatory change to clarify language that is currently being implemented in the regulations to retain a 500-hour internship requirement regardless of accreditation requirements.

Disciplinary Matters

Ms. Howell reported that there was an update in Cases 2022-006 and 2023-001, and recommended that the matter be discussed in Executive Session. Dr. Nichols moved that the Board go into executive session for 30 minutes to discuss, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Downs. Ms. Howell certified that the Executive Session could be called for this purpose. Following a roll call vote, the Board voted unanimously in favor of convening an Executive Session, and Chairman Cooke called the meeting into Executive Session at 11:29a.m.

Dr. Nichols made the motion to exit the Executive Session and reconvene the business meeting. The motion was seconded by Dr. Downs, and following a roll call vote, the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. Chairman Cooke reconvened the business meeting at 11:46a.m.

Dr. Nichols moved to make a counter-offer on the Consent Agreement to the Respondent on the following terms: \$1000 fine, completion of 20 hours of live Continuing Education (CE) on privacy protection, and one (1) year's probation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Downs, and following a roll call vote, the Board voted unanimously to approve the counteroffer and send the Consent Agreement in Cases 2022-006 and 2023-001 to the Respondent for approval and signing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Cooke called for any announcements, and there were none at this time.

Next Board Meeting

Chairman Cooke reported that the next Board meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2023 at 10:00a.m. at the Board's offices at 2777 Zelda Road.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, Chairman Cooke entertained a motion to dismiss by Vice Chairman Downs that was seconded by Dr. Jones, with all members present voting "aye." The meeting was adjourned at 11:30a.m.

