

**STATE OF NEVADA BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

December 2, 2022

**AGENDA**

**1. Call To Order/Roll Call to Determine the Presence of a Quorum.**

**Call to Order:** The meeting of the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners was called to order by President Whitney Owens, PsyD, at 8:01 a.m. online via "zoom" and physically at the office of the Board of Psychological Examiners, 4600 Kietzke Lane, Ste B-116, Reno, Nevada 89502.

**Roll Call:** Board President Whitney Owens, Psy.D., and members Soseh Esmaeili, Psy.D., Catherine Pearson, Ph.D., and Lorraine Benuto, Ph.D., were present. Members Stephanie Woodard, Psy.D., Stephanie Holland, Psy.D., and Monique Abarca, LCSW, were absent.

Also present were staff members Joel Bakker, Deputy Attorney General, Dr. Gary Lenkeit, Board Investigator, Dr. Sheila Young, Board Investigator, Lisa Scurry, Executive Director and members of the public Tara Borsch, Jodi Thomas and Carolina Morales-Alicea.

**2. Public Comment.**

There was no public comment at this time.

**3. Minutes**

**A. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the State of Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners on November 4, 2022.**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting of November 4, 2022. Member Catherine Pearson commented that item #10 mis-identified Dr. Holland in the motion where it should have been Dr. Pearson's name.

As Member Dr. Esmaeili was absent for the November 4, 2022, she stated she would approve the minutes as to form, not content.

**On motion by Lorraine Benuto, second by Catherine Pearson, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the meeting minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on November 4, 2022, with the revision.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**B. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Approval of the Minutes of the Strategic Planning Workshop of the State of Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners on November 4, 2022.**

There were no suggested changes to the minutes of the work session of November 4, 2022.

**On motion by Catherine Pearson, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the meeting minutes of the Board Work Session on November 4, 2022.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**4. Financials**

**A. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022, Through June 30, 2023).**

Lisa Scurry, Executive Director, reviewed the treasurer's report. Through the end of November 2022, the checking account balance was \$191,586.78. She explained that \$119,939.35 of that balance was considered deferred revenue. That left an actual balance to cover expenses of \$71,648.43. The savings account balance was \$105,021.

Based on the approved budget, 48% of expected revenues had been received; and nearly 33% of expected expenses, including payroll, were paid. No unexpected or non-budgeted expenses were paid.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaili, second by Catherine Pearson, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the Treasurer's Report for Fiscal Year 2023.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**5. Legislative Update**

**A. Report on Legislative Activities, including the work of Interim Committees and the 2023 Session of the Nevada Legislature**

The Board was provided a list of proposed legislation to be introduced during the upcoming session of the Nevada Legislature. President Owens called attention to several bills related to health care including Assembly Bill (AB) 69, related to reimbursement, and Bill Draft Request (BDR) 462, related to an "any willing provider" law which would establish laws for insurance companies to empanel providers.

**B. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action on the Proposed Revision of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 641.390, Representation or Practice Without License or Registration Prohibited, During the 2023 Session of the Nevada State Legislature**

President Owens explained that the Board's lobbyist is working with the bill sponsor on the Board's bill. That bill is currently included with a bill draft request related to the universal telehealth act. Ms. Laxalt is exploring the possibility of finding a new bill sponsor to separate the Board's bill from that Act. The Board's bill relates to licensure of psychologists in public agencies, such as the Corrections Department.

**6. Board Needs and Operations**

**A. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Select the Membership of the Application Tracking Equivalency and Mobility (ATEAM) Committee for a term ending June 30, 2023 from the Current Members of the Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners: Monique Abarca, Lorraine Benuto, Soseh Esmaeili, Stephanie Holland, Whitney Owens, Catherine Pearson, Stephanie Woodard**

At the August 12, 2022, meeting of the Board, action was taken to select Soseh Esmaeili, Stephanie Holland, and Stephanie Woodard as the members of the Application Tracking Equivalency and Mobility (ATEAM) Committee for a six-month term ending December 31, 2022. The six-month term was assigned to give new members to the Board time to decide if they are interested in joining the committee.

Director Scurry explained that Dr. Holland informed her that she was interested in remaining on the Committee. Member Dr. Esmaeili also stated she would remain as a member on the ATEAM.

Member Dr. Pearson asked if the meetings could be held at a different time/day as she would have conflicts meeting two Fridays each month.

There was discussion about potential meeting times. It was suggested that the ATEAM meet on the same day as the regular Board meetings. That would provide for just one meeting day per month. Director Scurry indicated she would survey the members to find a suitable meeting day/time.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaeili, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the membership of the ATEAM Committee as Soseh Esmaeili, Stephanie Holland, and Catherine Pearson for a term ending June 30, 2023.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

## **B. Report from the Nevada Psychological Association**

Tara Borsh from the Nevada Psychological Association provided an update on the activities of that organization. Her report focused on upcoming legislation as the NPA Board would not be meeting in December.

## **C. Report From the Executive Director on Board Office Operations, including licensure renewals.**

Lisa Scurry, Executive Director, presented statistics from the office for the month of November 2022. Information provided included the numbers of applications received, state exams proctored, and licenses issued.

She explained that the renewal period was ongoing. Of the 650 active licensees, approximately 250 had completed renewal by the end of November. The renewal period ends on December 31, 2022.

Ms. Scurry expressed her gratitude for the support of the NPA and, in particular, their Executive Director, Ms. O'Connor.

## **7. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Candidates for Interview by the Board's Sub-Committee to Hire an Executive Director from the Following Applicants: Laura Arnold, Cameron Ballantyne, Tracey Collamer, Tricia Decosta, Erin Dunn, Lindsey Fassbender, Michael Gasaway, Cortney Huth, Johanna Jenkins, Luis Loe, Michelle Long, Brandi Mondragon, William Nash, Dolores Preciado, Elizabeth Rodriguez-Lopez, Sandra Skender, Danielle Stephens, Mark Toomey, Sabrina Torres-Ramirez, Nnamaka Ugezene, Jennifer Walker, Tiffany Wedgeworth, Levi Whittaker, Ballinda Winters, Brandon Wood**

The Board's Sub-Committee to Hire an Executive Director met on Friday, November 18, 2022. Twenty-five applications were reviewed and eight were selected for interviews, pending approval by the Board. Of the eight, one withdrew. The following were selected for interview: Laura Arnold, Cameron Ballantyne, Tracey Collamer, Brandi Mondragon, Michelle Long, Ballinda Winters, and Sabrina Torres-Ramirez.

**On motion by Catherine Pearson, second by Soseh Esmaili, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the following individuals for interview by the Sub-Committee to Hire an Executive Director: Laura Arnold, Cameron Ballantyne, Tracey Collamer, Brandi Mondragon, Michelle Long, Ballinda Winters, and Sabrina Torres-Ramirez.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**8. (For Possible Action) Discussion, and Possible Action on Pending Consumer Complaints:**

Harry Ward, Deputy Attorney General, stated there were no updates on the consumer complaints.

- A. Complaint #19-0626
- B. Complaint #19-0709
- C. Complaint #21-0726
- D. Complaint #22-0804
- E. Complaint #22-0930

**9. (For Possible Action) Review and Possible Action on Applications for Licensure as a Psychologist or Registration as a Psychological Assistant, Intern or Trainee. The Board May Convene in Closed Session to Receive Information Regarding Applicants, Which May Involve Considering the Character, Alleged Misconduct, Professional Competence or Physical or Mental Health of the Applicant (NRS 241.030). All Deliberation and Action Will Occur in an Open Session.**

The following applicants were recommended for approval of their applications for licensure pending completion of licensure requirements: Daniel Fenton, Alyssa Gallagher, Alexia Holovatyk, John King, and Jessica Patel.

**On motion by Lorraine Benuto, second by Soseh Esmaeili, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the following applicants for licensure pending completion of licensure requirements: Daniel Fenton, Alyssa Gallagher, Alexia Holovatyk, John King, and Jessica Patel.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**10. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the application of Michelle Mercurio for licensure as a psychologist as recommended by the Application Tracking Equivalency and Mobility (ATEAM) Committee**

The ATEAM Committee conducted a review of the application of Dr. Michelle Mercurio as she had not attended an APA-accredited educational program. Following review, the education was found to be substantially equivalent to an APA-accredited program. The Committee recommended approval of licensure, contingent upon satisfactory completion of licensure requirements.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaeili, second by Catherine Pearson, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the application for licensure of Dr. Michelle Mercurio, pending completion of licensure requirements.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**11. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Approve the application of Alisa Turner-Augustyn for licensure as a psychologist as recommended by the Application Tracking Equivalency and Mobility (ATEAM) Committee**

Dr. Alisa Turner-Augustyn attended a program that was accredited by the American Psychological Association. However, she did not have the required 2,000 internship hours. However, she earned nearly 2,500 hours during the post-doctoral experience with a satisfactory amount of supervision hours. The ATEAM Committee conducted a review and found the total number of training hours to be sufficient. The Committee recommended approval of licensure, contingent upon satisfactory completion of licensure requirements.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaeili, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the application for licensure of Dr. Alisa Turner-Augustyn, pending completion of licensure requirements.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**12. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the Request of Leanne Earnest, Ph.D., for a 60-day Extension to Complete the Continuing Education Requirements for the current License Renewal Period, ending March 1, 2023**

Dr. Leanne Earnest requested a 60-day extension to complete the continuing education requirements for licensure renewal. Although she expected to have 30 credits completed by the end of the year, she expressed concern that the ethics and suicide prevention requirements would not be completed. She provided an explanation of appropriate extenuating circumstances.

**On motion by Catherine Pearson, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the request of Dr. Leanne Earnest for a 60-day Extension to Complete the Continuing Education Requirements for the current License Renewal Period, ending March 1, 2023.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**13. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the Request of D. Jeanne White, Ph.D., for a 60-day Extension to Complete the Continuing Education Requirements for the current License Renewal Period, ending March 1, 2023**

Dr. Jeanne White requested a 60-day extension to complete the continuing education requirements for licensure renewal. As of the writing of the request, she had completed 12 of the required 15 live credits. However, problems with the internet connectivity service in her neighborhood has made it difficult to complete the required courses. She stated that at one point, the cable representative confirmed 51 outages in 2 months in her area.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaeili, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the request of Dr. Jeanne White, for a 60-day Extension to Complete the Continuing Education Requirements for the current License Renewal Period, ending March 1, 2023.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**14. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the Request of a Testing Accommodation for Licensure Applicant Jodi Lovejoy**

Dr. Jodi Lovejoy applied for a testing accommodation to take the EPPP and the Nevada State Exam. The accommodation would be for extra time (time and half), a paper exam, use of paper as needed, a separate quiet room, and extended breaks.

Director Scurry explained that her application was also being reviewed by the ATEAM Committee for equivalency. Dr. Lovejoy was informed that approval of the application for licensure was not guaranteed based on approval of the accommodation.

There was discussion about the accommodation requests and whether a paper exam would be possible. Ms. Scurry explained that approval of a paper version of the state exam would come back to the Board as a separate request as it would require in-person proctoring. Dr. Young added that a paper version of the EPPP is difficult as well due to the proctoring concerns and cost. Additional medical verification of the need of an accommodation to provide a paper exam would be needed before such approval could be granted.

**On motion by Lorraine Benuto, second by Soseh Esmaeili, the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners approved the testing accommodation for Jodi Lovejoy for the Nevada State Exam and the EPPP Parts 1 and 2. Accommodations shall include extra time, use of scrap paper, a separate quiet room, and extended breaks. Approval of licensure would require approval by the ATEAM for equivalency.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Soseh Esmaeili, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**15. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the Request of Carolina Morales-Alicea for an Extension to her Registration as a Psychological Assistant up to January 1, 2024**

(This item was taken out of order.)

Dr. Carolina Morales-Alicea requested an extension of her registration as a psychological assistant through 2023. She had completed the required training hours, the EPPP Part-1 and the Nevada State Exam. The additional time would allow her to prepare for the EPPP Part-2.

Dr. Morales-Alicea explained the need for the extension and to request a waiver of the EPPP Part-2, using the score from the last time she took the test. She added that she had taken the EPPP Part-2 twice. Her supervisor, Dr. Ahmad, and the work location would remain the same if approved.

President Owens suggested providing a 6-month extension to allow Dr. Morales to take the exam. If she did not pass, she would have to return to the Board with a study plan, as required by the Board's regulation related to examinations.

Mr. Ward stated the Board could not take action on the waiver of the EPPP Part-2 but could on the request for the waiver. President Owens added that the Board would not consider a waiver of the failing test score as that would set a precedent for future applicants.

Dr. Morales made comment about the lack of studying materials and support for the EPPP Part-2.

**On motion by Soseh Esmaeili, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Board of Psychological Examiners approved Carolina Morales-Alicea for an Extension to her Registration as a Psychological Assistant for an additional six months, through July 3, 2023.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Stephanie Woodard, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**16. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the License Reactivation Application of Dr. Tristan Sophia**

Dr. Tristan Sophia applied for reactivation of her license in August 2022. At the time, it was found that she did not have any live credits and was short 3 ethics credits. Since then, Dr. Sophia completed the continuing education credits, earning more than 50 hours with 18.75 of them live. She also satisfied the ethics, suicide prevention, and cultural competency requirements.

**On motion by Lorraine Benuto, second by Soseh Esmaeili, the Board of Psychological Examiners approved the reactivation of the license of Dr. Tristan Sophia.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Stephanie Woodard, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

**17. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Board to Consider Registration of Supervisors of Psychological Assistants, Psychological Interns, and Psychological Trainees, and Associated Concerns. Discussion and Possible Approval may include:**

- A. Establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee and Committee members from the following individuals: Monique Abarca, Lorraine Benuto, Soseh Esmaeili, Stephanie Holland, Whitney Owens, Catherine Pearson, Stephanie Woodard, Ben Adams, Gretchen Arian, Andrew Bertagnolli, Yvonne Fritz, Christopher Fyfe, and Adrianna Zimring.
- B. Charge of the committee to revise Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 641.1519, Qualifications of Supervisors, and 641.158, Limitations on Number of Assistants, Interns, and Supervisors.
- C. Consideration of up to 2 continuing education credits for each committee member for the renewal period ending December 31, 2024

Creation of an ad hoc committee has been proposed to review the proposal to create a regulation mandating registration of supervisors of psychological trainees, psychological interns, and psychological assistants.

President Owens stated she would be recusing herself from the vote. As a result, there would not be a quorum available to take a vote. The item will return on a future agenda.

**18. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Direct the Board's Exam Chair and Executive Director to conduct the biennial review of the Nevada State Examination, including the questions/answers and administration procedures. Such review may include enlisting 5-10 licensees who have stated their willingness to volunteer for "Exam Review/Development" during the current license renewal period. The review of the exam shall not be subject to Nevada's Open Meeting Law as the exam questions/answers must remain confidential in accordance with the APA Code of Ethics.**

Director Scurry explained that a process for the annual, or biennial, review of the state exam has been proposed that would include review by licensee volunteers. Review should occur following a legislative session and/or after regulations are adopted by the Board.

The first step would be enlisting a group of licensees to review the exam questions/answers. As part of the license renewal process, all licensees were asked if they would be willing to participate in exam review. From those volunteers, a group of 5-10 would be selected to perform the review and provide notes to Dr. Holland and the executive director.

Dr. Holland and the executive director would review the comments of the reviewers and make decisions about potential changes to the exam, if needed. As the exam questions must stay confidential, the review group will not be a formally adopted committee under Nevada's Open Meeting Law. However, if any changes are suggested related to review of the exam's Candidate Guide, they would come to the Board for adoption.

President Owens suggested having individuals with expertise in diversity participate in the review. She also asked that any individual conducting a review be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

**On motion by Catherine Pearson, second by Lorraine Benuto, the Board of Psychological Examiners directed the Board's Exam Chair and executive director to recruit volunteers from licensees for the purpose of reviewing the questions of the Nevada State Exam for accuracy and clarity.** (Yea: Whitney Owens, Stephanie Woodard, Lorraine Benuto, and Catherine Pearson.) Motion Carried: 4-0

### **19. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Revise the Policy on Consumer Complaints and Discipline**

Director Scurry explained revision of the consumer complaints and discipline policy was ongoing. Dr. Lenkeit proposed revisions and the policy was currently with Dr. Young and Mr. Ward for their review. The policy was reviewed with Board members and would return at the January meeting for potential adoption of the revisions.

Dr. Lenkeit explained that changes to the policy include clarification of the executive director's role in the complaint process. The title was also changed to reflect that its purpose was the consumer complaints process, and not just discipline.

President Owens asked about records retention and if the policy included information about what documents should be included in a complaint file. Director Scurry responded that the policy was being revised to include that information and that an office procedure related to standardization of complaint files, the report template, etc., was also being developed.

Dr. Young suggested provisions related to communication be amended. Generally, the investigators do not mail or email respondents or complainants directly. She suggested that the section be revised to indicate most communication will be handled through the Board office.

Mr. Ward reminded the members that the policy may be scrutinized by attorneys or judges when a matter is being addressed. As a result, the policy should reflect the process being followed by the office, the attorney, and the investigators.

**20. (For Possible Action) Schedule of Future Board Meetings, Hearings, and Workshops. The Board May Discuss and Decide Future Meeting Dates, Hearing Dates, and Workshop Dates**

- A. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners is Friday, January 13, 2022, at 8:30 a.m.

President Owens stated that there is currently no date for the Strategic Planning meeting. Options would be sent out via email.

**21. Requests for Future Board Meeting Agenda Items (No Discussion Among the Members will Take Place on this Item)**

There were no requests for future Board meeting agenda items.

**22. Public Comment**

There was no public comment at this time.

**23. (For Possible Action) Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Board, President Owens adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

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