

ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN COUNSELING

2777 Zelda Rd
Montgomery, AL 36106
334/240-7229 Fax: 334/263-6115
www.abec.alabama.gov

MINUTES

Board Meeting

May 17, 2024

The Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling (ABEC) held its regular meeting on Friday, May 17, 2024, to conduct business. The meeting was held at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road in Montgomery, Alabama. Members in attendance were Dr. Debra Atchison (Board Chair), Dr. Glenn Hollingsworth (member), Dr. Sherrionda Crawford (member), and Ms. DeAnna Tidwell (member). Members absent were Ms. Anjanette Robinson (Board Vice Chair), Dr. Sheila Webb (member) and Ms. Jessie Bowie (member). Also in attendance were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Mr. Matt Bledsoe (Assistant Attorney General – Legal Counsel), Mrs. Sheila Dopson (Board Administrator), Ms. Charlotte Daughetee (Academic Consultant), Mr. Mike James (Investigator), Ms. Karen Entriken (Investigator), Mr. Brannon Littleton (CFO), Ms. Dawn Durick (Licensing Specialist), Ms. Angela Warr (Executive Assistant) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary). Public guests were also present and attended virtually.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Atchison, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. The regularly scheduled meeting was advertised to the public on the Board's website, (www.abec.alabama.gov), as well as the Secretary of State's website, (www.sos.alabama.gov), in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. Mr. Warren called the official member roll, and a quorum of the members was in attendance. Mr. Warren read the Opening Statement regarding Robert's Rules of Order, and Chairperson Atchison welcomed attendees, commenting on Mr. Bledsoe attendance as Board Legal Counsel in the absence of Mrs. Coody, and Dr. Melissa Golden attendance to address the Board later on the agenda. Actions by the Board were recorded from members attending onsite and Chairperson Atchison did not vote except in the case of a tie vote.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Chairperson Atchison presented the meeting agenda for the Board's approval. A copy of the agenda was provided to the Board members prior to the meeting for their review.

MOTION: Dr. Hollingsworth made a motion to approve the May 17, 2024, meeting agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Crawford and unanimously approved by the Board.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Atchison presented the minutes from the March 22, 2024, regular meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Tidwell made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Crawford and, following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Warren presented the Executive Director report to include financial activities of the Board for the period ending April 30, 2024. He reported that the Board operates on the funds received and expenditures cannot exceed the annual budget regardless of accumulation of revenue over the years. He reported that prior to Smith Warren's management of the Board, some of the Board's income had not been certified and Smith Warren identified the error and were able to process the funds before the certification date had expired.

Mr. Warren reported that the iPads for Board meetings had arrived, and he was working to establish the new platform that the Board would use to access meeting documents and facilitate communications with Board members.

Mr. Warren also reported that Ms. Robinson and Ms. Tidwell were planning to attend onsite the NBCC meeting and out-of-state travel requests were being processed and Dr. Atchison planned to attend virtually. Dr. Crawford indicated that she planned to attend the meeting onsite, and Mr. Warren asked that she contact Ms. Warr to complete the pre-approval travel request.

MOTION: Dr. Crawford made the motion to accept the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Warren reviewed the current number of licensees, along with the number of complaints received in fiscal year 2024 (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

Mr. Warren indicated that plans for a board-sponsored ethics training would be presented at a future meeting for the Board's consideration.

A copy of the Board training publication, *Resource Manual for Alabama Regulatory Boards and Commissions*, 20th edition, dated August 2023, was provided to the members. Mr. Warren reported that the training manual was published by the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts.

LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT

Chairman Atchison introduced Mr. Matt Bledsoe as Board legal counsel in the absence of Mrs. Coody. Mr. James presented the recommendations of the IC for Board approval. A list of cases was provided to the members (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He indicated that Chairperson Atchison served on the Committee in the review of the case.

- Complaints withdrawn by the complainant and recommendation to close the cases: Cases 2024-043 and 2024-044.
- Close complaints due to no jurisdiction: Cases 2024-049, 2024-051, 2024-052, 2024-054 and 2024-056.
- Close complaints as unfounded: Cases 2024-034, 2024-036, 2024-039, 2024-040, and 2024-041.
- Issue a letter of concern: Case 2024-042.
- Complaint was founded and one-year probation and \$1,000 fine was recommended for violation of altered license on social media: Case 2024-035.
- Close complaints as no violations found in the cases: Cases 2024-045, 2024-046, 2024-047, 2024-048 and 2024-050.

MOTION: Dr. Crawford made the motion to approve the IC's recommendation as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board, with Chairperson Atchison abstaining from voting as a member of the committee.

Mr. James introduced Ms. Karen Enriken, as the Board's investigator who would be involved in the Board's wellness program referred cases and investigating Board complaints.

Update on Counseling Compact

Mr. Warren reported that Dr. Parker, the Board's Counseling Compact liaison, was not able to attend the Board meeting. He reported that Compact activities were moving slowly, and some states were reconsidering participation in the Compact. He reported that the Alabama legislation for the Counseling Compact had not been approved.

Academia Rule Revision Committee Report

Dr. Hollingsworth reported that the Academia Rule Revision Committee had no report at this time.

Supervision Committee Report

Dr. Crawford reported that the Supervision Committee had no report at this time.

ALCA Update

Dr. Jane Coleman with the Alabama Counseling Association, attending virtually, reported on election of Association officers and indicated that Dr. Debbie Grant would be the new ALCA President. She reminded the Board that the ALCA Fall Conference would be held in November 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

Petition for Declaratory Rulings

Mr. Bledsoe presented new rule 255-X-8-.11 Petition for Declaratory Rulings for the Board's approval. He explained that in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, the Board could give an opinion on interpretation of the Board's statute. The proposed rule was regarding the opinion process, and also included a form as an appendix to the rules (copies available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

MOTION: Ms. Tidwell made the motion to approve the proposed rule and appendix as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board.

Continuing Education

Mr. Warren introduced Dr. Melissa Golden who requested to appear before the Board to present information concerning the Board's continuing education policy. She asked the Board to consider expanding the licensees' access to continuing education providers and subject matter. The Board reviewed the Board's rule changes concerning CE providers as a step toward participating in the Counseling Compact and asked the Executive Director to determine whether the CE requirements were specific to state participation in the Compact or specific only to individual(s) requesting compact reciprocal licensure. Dr. Golden provided a comparison of CE providers approved by other states. The Board discussed preserving the core of training for the profession by splitting the CE hour requirements between NBCC approved hours and CE hours obtained through other proposed CE providers.

MOTION: Dr. Crawford made the motion to table further discussion until the Executive Director had clarification about the Counseling Compact continuing education requirement. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board.

Review of Applications and License Requests:

Mr. Warren and Ms. Dopson presented licensing requests for the Board's approval (list of applications available in the Board's official Book of Minutes):

Initial ALC: Ms. Tidwell made the motion to approve the ALC requests for initial issuance of license. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board.

ALC to LPC: Dr. Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the ALC requests to become an LPC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board.

LPC by Endorsement: Dr. Crawford made the motion to approve the LPC applications by endorsement requests. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board.

LPC-Supervisor: Dr. Crawford made the motion to approve the LPC-Supervisor requests for licensure. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board.

NCE Accommodations: Dr. Hollingsworth made the motion to ratify the Board's Chairperson's approval of NCE accommodation requests. The motion was seconded by Dr. Crawford and unanimously approved by the Board.

Special Review of Transcripts: The transcripts were reviewed for KAH and MJW with a counseling psychology degree.

Dr. Hollingsworth made the motion to approve the requests from KAH as an ALC and MJW as an LPC by endorsement. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board.

Special Review of Supervision: The documentation from MD regarding their supervised clinical experience to obtain licensure in Pennsylvania was reviewed by the Board to consider licensure in Alabama.

Dr. Crawford made the motion to accept MD's request for LPC licensure from provisional status. The motion was

Requests to Inactive Status: Dr. Crawford made the motion to ratify the actions of the Board Chairperson's approval of requests to place their license on inactive status. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board.

Requests to Reactive License: Ms. Tidwell made the motion to ratify the actions of the Board Chairperson's approval of requests to reactive their license. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hollingsworth and unanimously approved by the Board.

Special Review of LPC Endorsement Application: Dr. Hollingsworth made the motion to approve CJC's request for LPC license. The motion was seconded by Dr. Crawford and unanimously approved by the Board.

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Discussion of Rules regarding Supervision of ALC:

Mr. Warren and Dr. Daughhettee commented on confusion by supervisors and ALC regarding the hours of supervision and recommended that the Board's rules regarding supervision be modified to clarify that virtual supervision was allowed when supervisors have taken the virtual supervision training. The Board also discussed sponsoring a training course on the interpretation of the supervision rules.

MOTION: Ms. Tidwell made the motion to amend the rule 255-X-3-.02 and the supervision forms and publish the rule for public comment. The motion was seconded by Dr. Crawford and unanimously approved by the Board.

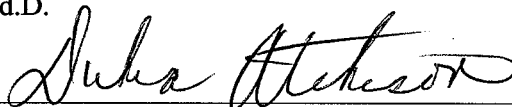
Next Board Meeting: Chairperson Atchison reminded the members that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board was July 19, 2024, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

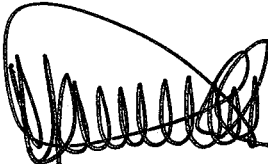
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Crawford made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tidwell and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairperson Atchison adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.


Respectfully Submitted,

Debra H. Atchison, Ed.D.
Board Chair





Keith E. Warren
Executive Director

Approved on: July 19, 2024 / /rr