

STATE OF NEVADA



Board of Dispensing Opticians

Minutes of Public Meeting: February 13, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Board meeting to took place via teleconference at:
Office of the Nevada Board of Dispensing Opticians
4747 Caughlin Parkway, Front Conference Room
Reno, Nevada 89519

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Letten, President
Mark Myers, Vice President
Tamara Sternod, Secretary
Marilyn Brainard, Treasurer

Board Staff Present:

Corinne Sedran, Executive Director
Laena St-Jules, Deputy Attorney General

1. Call to order
Ms. Letten began the meeting and called roll at 5:05 p.m.
2. Public comment
There was no public comment.
3. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Approval of previous board meeting minutes
December 12, 2019 Board Meeting
Motion: Ms. Brainard moved to accept the minutes as presented.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
4. Announcement of newly licensed Ophthalmic Dispensers:
Congratulations to the following opticians licensed since the last board meeting:
711 Joseph DeMasi
712 Pamela Mattiello
713 Steve Sai

5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Q and A session with Jim Morris of the American Board of Opticianry re: licensing exams
Discussion: Mr. Morris said the exam scores of Nevada applicants have been steadily increasing. The pass rate for the Advanced Exams now exceeds fifty percent. Ms. Sternod asked if other states have adopted the Advanced Exams as a licensing requirement. Mr. Morris said twelve states are now utilizing the Practical Exams and New Jersey is the second state to formally adopt the ABO Advanced Exam. He also discussed patterns of occupational deregulation nationwide and various state optical boards undergoing either a sunset review or consolidation process. Ms. Sedran stated the Nevada boards are currently undergoing similar review. Mr. Morris said he will be available if the Board needs him to testify regarding the need for an independent board that monitors ophthalmic dispensing in Nevada. Ms. Letten asked about past exam administration issues at the testing centers. Mr. Morris said any issues were resolved when the ABO adopted a new testing company. Policies and procedures for exam administration are now consistent among the testing centers and the ABO has not received further complaints. Ms. Sternod thanked Mr. Morris for the ABO's provision of exam prep courses at OptiCon each year; she said it has made a huge difference in preparing applicants to take the exams.
6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Report and recommendations by assigned board member on atypical applications and requests
Ms. Letten had no items to report.
7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Assignment of board member to review and recommend apprenticeship education programs; report and recommendations by assigned board member
Discussion: Ms. Sedran said this item had been requested at the last meeting; the Board had discussed the need to review options for apprentice education programs.
Motion: Ms. Brainard moved to appoint Mr. Myers to the position.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
8. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Proposals and discussion of Board statute/regulation changes; initial drafting of proposed regulation changes
Discussion: Ms. Sedran listed the various statutory and regulatory changes proposed at previous meetings. These include: changes to the requirements for managing optical retail locations, including clarifying the definition of "manager"; removing the section detailing contact lens training hours to allow the board more flexibility in setting training requirements; clarifying apprenticeship requirements by moving them under a single section in the regulations; clarifying the number of license renewals available to apprentices and the apprenticeship timeline; clarifying the definition of "dispensing" by further defining terms such as "design" and "delivery" in the regulations; reducing the length of time for reinstating a delinquent optician license.

Mr. Myers suggested the definition of manager should refer to the definition of ophthalmic dispensing and include any activities under that heading. Ms. Letten said the board may need to further define what a management position entails and that it may include day-to-day activities that do not pertain directly to dispensing but do give the manger authority over a licensed dispensing optician. Ms. Sedran asked about locations that do not have a licensed optician regularly on site but call one over from another store when dispensing duties are required. Ms. Letten suggested that if a location offers dispensing services, it should be required to have a licensed optician on duty daily.

Ms. Sternod presented her suggestions for regulation changes, including reducing the apprenticeship timeline to two years and clarifying deadlines for completing the apprenticeship program; apprentices are able to obtain the required number of training hours working part-time over two years and should not have to wait a third year to obtain their licenses. Ms. Brainard agreed the Board should take steps to reduce roadblocks to licensure for qualified applicants. Ms. Letten said she is also in favor of reducing the required apprenticeship time for otherwise-qualified applicants. Ms. Sternod also suggested the Board look at changing its licensing fees, as renewal fees for opticians have not increased since 2004.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Financials

a. Review and acceptance of **November and December 2019** financial reports

Discussion: Ms. Brainard explained the Board's investment account is due to mature this month and presented various options for reinvestment; she will reinvest the funds with the same institution at a similar rate and present the new investment to the Board at the next meeting.

Motion: Ms. Brainard moved to accept the financial reports as presented.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

b. Assessment of database costs; allocation of funds

Discussion: Ms. Sedran said the new database and online licensing system are working very well overall and the IT company is very responsive. The program requires updates and maintenance and she would like the Board to earmark additional funds this fiscal year for the project; the Board has more than enough in reserves to allow for these costs without any financial hardship.

Motion: Ms. Letten moved to allocate an additional \$10,000 in the current year's budget for the project.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Executive Director's report

Administrative Items:

a. Review of licensing numbers and exam statistics

Ms. Sedran reviewed current licensing numbers, which stand at 370 active opticians and limited opticians and 126 active apprentices; the Board's license retention rate was exceptional for the 2020 renewal cycle, with most opticians and apprentices renewing their licenses.

b. State-required reporting updates

Ms. Sedran updated the Board on reporting requirements and compliance.

c. Tentative schedule of meeting dates

Ms. Sedran said meeting dates have been scheduled for the second Thursday of every other month for the past year. The Board members agreed they would continue to meet on this schedule, subject to changes as necessary.

11. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Board member comment and future agenda items

Mr. Myers asked what the Board has historically considered in terms of accreditation and other requirements when approving apprentice education programs. Ms. Sedran said she would research Board history on the topic and send the information to Mr. Myers.

12. Public comment

There was no public comment.

Ms. Letten thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 6:24 p.m.