

STATE OF NEVADA



Board of Dispensing Opticians

Minutes of Public Meeting:

October 14, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

There was no public location provided for this meeting. All interested parties were invited to attend via teleconference.

Board Members Present:

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

Board Staff Present:

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

1. Call to order

Ms. Letten called the meeting to order and called roll at 5:06 p.m. All board members were in attendance, but Ms. Brainard had to leave the call due to technical difficulties.

2. Public comment

There was no public comment.

3. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Approval of previous board meeting minutes
August 12, 2021 Board Meeting

Motion: Mr. Myers moved to approve the minutes as presented.

Vote: The motion passed by unanimous vote of the members present.

4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Election of acting board officers

This item was postponed and revisited after Item 12.

Motion: Ms. Letten moved to approve the proposed roster of board officers:

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

Vote: The motion unanimously.

5. Announcement of newly licensed Ophthalmic Dispensers:
Ms. Sedran announced the new opticians.
735 Roveri, Corey
736 Rios, Juan

6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Review and decision on Apprenticeship Extension Requests
Vo, Johnny
Discussion: Ms. Sedran said the applicant is requesting one additional renewal of his license to complete his apprenticeship requirements. Ms. Letten said the Board has considered COVID hardships as meeting the threshold for granting an extension, but an apprentice must submit a request by the 90-day deadline. Ms. Sedran said the Board previously approved apprenticeship extension requests citing COVID-related workplace and school closures at the December 2020 meeting.
Motion: Ms. Sternod moved to approve the applicant's extension request.
Vote: The motion passed by unanimous vote of the members present.

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Report and recommendations on apprentice education programs by assigned board member
Mr. Myers said he did not have any items to report at this time.

8. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Report and recommendations on continuing education courses and providers by assigned board member
Ms. Letten said she is reviewing a company called CE Broker that tracks licensees' CE course requirements and completions. She and Ms. Sedran are still reviewing the contract details supplied by the company, so she would like to table this discussion until the next meeting.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Discussion of proposed changes to NAC Chapter 637
Ms. Sedran said there are no updates to report; this is a standing item for recommendations or requests. Ms. Sternod asked about the timeline for implementing the proposed regulations.

Ms. Brainard rejoined the meeting.

Ms. St-Jules said she would research how the Legislative Counsel Bureau treats regulation requests in odd versus even years and send the information to the board office. Ms. Brainard said it is preferable to pursue regulation changes in a year the legislature is not in session. Ms. Sedran agreed it would be easier to obtain draft legislation from the LCB in an off year, which would facilitate the process.

Mr. Myers asked about proposed regulations pertaining to granting applicants prior experience credit. He explained people from out of state are given a two-year window before their workplace experience is considered out-of-date, while prior Nevada apprentices are given a three-year window. Ms. Sedran said applicants who were previously licensed as Nevada apprentices will still need to complete all the other apprenticeship education and training requirements to be eligible for licensure, while applicants from out of state will not. However, the Board can change these timeframes to make them congruent for all applicants.

10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Financial items
 - a. Review and acceptance of **July and August 2021** financial reports
Motion: Ms. Brainard moved to accept the reports as presented.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Discussion and decision on yearly COLA/wage increase for executive director
Discussion: Ms. Sedran said the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) increased contribution rates by .25% for this fiscal year. Ms. Letten said there was an average 2% COLA increase for Nevada employees this year; she proposed the same increase for the executive director. She also proposed a \$500 end-of-year bonus owing to the amount work outside of regular office hours Ms. Sedran contributed during the 2021 legislative session. She explained a lot of behind-the-scenes efforts were required to protect the Board's legislation from outside interests, and Ms. Sedran's work was instrumental in protecting the Board's regulatory authority.
Motion: Ms. Brainard moved to accept Ms. Letten's proposed wage increase and bonus for the executive director.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

11. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Executive Director's report

- a. Office and licensing updates
Ms. Sedran updated the Board on its license numbers, which include 143 apprentices, with 53 new apprentice licenses added in 2021 (up from 34 in 2020), and 381 opticians, with 8 new optician licenses added so far in 2021 (down from 17 in 2020). September exam pass rates were 75% for the ABO Practical, 100% for the NCLE Practical, 50% for the ABO Advanced, and 44% for the NCLE Advanced.
- b. General updates
Ms. Sedran said Ms. St-Jules is taking a leave and will be back in mid-January. The Board can conduct its board-member training at the February meeting when she returns.

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

Ms. Brainard asked if the Board should be working with the national organization (ABO) on improving the exam pass rates. Ms. Sternod said several licensees are working on reestablishing a professional organization in Nevada. She has stressed to them the importance of providing online courses for preparing for the Advanced Certification Exams. The organization is still a work in progress, but she is hopeful it will give local opticians a way to communicate with other optical organizations nationally. Nevada opticians will have more access to national speakers and other educational resources geared towards the national certification exams. Focus needs to be on supporting apprentices in their education and training.

Ms. Sedran said there have been some improvements to the CLSA home-study program in the past year, including launching online exams. However, she would like to see the CLSA introduce an Advanced Contact Lens home-study course. Jim Morris of the ABO had indicated such a program was in the works, but there have not been any recent updates. Ms. Sedran said a comprehensive education program that covers advanced material is the most important component in helping apprentices prepare for the national exams.

Ms. Letten said the professional organization has already worked on providing advanced courses through an organization called D&D Management; the courses are all ABO-approved.

13. Public comment

There was no public comment. Ms. Letten thanked Ms. St-Jules, Ms. Sternod, and Mr. Roames for their dedication and service to the Board.

Ms. Letten closed the meeting at 5:52 p.m.