

STATE OF NEVADA



Board of Dispensing Opticians

Minutes of Public Meeting: December 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Letten, President
Jennifer Seymour, Vice President
Priscilla Acosta, Board Member
Maria Landin, Board Member

Board Staff Present:

Corinne Sedran, Executive Director
Michael Cabrera, Board Counsel
Joseph Ostunio, Deputy Attorney General

1. Call to order
Ms. Letten called the meeting to order and called roll at 5:04 p.m. Board Member Cristobal Esparza was absent.
2. Public comment
There was no public comment.
3. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Approval of previous board meeting minutes
October 10, 2024 Board Meeting
Motion: Ms. Letten moved to approve the minutes as presented.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Confirmation of newly licensed Dispensing Opticians
 - a. **826 Lescet Gonzalez**
 - b. **827 Ana Tabares**
 - c. **828 Maryam Rezazadeh Pirbazari**
 - d. **829 Sasha Rayford**
 - e. **830 Angelica Arenas**
 - f. **831 Corrin Ehnis**
Motion: Ms. Letten moved to confirm the licensure of the new opticians.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.
5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Review and decision on requests for one additional renewal of an apprentice license, pursuant to Approved Regulation R067-23, Sec. 4(6)
 - a. **Rabina, Michael**
Motion: Ms. Letten said the applicant did not demonstrate any of the extenuating circumstances allowed by Board policy and moved to deny his request.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

b. **Nickerson, Lana**

Motion: Ms. Letten moved to approve Ms. Nickerson's request.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

6. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION:** Updates on the Office of Nevada Boards, Commissions and Councils Standards, created pursuant to NRS 232.8413; review and decision on response to **SB 78** (Board Consolidation Bill)

Discussion: Mr. Nick Vander Poel and Ms. Mendy Elliott, lobbyists for the Board, gave updates on this item. Mr. Vander Poel gave a summary of SB 78, explaining the Department of Business and Industry (B&I) is proposing a consolidation of various licensing boards that operate under Nevada's Title 54. Because the proposed bill is so extensive, the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) has only supplied a "skeleton format" bill, meaning the full text of the bill is not yet available to review. The version of the bill that has been released is reportedly undergoing revisions. Representatives for B&I indicated their department would release a 90-page white paper giving an overview of what they are trying to accomplish with the bill, however, to date, the paper has not been released. The reps. have stated their general goals are cost savings and ensuring oversight of and compliance by the boards. They also want to consolidate many administrative processes, including website maintenance, finances, auditing, investigations, and legal representation. They have indicated there will be about 80 employee positions to fill within the new Division of Boards and Commissions that would be created by the bill.

Ms. Elliott discussed a meeting that took place between reps. for the Board and B&I in November. During the meeting, Ms. Elliott noted the proposed bill will likely be several thousand pages long, and she expressed reservations that such a large bill could be enacted within the span of the 120-day legislative session. Another point of concern is B&I's proposal that the Board of Opticians be combined with four other boards that do not have any relation to the field of opticianry. It will be difficult for members of the new board to understand the roles of a dispensing optician, and any pertinent licensing issues. The current structure of the occupational licensing boards works well because each occupation is represented by members of its own field. It will be difficult for the Board to craft a formal response to the proposal until the actual text of the bill is released.

Mr. Vander Poel explained that B&I is proposing the creation of various "superboards" that will each absorb several of the smaller boards. The new superboard that would absorb the Board of Opticians would be called the Board of Vision, Speech, and Mobility Professions, and four diverse medical industries would fall under its purview. The board itself would be composed of nine members, only two of which would be opticians. Those opticians would need to work with the representatives of the other industries, who are unlikely to have any background or expertise in the field, on any objectives related to opticianry. B&I representatives indicated the current board directors would be reassigned to other jobs with the State.

Ms. Sedran said a reorganization and consolidation of the boards would have far-reaching consequences for Nevada opticians. The bill proposes centralization of not only the administrative functions of the boards, but also of their disciplinary, legislative, and legal processes. The Board would no longer have direct rulemaking authority to draft legislation that affects the profession; all legislative efforts would need to be preapproved by B&I. The Board would also lose its ability to host its own public meetings. The president of the new superboard would need to call for any meetings, and with only two opticians on a board of nine members, it would be difficult not only to request meetings, but to ensure any necessary items end up on the meeting agendas. Meetings would

be much lengthier because they would need to address the concerns of several industries at once.

Ms. Brusven noted that under the proposed legislation, the Board's current executive director would no longer work for the Board. Mr. Vander Poel said B&I representatives indicated they would assign some of the current board directors to roles on one of the new superboards and find other State jobs for the remaining displaced directors. Ms. Letten said she had taken a phone meeting with Director Sanchez with B&I and had expressed her concerns with the loss of representation the opticians would have within their industry. He indicated he had received similar concerns from other boards.

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: General legislative updates for the **2025 Legislative Session** and authorization of Board President to testify and submit correspondence on behalf of the Board at/for legislative meetings and hearings

Discussion: Mr. Vander Poel said the deadline for legislators to submit their bill draft requests for the 2025 Legislative Session was December 10th, which means a slew of legislation will be available for review soon. He and Ms. Elliott have a system in place to keep track of the bills and will provide the Board with regular updates on any that mention occupational licensing boards. Ms. Elliott said they will also be tracking bills related to Open Meeting Law and other tangential issues.

Ms. Sedran said the AG's Office advised the boards during the last legislative session that individual board members may not testify or submit correspondence on behalf of their boards without direct authorization by the boards at a meeting. She asked the Board to authorize Ms. Letten, as Board President, to testify and submit correspondence on its behalf at legislative meetings and hearings for the 2025 Legislative Session.

Motion: Ms. Seymour moved to authorize Ms. Letten to testify and submit correspondence on behalf of the Board regarding any proposed legislation.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

8. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Discussion and decision on how to proceed with reviewing and/or approving apprenticeship education and training programs

Discussion: Ms. Letten suggested adding an agenda item for the next meeting to consider guidelines for entities that request a review of their apprentice education programs. She recommends limiting a review of these programs to once annually, as the Board has limited resources to devote to this issue.

Ms. Sedran said she has received several review requests in the span of just a few months, and the individual board members cannot be expected to conduct an in-depth review of each and every program available. There should be a clear-cut strategy for review, and a detailed list of requirements a program must meet before it will be considered. Ms. Letten agreed the Board should not be spending time at every meeting reviewing programs, and there should be more rigid guidelines in place.

The Board members agreed to add an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

9. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Discussion and updates with representative for the American Board of Opticianry
A representative was not available to attend this meeting.

10. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Executive Director's report

a. Licensing updates

Ms. Sedran said the Board office issued 12 new apprentice licenses since last meeting, and 45 this year, for a total of 141 active or retired Apprentice Licenses. The Board office issued 7 new optician licenses since the last meeting, and 25 this year, for a total of 442 Active Optician Licenses.

b. General office and miscellaneous updates

Ms. Sedran said Ms. Seymour had expressed concern at a previous meeting regarding ambiguity in the instructions on the Apprentice Training Forms. Instructors at CSN have been reluctant to sign off on the forms because the instructions indicate they are to be used by apprentices. Some of the students at CSN do not yet hold apprentice licenses, and the instructors are unsure of the Board's policy regarding collecting training hours prior to licensure. Ms. Sedran said she has updated the forms to clarify they are for use by applicants for an optician license, rather than just licensed apprentices. This is in line with the Board's policy that an applicant may complete some of their apprenticeship requirements after they have timed out of the program and are no longer eligible to hold an apprentice license. The policy should be consistent in allowing applicants to complete some of their requirements pre-licensure, as well as post-licensure.

Ms. Sedran said license renewals for 2025 will begin on December 15th, and that notices will be sent out via email on that date.

11. Public comment

Ms. Ruby Garcia with the National Optician Apprenticeship Program asked if she would be notified when the new process for approving apprenticeship programs is approved. Ms. Sedran said any decisions about the new process would need to be made at a public meeting, and she would notify Ms. Garcia of those meetings.

Ms. Letten thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 5:42 p.m.