



STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
(BESW)

4600 Kietzke Lane, Suite C121, Reno,
Nevada 89502 775-688-2555

Board Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, April 5, 2023

The Board meeting for April 5, 2023, was called to order by Dr. Esther **Langston** at 9:03 a.m. **Roll Call** was taken. Board members in attendance: Linda **Holland Browne**, Abigail **Klimas**, Esther **Langston**, and Jacqueline **Sanders**. BESW Staff in attendance: Karen **Oppenlander**. In attendance was Board Counsel/ Deputy Attorney General Harry **Ward**. Guest in attendance: Jacqueline C. **Jones**, LMSW.

As there was no **Public Comment** in-person, online or written, **Langston** moved to **Board Operations, Item 3A, Review and Discuss Recruitment for Executive Director. (For Possible Action)**. Introductions were made. A brief outline of the agenda was reviewed. Next, the Board reviewed the position as outlined in the position description.

Next, the Board members asked Candidate Jacqueline C. **Jones**, LCSW a set of pre-determined interview questions. After the interview, **Langston** made closing comments and thanked the candidate for applying for this position.

Following, **Langston** moved to **Agenda Item 3B - Review and Discuss Closing Out the Interviews Based on Applications Received. (For Possible Action)**. **Oppenlander** stated that this agenda item is expressly for making a formal motion where the Board may say that out of the entire group of candidates, that the Board Members are choosing to reduce the pool to the two candidates who have been interviewed.

Jacqueline Sanders Made a Motion to Close the Recruiting Process and to Consider the Two People Interviewed; Seconded by Linda Holland Browne. Motion Approved Unanimously.

Following, **Langston** moved to **Agenda Item 3C - Review and Discuss Selection of the Executive Director. (For Possible Action)**. **Langston** continued by stating that we will now enter a discussion about the candidates i.e., review and discuss the candidates: Victoria L. **Erickson**, LCSW and Jacqueline C **Jones**, LMSW.

Holland Browne stated that BESW has two exceptional candidates. I of course, along with everyone else, have scored our candidates. And if I am going strictly by numbers and nothing else, my score indicates that **Erickson** would be first choice. However, I'm very impressed with **Jones**. I don't think she has the level of involvement that **Erickson** has locally, statewide, and nationally. I also don't feel she has a good concept of our disciplinary responsibilities and role, which of course is our purpose in existing in terms of protecting the public. So, from that perspective, I think **Erickson** is a more viable candidate. **Jones** brings something unique to the Board. She brings up some interesting issues around diversity and employment; but I don't see her as having legislative experience, understanding of the open meeting law, which is critical,

and perhaps did not grasp the question we asked about how you handle complaints from the public or licensees about staff, Board members and so on as we must be responsive. We can't simply defend and protect everyone. We have to ask hard questions. We must give those complaints serious consideration. From that standpoint, I feel that she'd have a sharp learning curve coming into our agency. **Langston** thanked Board Member **Holland Browne** and asked for additional comments from the Board.

Member **Sanders** shared a different opinion regarding **Jones** and clarified that this was her unbiased judgment. I did notice that there was a hesitation when it came to the discussion of policy and how they would be handled, but I would also hesitate because I would have to go by policy and when I am not presented with that policy book, you have to be mindful of what your statements or your judgment would be because every complaint could be something different. You automatically respect and represent the Board. You also respect and represent the public. So I would have to look at what each individual concern is before I make a judgment on that. The open meeting law, she stated, had been new to her; but she did read up on it and has learned through interactions with Karen etcetera. I can relate to that. **DAG Ward** supports me with that still. So, I won't hold any concern of that. I judged her and I used the point system that we had. I had Ms. **Jones** coming out ahead.

Klimas indicated that the candidates scored differently in categories but coming out to the same overall score. She said that knowing **Erickson** through this Board, including her background, and understanding, gave me a little bit more comfort since she has been an integral part of bringing this Board to where it is right now. I was incredibly impressed with **Jones** and her experience. In the categories that I did rate her lower in, I think that those are all learned things (e.g., open meaning law, testifying in front of a legislative hearing), and I would have no concern about her learning to do that. So, I think they have very different strengths, and they present themselves very differently. I think **Erickson** has more of a quiet confidence and **Jones** speaks in a way that is engaging and she seems like she can handle anything that comes her way. I am looking back through my notes and will need some more time to collect my thoughts.

Langston said that she listened to both very carefully. I rated both of them. My rating is higher for **Erickson** than it is for **Jones**. I grant that some of the areas where **Jones** lacks experience, those are learned things. In terms of the learning curve and where we are and where we are moving and where we are trying to go and what we are trying to keep building on, I had a higher rating for **Erickson**. **Langston** asked if there was any further discussion from the Board or questions to **DAG Ward**?

Ward clarified that all that's required for us to do today is to openly discuss it and the possibility of voting for the next executive director because it is for possible action. **Langston** followed and indicated that the discussion is now open for possible action on the selection of the Executive Director position. It was clarified that there was previously an agreement to make an offer to a candidate and if the candidate does not accept it, then BESW will reopen the position. **Langston** asked if there was any further discussion from the Board Members on the selection of the Executive Director? If there are no questions, I will entertain a motion.

Linda Holland Browne Made a Motion for BESW to Offer the Position of Executive Director to Victoria Erickson; Seconded by Abigail Klimas. Roll Call Vote: Holland Browne – Aye; Klimas – Aye; Sanders – Nay, Langston - Aye. Motion Carried.

Langston summarized that the position of Executive Director will be offered to Victoria **Erickson**; in the event **Erickson** declines the position, the position for Executive Director will be reopened.

Langston moved to **Public Comment**. There was no public comment in-person, via email, or in writing. Hearing no public comment, **Langston** adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m. after thanking the Board Members for their due diligence in this process. I really appreciate your commitment of time and effort to go through this process and to really give it clarity and thought because we all know that this is a very critical position to how this Board will function and move forward. You all are fantastic Board Members.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Oppenlander.