



State of Nevada

**Board of Examiners for Social Workers**

4600 Kietzke Lane, #C-121, Reno, NV 89502

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**Board Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, August 16, 2023**

The Board meeting for August 16, 2023, was called to order by Linda **Holland-Browne** at 1:01 pm. Roll Call was taken. Board members in attendance: Linda **Holland-Browne**, Jamie **Vaughn**, Abigail Klimas and Esther Langston, who had a brief overlapping appointment and joined a couple minutes later. BESW Staff in attendance: Vikki **Erickson** and Sandra **Lowery**. In attendance was Board Counsel/Deputy Attorney General Harry **Ward**. Guest in attendance: Nick **Vanderpoel** from Flynn Guidici Government Affairs.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment in person and **Erickson** stated that there was no public comment in writing or online.

**Langston** moved to Item **3A. Review and Discuss June 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes (For Possible Action)**.

**Motion was made by Abigail Klimas to approve the June 21, 2023 meeting minutes; seconded by Linda Holland-Browne, the Motion was approved unanimously.**

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item 3B. Introduction of New Board Member Jamie **Vaughn**, Public Member (Informational). Ms. **Vaughn** provided her background, "I am a native of Reno, Nevada. I've been in and out of Reno, Nevada but here since I've been 21 years old". "I'm a former schoolteacher of the Washoe County School District. I am currently retired, and I have a million other things that I do in my retirement". The board members welcomed Ms. **Vaughn**.

**Langston** moved to Item **3C. Review and Discuss 2023 Final Legislative Tracking Report – Flynn Guidici Government Affairs Advocates Report. (For Possible Action)**. Mr. **Vanderpoel** introduced himself to present the 2023 final legislative report. He states that the 2023 legislative session began on February 6<sup>th</sup> and ended on June 5<sup>th</sup>. They went into a special session on June 6<sup>th</sup>, which he described as the fastest special session in legislative history on the capital improvement projects bills, also known as the CIP. Mr. **Vanderpoel** states that immediately following, they went into another special session June 7<sup>th</sup> through June 14<sup>th</sup> for the Oakland A's stadium. He states there were 1234 bill draft requests. He states that of the 1234 bill draft requests, 1096 were introduced and 295 died. Mr. **Vanderpoel** indicated that 2 open meeting bills were adopted, AB 52 and AB219 on how to conduct business, specifically that there needs to be a physical space for participants and to allow multiple days to allow

public comment and for public participation. He described AB522 was to assist in increasing staff by adjusting the budget to increase salary. He states SB231 is for appropriation to increase pay for school social workers in the school districts. He indicates AB245 relates to school violence and SB163 relates to the treatment of disorders of sexual development, which includes health insurance coverage which includes social work services. Mr. **Vanderpoel** indicates the final bill he'll bring to the attention of the board is SB431, which is the Governor's restructuring bill which under the Department of Business and Industry, there is a director of Boards and Commissions. He states that to his understanding the Governor's office or maybe Director Reynolds from Business and Industry have been reaching out to boards and commissions about what the next steps look like. He believes this is still a fluid conversation of what that looks like, but the conversation is starting to take place and boards are being contacted.

Mr. **Vanderpoel** discussed the bill that the board tried to put forward this legislative session in February. He described it in collaboration with the Council of State Governments in partnership with the Department of Defense called the Social Work Interstate Compact. He states that once seven states adopt the compact that it allows social workers to move across state lines. He states the assembly minority leader gave him an emergency bill. He described why the bill failed due to unforeseen consequences; however, we will still try to bring the compact forward in the next legislative session. "My response to Council of State Governments was that we need to think this through a little more" and "how to approach this and protect the social workers". "There's a dire need for social workers in Nevada and they wanna find a solution". "The plan is to revisit the topic with the individuals, my colleagues in the legislative building in September after the dust is settled and everybody's un-winded from the legislative session and at least have a conversation of how to maybe address this going forward in 2025".

**Erickson** discussed how there has already been contact from the office of the director from Terry Reynolds, that they would be reaching out to set up a meeting and gather information. **Erickson** discussed that a copy of the letter the Director's office put out was in the Board packet for them to review. She also discussed that she has been in contact from an assistant reaching out requesting information for the Director's office regarding financial information and we have been fully cooperative with their requests.

**Langston** inquired if there were further questions or discussion and thanked Mr. **Vanderpoel**. She indicated that we certainly will be having conversations with him as all the states wrestle with how to develop an interstate compact that will protect social workers. She states that we will take part in those discussions and come up with solutions and will share them with him.

**Langston** introduced agenda Item **3D. Review and Discuss the "Screening Question"/ "YES Policy" Matrix (For Possible Action)**. **Erickson** indicated that Ms. **Lowery** has been working on the completion of the matrix and turned the discussion over to Ms. **Lowery**. Ms. **Lowery** shared her screen with the Screening Policy. Ms.

**Lowery** oriented the board to the matrix and discussed the various legal issues that would take an applicant to the board for licensing versus allowing the compliance unit and/or a board member and the executive director to make the decision to move forward with licensure.

**Klimas** thanked **Lowery** for streamlining the matrix to make it understandable.

**Holland-Browne** stated that she realized that we were getting a little bit backlogged with some of our complaints and investigations, and she understands some need to be expedient and move things along. She inquired if this change would move things from the compliance unit to the board members or the entire board. "Is this gonna be a significant number of cases?"

**Lowery** clarified that this would apply to initial applications coming in for licensure and renewal, indicating that rarely do these cases come before the board. It will speed things up in terms of what can be cleared in the office without needing to include a board member, and that none of these situations go to DAG **Ward** unless egregious or unless the Executive Director is looking for an opinion. She further clarified that this is licensing, not disciplinary cases and inquired if **Holland-Browne** was inquiring about disciplinary cases and where we were with those.

**Holland-Browne** acknowledged that she would like this streamlined with the application process and not getting hung up on a case.

**Langston** thanked everybody for working on this project and streamlining the process so things can move along more efficiently. She acknowledged that this was a work in progress, "it's not finished. Stuff will happen that's not there. And we will deal with it as it arises".

**Langston** asked for a motion to approve the screening policy to be reviewed in 6 months.

**Holland-Browne** made a motion to approve the screening policy to be reviewed in 6 months; seconded by **Klimas**. The Motion was approved unanimously.

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item **3E. 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Financials and Finalized Budget (for Possible Action)**. **Erickson** turned this item over to **Lowery** who shared her screen. **Lowery** discussed that we came in at 116% of anticipated income, indicating we brought in more money than anticipated. She discussed that our expenses were in line with the salary expense at 100%. All other related expenses were at 70% so we did well. **Lowery** reminded the board with the GASB changes that the board took a large hit in relation to accounting for possible funds. Specifically keeping a fund to pay retirement if there were issues with State funding. **Lowery** discussed with the Board that last year, the Board decided to pay the funds for the retirement account after the GASB adjustment was, paying about \$400,000, but despite that, the board remains financially ahead. **Lowery** discussed the reserves that the Board is required to account

for. as well as the, except for December, the Board was above anticipated income. **Lowery** discussed that in April, the expenses were higher because of the way things fell into the budget such as paying the auditors, but for the most part the expenses are running pretty well and are overall 70% lower than anticipated.

**Lowery** discussed the year end numbers, indicating that she and **Erickson** decided to increase income expectations a little bit since we were being conservative. She indicated that we anticipate having \$714,000 in income over the next fiscal year and that expenses were under that amount without touching the \$199,000 that are in reserve. Payroll expenses are going to come in at about \$440,000 since we were able to do a 12% raise for the employees that was granted by the Governor. We were able to accommodate that in our budget. **Lowery** indicated that the contract labor is from the temporary company, board reimbursement is the money paid to the board members, etc. She indicated that we always anticipate a higher cost on credit card processing because as more and more of our business is on the credit cards and the amount of processing fees go up. She described that at the end of the year, we would make \$900, but that means that our budget balances with out income. She reminded the Board that the Board had severe financial issues several years ago which required us to do a 10% raise in fees.

**Langston requested a motion to accept the budget. Holland-Browne moved to accept the budget, Klimas seconded. The Motion was approved unanimously.**

**Holland-Browne** states “I need to say what a phenomenon this is having been aware of the comings and goings of the Board for some years”. She states, “through Karen’s leadership, I don’t know of any other board that has been successful in turning their budget around”.

**Langston** inquired if the Board charges credit card fees back to the applicant when they renew, or does the board absorb it all?

**Lowery** indicates we do not charge the licensee, but it was a small expense totaling about \$14,000, and we are uncertain if we are legally authority to charge it back to the licensee.

**Ward** indicates that unless we have statutory authority to charge it back, we are unable to do that, and his boards cannot do that.

**Langston** thanked Board staff for their due diligence and managing the budget.

**Langston** moved to Item 3F. **Request for additional Check Signer (For Possible Action)**. **Erickson** discussed that the checks the Board has written require 2 signers, the Executive Director and a Board Member who is currently **Holland-Browne**. She requested that the board consider having another check signer authorized on the account in case **Holland-Browne** is unavailable and requested Jamie **Vaughn** since she resides in Northern Nevada. Discussed that **Vaughn** would need to accompany

**Holland-Browne** and **Erickson** to the bank to sign on to the account if the Board approves.

**Langston requests a motion. Holland-Browne makes the motion to approve Ms. Vaughn as a check signer. Klimas seconded the motion. Unanimous approval of the motion.**

**Langston** moves to Agenda Item **3G. Online Complaint Form (For Possible Action)**. **Lowery** shares her screen with the Board to review the old accusation form. She describes that Karen started the process to improve the Complaint form and put it on the data base. **Lowery** indicates that 90% of states have an online complaint form and reviewed some states that seemed to have a database that would be helpful to this Board. She indicates the link for the form will be on the Board website. She indicates that the form will have several more questions to identify the complaint. The module is ready on the database if the Board approves to move forward with it.

**Langston requests a motion to move forward with use of the online complaint form. Holland-Browne makes a motion. Klimas seconds the motion. Unanimous approval of the motion.**

**Langston** indicates she finds this to be “user friendly”. **Holland-Browne** states that she feels this is a big move forward. **Klimas** inquires when this will start. **Lowery** indicates the link will go up on the website tomorrow.

**Vaughn** inquired if the complainant must use their name when filling out the form, and if it would deter people from making complaints. **Holland-Browne** states the importance of identifying who the complainant is for questions since this is regarding possible disciplinary action.

**Holland-Browne** inquired about if there were very many anonymous complaints. **Erickson** indicated it was relatively rare to get an anonymous complaint. **DAG Ward** indicates that he cannot prosecute a case from an anonymous complaint because the defense attorney would say that his client has a right to confront his accuser which is a constitutional right.

**Langston** moves to Agenda Item **3H. ASWB Delegate Assembly, November 2-4, 2023 in Memphis, TN, Delegate Request (For Possible Action)**. **Erickson** discussed the role of a board member in the delegate assembly, which would be fully funded by the ASWB, and the importance of participation and voting for ASWB leadership, and other topics up for vote in November. She discussed that she would be attending as the Chair of the Nominating Committee and participating in the Administrators Forum. Discussed that she could also serve as the delegate if no board member was able to attend, but it would be a good idea for a board member to participate. **Vaughn** indicated that she would be honored to go although she is newly appointed to the board. **Langston** indicates she is able to participate in the Delegate Assembly.

**Langston requests a motion. Klimas makes the motion, Holland-Browne seconds the motion. Unanimously approved.**

**Langston** indicates if somebody else on the board would also like to go, to notify **Erickson**.

**Langston** moves to Agenda Item **3I. ASWB New Board Member Training October 1-3, 2023 in Washington DC (For Possible Action)**. **Erickson** states that both **Langston** and **Vaughn** are signed up for this training. **Holland-Browne** states she is also signed up.

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item **3J. ASWB Conference Report Update (Informational)**. **Erickson** provided an update to the ASWB meeting in Westminster Colorado in August. She is chairing the Nominating Committee and provided an update that a slate has been completed and submitted to ASWB for the Delegate Assembly. Discussed that all Committees met together in Westminster, CO.

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item **3K. Board Review of Hearing for Virgilio DeSio, License No. 6200-C (For Possible Action)**. **Ward** reviewed with the board that there are negotiations in regard to a settlement in this matter. He states that he and the licensee's attorney are trying to hammer out the language in the settlement agreement, however the licensee's attorney has left the firm so another attorney is taking over for him. **Ward** states that he anticipates this will be resolved and that he does not anticipate this being set for a hearing. He hopes to have a settlement agreement for the board in the very near future.

**Holland-Browne** inquired that a few months ago **Ward** had mentioned that there was hiring at the attorney general's office to assist with handling some of the boards and inquired on the progress of that. **Ward** stated that another attorney was hired and they had been assigned one of the boards at this time, that he is now working with 18 boards. **Holland-Browne** inquired how far behind we are on current investigations, hearing that a few years ago it was dreadful and thought they were making good progress but didn't know where we currently stand. **Ward** indicated that we were on top of everything. He states that we've sent out letters and some responses and although they're not resolved, **Erickson** is in a better position. **Ward** indicates we are caught up currently.

**Langston** moves to Agenda Item **3L. Executive Director's Report (Informational)**. **Erickson** informed the board to let her know if there are any agenda items they would like added to future agendas. **Erickson** discussed that she and **Lowery** will begin working on NAC changes shortly. **Erickson** inquired if the Board was able to have the next meeting September 20, 2023 at 9:00 am. The Board agreed to this.

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item **4. Public Comment**. No public comment in person, online or via email noted.

**Langston** moved to Agenda Item **5. Adjournment.** Meeting adjourned at 2:33pm.