

**State of Alaska  
Department of Commerce, Community and  
Economic Development  
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing**

**BOARD OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY**

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
August 16, 2024**

By authority of AS 08.01.070(2), and in compliance with the provisions of AS 44.62, Article 6, a scheduled meeting of the Board of Public Accountancy was held August 16, 2024.

**Friday, August 16, 2024**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Rachel Hanks, at 9:14 a.m. Those present, constituting a quorum of the Board were:

Mark Diehl, CPA  
Rachel Hanks, CPA  
Beth Stuart, CPA  
Steven Jordan, CPA

Present from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing, were:

Cori Hondolero, Executive Administrator  
Jennifer Summers, Senior Investigator (agenda item #6)  
Marilyn Zimmerman, Paralegal 2 (agenda item #6)  
Amy Kennedy, Paralegal 2 (agenda item #6)  
Sylvan Robb, Division Director (agenda item #11)  
Alison Osborne, Regulations Specialist II (agenda item #12)

Visitors present included:

Crista Burson – Alaska Society of CPAs (AKCPA)  
John Rodgers – Alaska Society of CPAs (AKCPA)  
James Cox, AICPA  
Tyian Scarlett  
Jacob Dutton, CPA  
David Tise, CPA

**Agenda Item 1 – Review Agenda**

The Board reviewed the agenda and made no changes.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan, seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the agenda as written.**

**Agenda Item 2 – Ethics Report**

The Board noted for the record that the following Board members and staff attended a NASBA Board of Directors dinner on July 17, 2024:

Rachel Hanks, Beth Stuart, Steven Jordan and Cori Hondolero. The Board members did not sit together during the dinner and the value of the meal does not require a formal gift disclosure.

**Agenda Item 3 – Review Meeting Minutes**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the last meetings.

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the April 25-26, 2024 and June 11, 2024 meetings as written.**

**Agenda Item 4 - Alaska Society of Certified  
Public Accountants (ASCPA)**

Mr. Rodgers provided the following update on State Society activities:

1. Alaska Society of CPAs Board of Directors meets on August 26th.
2. Bi-weekly Tax Round Table Meetings virtual – next meeting is Tuesday, August 20th at noon.
3. AICPA Fall Council and Leadership Conference is October 21st – 24th, 2024 in Atlanta, GA.
4. 2025 Annual Meeting is Wednesday, May 28th – Friday, May 30th at the Windsong Lodge in Seward.
5. CPE Season – Ongoing live webcast classes and in-person classes in Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks August 26th – 30th, and in September and December. November 6th partnering with Hawaii Society of CPAs and K2 to offer the third annual 1-day virtual technology conference.

6. 2025 Leadership Academy – Applications for the 6th AKCPA Leadership Academy are being accepted until December 31st. Applications available on the AKCPA website or contact Crista Burson for more information.

7. Scholarships – Applications are being accepted through November 20th for Paul Hagelbarger Memorial Scholarship Fund. The primary objective of the Fund is to provide financial support to promote accounting education for the practice of public accounting in the State of Alaska. The awarding of scholarships is based on the scholastic achievement, the student's intent to pursue a career in public accounting in Alaska and financial need. The scholarships are open to all junior, senior, and graduate students who major in accounting and attend a four-year institution in the State of Alaska. Although the size of the scholarships can vary, the minimum award has been set at \$2,000. Applications available on the AKCPA website or contact Crista Burson for more information.

8. National Pipeline Advisory Group (NPAG) – Their final report was released. AICPA and NASBA Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) Committee is developing model legislative language that if enacted by all states will add flexibility without compromising rigor while preserving mobility.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Public Comment**

There was no one present that made a request to address the Board.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Investigative Report**

Senior Investigator Summers joined the meeting and provided a summary of the investigative report in the packet. Investigator Summers noted that Investigator Bundick no longer works for the Division and if members have any outstanding cases, they can send them to her.

The current report covered the period April 13, 2024 to August 2, 2024.

- 77 open cases
- 17 closed cases

The Board had asked a question at the previous meeting regarding if more than one member reviews a case, but they have differing opinions, what is the protocol supposed to be. Investigator Summers stated that there are procedures for this; if reviewing members have different answers/opinions, they should be put together to discuss.

There was also a question about if the Board rejects an imposition of civil fine (ICF). If the Board rejects an ICF, the matter goes back to investigations; they are proposed until adopted by the Board.

Clarification was also provided for how review and motions need to take place regarding the reviewing Board members (RBM) participation. The RBM must leave the room during executive session, and they should recuse themselves from voting on the matter. It was noted that the Board can't recuse themselves out of a quorum.

Mr. Jordan wanted to discuss ICF fines for practice while lapsed. Should there be varying fine amounts based on the length of lapse. Investigator Summers noted that other Boards have samples in their matrixes that address this. Investigator Summers indicated that she would provide samples.

Ms. Hanks is continuing to work on the matrix and will contact Investigator Summers with questions. An updated draft will be ready for review at the November meeting.

The Board thanked the investigator Summers for the report that was presented.

The Board had two ICF documents to review at the meeting.

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Stuart seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the Imposition of Civil Fine (ICF) documents as presented for case #2024-000169 and case #2024-000176.**

Division paralegals Marilyn Zimmerman and Amy Kennedy joined the meeting to review a hardship waiver request and multiple consent agreements with the Board. It was noted that the Board would need to move in and out of executive session a few times due to cases having different reviewing Board members.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Jordan, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to enter into executive session for the purpose of reviewing investigative matters.**

The Board entered executive session at 9:47 a.m.  
The Board went back on the record at 10:24 a.m.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Ms. Stuart, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to remove the reprimand from the proposed license action for case #2024-000411 due to hardship.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Diehl seconded by Ms. Stuart, and approved by a quorum, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the consent agreement as presented for case #2022-000589.**

**\*Mr. Jordan abstained from voting on this matter.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan, seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing case #2024-000413.**

Ms. Hanks left the room during executive session.  
The Board entered executive session at 10:33 a.m.  
The Board went back on the record at 10:37 a.m.

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Stuart seconded by Mr. Jordan, and approved by a quorum, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the consent agreement as presented for case #2024-000413.**

**\*Ms. Hanks abstained from voting on this matter.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Jordan, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to enter into executive session for the purpose of reviewing investigative matters.**

The Board entered executive session at 10:39 a.m.  
The Board went back on the record at 10:57 a.m.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Diehl seconded by Ms. Stuart, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the consent agreements as presented for cases #2024-000370, #2024-000377, #2024-000381, #2024-000383, #2024-000392, #2024-000494, #2024-000498, #2024-000502, #2024-000504, #2024-000514 and #2024-000515.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Stuart seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the consent agreements as presented for cases #2024-000382, #2024-000385 and #2024-000386.**

### **Agenda Item 8 – Pipeline Discussion**

James Cox, Associate Director – State Regulatory & Legislative Affairs with AICPA joined the meeting to discuss current pipeline issues.

The recently released National Pipeline Advisory Group (NPAG) report was included in the packet. The report reviewed substantial equivalency and mobility, time/cost of education, 90-hour bachelor's degrees and what that does to licensure. It was noted that support is needed for the CPA exam; time to study and assistance paying for the exam. Starting salaries were reviewed; industry needs to be able to attract and retain people in the profession.

What comes next – prioritization and implementation. Discussion about a competency-based framework; 120 semester hours for a bachelor's degree, 1 year competency-based experience and 1 year of work experience. The Uniform Accountancy Act (UAA) model language might be updated to reflect this model.

There are potential mobility and substantial equivalency issues as requirements change in individual jurisdictions. Eleven states are already initiating updates. California, Washington and Oregon are likely to move to bachelor's degree (120) + 2 years of experience. Four states have automatic mobility and more may be moving towards universal mobility.

It was noted that reciprocity and mobility need to be separate. Some jurisdictions may update their licensing language to say bachelor's degree but will not list the required number of semester hours.

Mr. Rodgers asked if students are sitting for the exam while they are still in school. Mr. Cox stated that yes, some jurisdictions allow candidates to sit with 120 semester hours and students are taking the exam.

Mr. Jordan asked AKCPA what they thought the minimum standards for public protection is; what will uphold the public trust. Ms. Burson indicated that the AKCPA Board would be meeting to discuss all the latest information soon.

The Board thanked Mr. Cox for attending and providing the update.

### **Agenda Item 7 – CPA Exam**

The Board reviewed the exam performance data in the meeting packet and noted that TCP seems to have the highest discipline pass rate.

### **Agenda Item 9 – NASBA Updates**

#### **Meetings**

Western Regional – June 2024 –Mr. Diehl attended and provided a summary.

Annual Meeting – October 2024 – Request will be put in for Ms. Hanks and Ms. Hondolero to attend.

ED Conference – Spring 2025 – Request will be put in for Ms. Hondolero to attend.

### Committees

Ms. Hanks – Communications Committee – committee meets via Zoom on a monthly basis. The committee is trying to get share with more Boards the services that are offered by NASBA. NASBA can offer free assistance with newsletters, CPE audit services do have a cost, but the system offers licensees an option to upload documents.

### **Agenda Item 11 – Board Business**

#### SCRA – Military Licensure

Division Director, Sylvan Robb joined the meeting to discuss SCRA with the Board. A handout was included in the packet. Essentially if the applicant submits the required documents as outlined in the flyer, the license must be issued. The applications must still be reviewed by the Board but will be screened by Division prior to being presented.

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Stuart seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve Chelsea Dastrup for licensure under SCRA.**

Mr. Diehl asked if the Board had discretion/spending authority. Director Robb stated that no, the Division is not split out like that. While revenue/expenditures are tracked for each program, spending authority is authorized for the Division as a whole.

#### ED Report

Board vacancies – Three vacancies – 2 public members and one CPA.

Division staffing – Ms. Hondolero is assisting with other programs; time worked on other programs is charged accordingly.

#### Miscellaneous –

- No new exam release dates were posted before the meeting.
- Are there fewer out of country, AK candidates testing for the CPA exam? Likely no change; CPAES still processes all exam applications.
- Data was provided to the Board to show licensing data for the past couple fiscal years.
- What happens if an AK exam candidate does not qualify for licensure in AK? The candidate would need to research other jurisdictions to see where they might qualify.

- How is the criminal history check requirement working? There have been no complaints and applicants are providing the required checks as part of the application process.
- Impacts of 12 AAC 04.151 – the Board will need to review the applications and written explanations provided to determine if the requirements have been met.

### **Agenda Item 12 – Statute/Regulation Projects**

Ms. Osborne, Regulations Specialist 2 was present to review areas for potential updates with the Board.

A copy of the statutes/regulations with areas marked for review was included in the meeting packet. The Board determined that they would focus on the regulations at this meeting and would set up an additional work session meeting to review the statutes for potential update.

12 AAC 04.151 - clarity needed for this section, so licenses who have held a license previously, but let that license lapse can still apply for licensure. Reference to temporary licensure also listed in this section but may not be necessary.

12 AAC 04.160 – Board requests repeal of this section; criminal history checks are now required.

12 AAC 04.165 – Board would like to remove the requirement for experience and education to be verified if the applicant has been licensed for at least two years. Add language like what is listed in 12 AAC 04.175 (2).

12 AAC 04.175 – remove reference requirement (section (E)).

12 AAC 04.189 – add reference to AK needing to be the state of residence/principal place of business. The Board requested transitional language be added to provide time for those who are outside of Alaska to obtain licensure elsewhere. The 2025 renewal should be the last time they can renew.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Ms. Stuart, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to open a regulations project to amend 12 AAC 04.151, 12 AAC 04.160, 12 AAC 04.165, 12 AAC 04.175 and 12 AAC 04.189.**

Mr. Jordan will be the primary Board member contact for regulation changes.  
Ms. Stuart will be the primary Board member contact for legislation changes.

The Board thanked Ms. Osborne for joining the meeting.



**Agenda Item 10 – Correspondence**

The Board reviewed the correspondence in the meeting packet and noted that none of the items required response.

**Agenda Item 13 – Application Review**

The Board started application review.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Jordan, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to enter into executive session for the purpose of reviewing applications.**

The Board entered executive session at 3:29 p.m.

The Board went back on the record at 4:30 p.m.

The Board took the following action on the applications that had been reviewed.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve Mimi Fitzgerald’s exam score reinstatement; FAR score extended 6 months, all sections should reflect as passed.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to deny the score reinstatement request from Tyian Scarlett; request is outside the length of time for extensions previously granted during covid.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve Stacey Trola’s exam score reinstatement; FAR score extended to 1/1/24, all sections should reflect as passed.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously by the members present, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve Isaac Light and Andrea Rhyner for licensure by exam.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to deny Sushant Eriwal's application for licensure by exam; applicant does not meet the principal place of business/residence requirements of AS 08.04.360, 12 ACC 04.151 and 12 AAC 04.175.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to deny Matthew Ward's application for licensure by exam; applicant does not meet the principal place of business/residence requirements of AS 08.04.360, 12 ACC 04.151 and 12 AAC 04.175.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to deny Sadok Yaich's application for licensure by exam; applicant does not meet the principal place of business/residence requirements of AS 08.04.360, 12 ACC 04.151 and 12 AAC 04.175.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the firm licenses of Abdo LLP, Jennifer L. Dorff, CPA LCC, Vicinity Financial Group LLC and Weaver and Tidwell LLP.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Hanks seconded by Mr. Johnson, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the reinstatements of Oluseun Oyewale and Avazkhodja Usmanov to active status.**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to deny the CPE audit of Clifford James and refer his file to the paralegal for non-compliance with CPE requirements; did not have at least 20 hours in each year (2022/2023).**

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the following CPE random audits:**

- **Ronald Alban**

- Prerna Chandla
- Randy Hamilton
- Beverly Holaday-English
- Jonathan McLeish
- Michael Schmitz
- Viktor Strachuk
- Rockne Wilson
- Zhehua Xue
- Stanislav Zolotarev

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Mr. Diehl, and approved unanimously, it was:**

**RESOLVED to approve the CPE submitted by Andrea McCormack for 24 hours.**

#### **Agenda Item 14 – Administrative Business**

##### **Confirm Upcoming Meeting Dates/Locations**

- September 18, 2024 – work session mainly on statutes/regulations
- November 7-8, 2024 – Board may determine this only needs to be a one-day meeting
- February 7, 2025
- April 25, 2025

##### **Task Lists**

Rachel Hanks

- Update matrix – have ready for Board review at Nov. meeting

Cori Hondolero

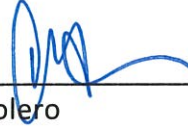
- Get information from NASBA on how they prevent jurisdiction hopping for exam candidates
- Get information regarding cost of NASBA CPE Audit services
- See if there is information available regarding what happens when a jurisdiction changes their requirements and licensees are unable to renew – Ex: SSN requirement etc.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Jordan seconded by Ms. Stuart, and approved unanimously by the members present, it was:**

**RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting.**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



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Cori Hondolero  
Executive Administrator

Approved:



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Rachel Hanks, Chair  
Alaska Board of Public Accountancy

Date: 11/7/24