

BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY

CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD *SEPTEMBER 05, 2024*

Date:	September 05, 2024
Time:	09:00 AM
Location:	Teleconference
Attending:	Board Members: Kathleen Rice (OD, Chair), Pamela Steffes (OD), Ethan Arndt (OD), Charles Rudstrom (Public Member) Division Staff: Ashley Carabajal (License Examiner), Reid Bowman (Program Coordinator)
Absent:	Sheryl Lentfer (OD)

1a. Call to Order: <u>Ethics Report</u>	
Brief Discussion:	<i>Each board member confirmed they had no ethical conflicts to disclose.</i>
1b. Call to Order: <u>Review/Approve Agenda</u>	
Brief Discussion:	<i>No discussion to amend the agenda.</i>
Motion:	<i>Motion to approve the agenda as written. (First: Dr. Steffes; Second: Dr. Arndt) The motion passed unanimously.</i>
Action Items:	<i>The board will follow the agenda as written unless amended later in the meeting.</i>
2. <u>Public Comment</u>	
Brief Discussion:	<i>Ms. Carabajal informed the board one member of the public joined the meeting regarding their continuing education exemption request being discussed.</i>
	<i>The board took time to listen to Dr. Connors' while he provided the board with more information on why he had requested a continuing education exemption to be approved to take the remainder of his continuing education hours required for renewals via online live or zoom.</i>
	<i>After Dr. Connors provided the board with more information on his request, the board continued to the next agenda item to discuss Dr. Connors' request.</i>
Action Items:	<i>The board will move to the next agenda item to discuss Dr. Connors' continuing education exemption request.</i>
3a. <u>Request for CE Exemption Discussion</u>	
Brief Discussion:	<i>The board discussed Dr. Connors' continuing education exemption request. His request was to be approved to take the remainder of his continuing education hours via online live or zoom.</i>
	<i>Dr. Rice did not approve of Dr. Connors request and stated it was because licensees are given 24 months to complete the required hours. She did not approve because it could establish a problematic precedent for anyone with a mild medical condition to request a</i>

	<p><i>similar exemption. This could lead to numerous requests and complicating the enforcements of continuing education standards. Dr. Rice explained there are many small meetings throughout the year, one being in Alaska and a lot of Alaska optometrists attend. Attending this meeting would provide an optometrist with the required continuing education hours for a two-year license period.</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Steffes believed the request should be approved because the regulations state the board has the opportunity to hear from licensees who believe they cannot for good cause meet the education requirements. In this case, the licensee presented their extenuating circumstance. Dr. Steffes stated the regulation gives the board a chance to listen to the licensees and offer them an opportunity to continue and maintain the education to allow optometrists to continue to safely practice and serve the public.</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Arndt agreed with Dr. Rice but also understands the circumstances. Dr. Arndt wondered if there was a way to allow an extension to allow the licensee more time to complete the remainder of their hours. Dr. Arndt asked to see an outline from the licensee and approved the request after reviewing.</i></p> <p><i>The board had no further comments about the continuing education exemption request.</i></p>	
Motion:	<p><i>Motion to approve Dr. Connors’ request to meet his education requirements using synchronous virtual courses in lieu of the in-person requirements. (First: Dr. Steffes; Second: Mr. Rudstrom)</i></p>	
Recorded Votes:	<i>Dr. Arndt – Approve</i>	<i>Dr. Rice – Not Approve</i>
	<i>Dr. Steffes - Approve</i>	<i>Dr. Lentfer – Absent</i>
	<i>Mr. Rudstrom - Approve</i>	
Action Items:	<p><i>Dr. Connors’ will complete the remainder of his continuing education using synchronous virtual courses in lieu of the in-person requirements. Ms. Carabajal will send an approval email to Dr. Connors after the meeting.</i></p>	
<p><u>3b. Request for CE Exemption Discussion</u></p>		
Brief Discussion:	<p><i>The board discussed Dr. Hagerman’s request for a continuing education extension. The board already unanimously approved this request via electronic voting but needed to discuss how to keep track of the extension and their continuing education.</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Hagerman’s request was to extend his continuing education deadline by 12 months to December 31, 2025.</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Rice asked how many hours he needed to complete. Ms. Carabajal stated Dr. Hagerman only needed 11 hours remaining.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Carabajal let the board know the examiners can set reminders in the license file to notify them of a certain date. She also let the board know, we can let the licensee know that if they obtain any of this continuing education after renewals (12/31/2024), those hours may not be used towards the next renewal. Ms. Carabajal mentioned if they do not submit the remaining 11 hours by the 12-month extension deadline, the licensee would be forwarded to investigations.</i></p>	

	<i>The board agrees adding a reminder to the license file and sending a reminder to the licensee to let them know they cannot use any of the remaining 11 hours completed after 12/31/2024 towards their next renewal.</i>
Action Items:	<i>Ms. Carabajal will set a reminder in Dr. Hagerman's file for his 12-month extension request that was approved. Ms. Carabajal will also send an email update to Dr. Hagerman.</i>
<u>4. Board Chair Summit</u>	
Brief Discussion:	<i>Ms. Carabajal informed the board about a Board Chair Summit put together by our Boards and Regulations Specialist, Ms. Sara Chambers. Dr. Rice already informed Ms. Chambers she was unavailable for both dates given. Dr. Arndt said they may be available and will check their schedule.</i>
Action Items:	<i>Dr. Arndt will check his schedule to see if they are available to attend Ms. Chambers Board Chair Summit in Anchorage. Ms. Carabajal will let Ms. Chambers know a member may be interested.</i>

Next Meeting:	<i>October 09, 2024</i>
Adjournment:	<i>09:32 AM</i>