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State of Alaska
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF CORPORATION, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS
Minutes of the meeting December 13, 2024

By the authority of AS 08.01.070(2) and AS 08.86.030, and in compliance with the provisions of AS 44.62, Article 6, a scheduled meeting of Professional Counselors originated from Anchorage, this meeting was held via Zoom.

The Chair brought the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

Agenda Item – Roll Call

Board Members Present Constituting a Quorum

- Dorene Hagen, Chair, Licensed Professional Counselor
- Sammie O’Neal, Licensed Professional Counselor
- Mary Elkins, Licensed Professional Counselor
- Crystal Herring, Licensed Professional Counselor

Board Members Absent

None

Staff Members Present

- Jeanne Pace, Program Coordinator I
- Miriam Honea, Licensing Examiner III
- Marlo Adams, Licensing Examiner III
- Stefanie Davis, Regulations Specialist II
- Jasmin Bautista, Investigator III
- Melissa Dumas, Administrative Operations Manager

Board Members Absent

None

Agenda Item - Introduction of New Board Member

Crystal Herring is the new member of the Board of Professional Counselors.

Agenda Item - Ethics Disclosure

No potential ethics conflicts to disclose.

43 **In a motion duly made by Mary Elkins, seconded by Sammie O’Neal with unanimous consent,**
 44 **it was resolved to approve the December 13, 2024, agenda.**

Board Member	Approve	Deny	Recuse	Absent
Dori Hagen, Chair	X			
Sammie O’Neal	X			
Mary Elkins	X			
Crystal Herring	X			

45
 46 **Agenda Item – Public Comment**

47 Jeanne Brady - Jeanne is a licensed professional counselor in Alaska. Jeanne expressed concern
 48 about current regulations pertaining to pre-licensed individuals and supervision. The concern is
 49 safety to the public. The board chair requested Jeanne to send this information to the division so the
 50 board can take a closer look.

51
 52 Kelly Brooks - Kelly hopes to become a licensed professional counselor. Kelly thanked the board,
 53 and stated she is attending the meeting to listen and learn more.

54 Jimmy Ward – Jimmy Ward applied to become a professional counselor in the past. At the time his
 55 application was approved pending 9 additional graduate semester hours. He is seeking
 56 reconsideration of his application with the new statute changes.

57 Eliza Muse – Eliza is here with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to listen to the meeting.

58 **Agenda Item – Division Update**

59 Melissa Dumas, operations manager for the division, shared the financial report for fiscal year 2024
 60 4th quarter. The professional counseling program ended the fiscal year with a deficit.

61
 62 **Agenda Item – Regulations Update**

63 The regulations update was given by Stefanie Davis, Regulations Specialist. The regulation draft for
 64 the associate license in being reviewed by the Department of Law – no further update.

65 The Regulation Project to delegate the authority to the division that was opened at the last board
 66 meeting (September 2024) was reviewed by the Department of law. The recommendation from the
 67 department of law is to withdraw the project and instead do a motion during this board meeting.

68 The reasoning is that the delegation of authority to the division is already in Statutes and starting a
 69 new project would be redundant. Furthermore, it might limit the authority of the board. All board
 70 members agreed, and both motions were made.

71
 72 **In a motion duly made by Mary Elkins, seconded by Sammie O’Neal with unanimous consent,**
 73 **it was resolved to withdraw project 2024200417 delegate authority to the department.**

Board Member	Approve	Deny	Recuse	Absent
Dori Hagen, Chair	X			
Sammie O’Neal	X			
Mary Elkins	X			
Crystal Herring	X			

75 In a motion duly made by Crystal Herring, seconded by Mary Elkins with unanimous consent,
 76 it was resolved to give authority to the department if an applicant for a license or certification
 77 under AS 08.29.020(a)(1) meets all applicable requirements and the board is unable to act due
 78 to lack of quorum, the board automatically delegates the decision to approve the license or
 79 certification to the department. The board does not authorize the department to deny a
 80 license application or take any disciplinary action on a license.

Board Member	Approve	Deny	Recuse	Absent
Dori Hagen, Chair	X			
Sammie O’Neal	X			
Mary Elkins	X			
Crystal Herring	X			

81
 82 Off record at 10:08 am
 83 On record at 10:16 am
 84

85 **Agenda Item – Investigative Report**

86 Jasmin Bautista, investigator gave the investigation report for the period of September 5, 2024,
 87 through December 3, 2024. There are 22 open cases. This includes continuing education cases.
 88 There are 4 closed cases.
 89

90 **Agenda Item - Investigative Training**

91 Jasmin Baustista presented case review training for new board members.
 92

93 Off record at 12:02 pm
 94 On record at 1:02 pm
 95

96 **Agenda Item - Application Review**

97 The deadline for applications in Onboard is December 27th at noon. The board decided to vote on
 98 applications in Onboard rather than reviewing applications during the meeting. There are 8
 99 applications for review in Onboard.
 100

101 **Agenda Item - Conference Report- out**

102 Mary Elkins, board member, attended the Clear conference in September. Regulatory excellence
 103 was the premise of the conference. Mary shared key take aways for each session she attended.
 104

105 **Agenda Item - Administrative Update**

106 **A. Old Business –**

107 There was no old business to discuss.

108 **B. New Business –**

109 There was no new business to discuss.
 110
 111
 112

113 **C. Customer Correspondence –**

114 The board reviewed an email from a customer encouraging the board to consider joining the
115 counseling compact. The email initiated a discussion between the board members about the
116 boards stand on the counseling compact.

117 The board voiced concern about joining the compact. The main points of concern were the financial
118 consequences for the Board of Professional counselors as well as the loss of control. The board of
119 Professional counselors in Alaska is self-funded. Joining the compact could significantly reduce the
120 revenue to the states counseling program. In addition, the board voiced concern regarding
121 insurance companies not paying out Alaska counselors at the Alaska rate but paying at a lower rate.
122 The board would also have to add additional board members who oversee the action of the
123 compact.

124 Besides the financial aspect that would impact the board of Professional Counselors, the board
125 also worried about the compacts ability to change regulations. The loss of independency could
126 potentially be a great as it is a very expensive and time-consuming process to change regulations
127 back.

128 The Board of Professional Counselors is not completely excluding the idea to ever join the compact,
129 but at this time, it is not an option.

130

131 **Agenda item - Board Chair Summit**

132 Dori Hagen, board chair, gave a brief report bout the board summit she joined at the beginning of
133 December.

134 She also shared that she will be stepping down as board chair and might not extend her term past
135 March 2025. The board discussed doing a nomination process during the next scheduled board
136 meeting to determine who will become the next board chair.

137 **Agenda Item - Scheduling Future Board Meetings**

138 Future board meetings were tentatively scheduled for February 21, 2025, and April 11, 2025.

139

140 **Agenda Item - Conference Schedule 2025**

141 The conference schedule for 2025 was discussed.

142

143 **Agenda Item – Adjournment**

144 **In a motion duly made by Crystal Herring, seconded by Mary Elkins with unanimous consent,**
145 **it was resolved to adjourn the December 13, 2024, meeting at 2:18 pm.**

Board Member	Approve	Deny	Recuse	Absent
Dori Hagen, Chair	X			
Sammie O’Neal	X			
Mary Elkins	X			
Crystal Herring	X			

146

Date final minutes approved by the board:	January 10, 2025
<input type="checkbox"/> Board Meeting	X Onboard

147