



## **Board of Veterinary Examiners**

Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
Meeting Minutes – August 24, 2023, at 1:00PM AKDT

**These meeting minutes were approved at a meeting of the board held September 14, 2023.**

**Members Present:** Rachel Bergartt, DVM, Chair; Ciara Vollaro, DVM; Denise Albert, DVM; Hal Geiger, PhD  
**Staff Present:** Sara Chambers, DCCED Boards and Regulations Advisor; Tami Bowman, Occupational Licensing Examiner; Dawn Bundick, Investigator

### **I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. All members were present, and a quorum was established.

### **II. Mission Statement**

The board's mission statement was read into the record by the chair.

### **III. Approve Agenda**

Dr. Geiger mentioned that he would need to leave a few minutes before 4:00 p.m. The AKVMA agenda item was moved to follow public comment so he could participate, and the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

### **IV. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

All members declared they had no ethical or financial conflicts of interest.

### **V. Approval of Minutes of July Meeting**

**Dr. Geiger moved to approve the minutes of the July meeting. Dr. Vollaro seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **VI. AAVSB Presentation**

Channing Benson, Darla Wright, and Amy Farmer from AAVSB presented on the State & Provincial Assessments (SPA) program, which allows AAVSB to administer a state jurisprudence exam. This can be offered electronically and can be proctored, if required. There is no cost to the state, and there is a \$50 per exam cost to the applicant.

**Dr. Albert moved to affirm researching the SPA program and placing it on the October meeting agenda. Dr. Geiger seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.**

## VII. Investigative Report

Investigator Bundick presented the report of activity for the period covering May 26, 2023, through August 11, 2023. She assured the board that cases were moving forward, despite two cases having been in process since 2019. These may be delayed due to lack of investigator resources, attorney intervention, and other activities happening in the background. She invited board members to attend the online investigative training happening August 30.

Dr. Albert requested the board discuss proposing a regulation instituting a two-year statute of limitations on compliants, as well as augmenting the board's regulations on licensee maintenance of medical records. Investigator Bundick provided some examples of concerns she has experienced when investigating veterinary complaints. She asked that this topic be placed on the October agenda. The board agreed this would be a good idea.

## VIII. Board Correspondence

The board reviewed a written question from a member of the public asking what standards are required to terminate a veterinary-client-patient relationship. The board reviewed its statutes and regulations and determined the answer was straightforwardly answered in 12 AAC 68.215(c) which allows termination without any stipulation. Dr. Albert stated it was a business practice and billing concerns are not within the purview of the board. The board discussed and agreed, stating that disagreements over billing that could not be worked out informally could be pursued in civil/small claims court, through the Department of Law's Consumer Protection Unit, Better Business Bureau, and other venues. Ms. Bowman was asked to draft a response and send to Chair Bergartt or the board for review.

## IX. Public Comment

No member of the public wished to provide comment to the board.

## X. AKVMA agenda

The Alaska Veterinary Medical Association (AKVMA) submitted their October 2023 Symposium agenda to the board for approval as a continuing education provider. Dr. Bergartt mentioned she is a speaker and was unsure whether she should vote.

**Dr. Geiger moved to allow Dr. Bergartt to participate in the vote on the AKVMA agenda since there was no apparent conflict of interest. Dr. Vollaro seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.**

The board discussed the merits of the agenda.

**Dr. Geiger moved to approve the 2023 AKVMA Symposium as a qualified continuing education provider. Dr. Albert seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.**

## **XI. Regulations Proposals**

Regulations specialist Alison Osborne walked through the regulations proposed to recognize the addition of PAVE to statute, removal of PDMP requirements from statute, change the approval process for the state exams, and update supervisory requirements.

**Dr. Geiger moved to approve the regulations for public notice.** Dr. Vollaro seconded. Dr. Albert stated that she felt these were thorough and was ready to vote. Vollaro agreed. Dr. Geiger agreed with Dr. Vollaro that no oral hearing was necessary since these were reasonably administrative and had been well-vetted. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

## **XII. Review VCPR FAQ Draft**

The board reviewed the proposed advice from AAG Burley and determined they needed more time than was available today.

**Dr. Albert moved to table the discussion to a date to be determined later in the meeting.** Dr. Vollaro seconded. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Ms. Chambers asked for board members to provide all comments, questions, and concerns so she could post them to OnBoard for members to review in advance of the next discussion.

The board took a comfort break at 3:00 p.m. and went back on the record at 3:07 p.m.

## **XIII. Exam Review**

**In accordance with the provisions of Alaska Statute 44.62.310 (c), Dr. Albert moved to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential, with board staff to remain during session.** Dr. Geiger seconded. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

In executive session at 3:09 p.m.

Back on record at 3:45 p.m.

**Dr. Albert moved to respectfully retire the handbook.** Dr. Vollaro seconded. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

The board requested continuation of the exam review be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **XIV. New Business**

The board set a meeting date for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 14, with a goal to conclude by noon. The focus of this meeting will be to discuss the draft VCPR FAQ and the state exam.

Dr. Geiger and Ms. Chambers left the meeting at 3:55 p.m.; a quorum was maintained.

Ms. Bowman provided her licensing report:

<b>Licenses Issued:</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>7/1/23 to Date</b>	<b>In Process</b>
Veterinarians	31	7	14
Vet Technicians	14	2	26
Courtesy	53	2	0
Student Permits	21	6	5
Temporary Permits	5	1	0
Temporary Licenses	1	0	2

Ms. Bowman confirmed that Dr. Albert and Dr. Vollaro had been approved by the division to attend the AAVSB annual conference in Kansas City in September. The division also approved travel and hotel expenses for Dr. Denise Albert to attend the October board meeting in Anchorage, as well as travel and hotel expenses for Dr. Bergartt to attend the October Board meeting and serve as the board's delegate to the AKVMA Symposium. After reviewing the relevant documentation with the division director, Dr. Geiger will attend the AAVSB RACE Committee meeting as an individual and not on behalf of the state of Alaska.

Ms. Bowman reported that the continuing education audit is almost complete, with only seven nonresponsive licensees. There will likely be related action on the agenda for the October board meeting. She also stated that she is in the process of cleaning up the program documentation for the licensing program; as the division is anticipating a handoff to new full-time staff this winter, she anticipated the clean-up project will be nearly completed by the end of September. Lastly, she alerted the board that there were three new applications posted on OnBoard that day.

The board discussed the merits of several forms updates.

Dr. Albert asked about the board's termination date of June 30, 2025, per AS 08.03.010. Dr. Bergartt explained the legislative sunset audit process that will begin in 2024 and legislation that will be initiated in 2025.

Seeing there was no more business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m.