

The open session meeting of the Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers and Speech-Language Pathologists was held on January 16, 2020, in Room 110 of the MDH Metro Executive Building, 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland. The Open Session Board meeting came to order at 4:13 p.m. Present for the quorum were Dr. Stacey Samuels Cole, Mr. John Cummins, Ms. Jillian DeLuca, Dr. Tinita Kearney, Dr. Jennifer Mertes, Dr. Tam Nhu Nguyen (via conference call), Dr. Carrie Nieman, Mr. John Rouse (via conference call), Mr. George Sheckells, Ms. Carolyn Stine and Ms. Ellen Stein.

**Staff Present**

Candace G. Robinson, Executive Director  
Deborah Donohue, AAG, Interim Board Counsel  
Zoann Mouzone, Administrative Specialist III  
David Bruce, Investigator

**Absent Members**

Mr. Kim Keller

**Absent Staff**

Monica Wright, Office Secretary III

**Visitors**

None

**Agenda Review and Approval for January, 2020**

Mr. Cummins made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The Board vote to approve the agenda as written was unanimous.

**Minutes Review and Approval for October, 2019**

Dr. Kearney made a motion to approve the minutes with amendments. Mr. Cummins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Regulatory Review**

**Senate Bill 67 (SB 67), January 8, 2020 - Public Information Act – position.**

Dr. Robinson informed the Board that SB67 is in reference to the Public Information Act. At the present time an agency has thirty (30) days to produce documents to a requestor. If the bill is passed the timeframe for the agency to obtain documents for the requestor will be seven (7) days. Interim Board Counsel Donohue suggested that the Board would have a difficult time complying with the stricter time requirements in the bill, and that other Boards had the same concerns. Dr. Kearney made a motion to oppose the bill by joining with the opposition position of the Physicians Board. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The Board vote was unanimous to oppose the bill.

**Senate Bill 103 (SB 103), January 8, 2020 – Health Occupations – Diagnostic and Treatment of Patients – Disciplinary Actions (The Patient’s Access to Integrative Healthcare Act) – position**

Dr. Robinson gave a brief summary of the bill and informed the Board that other Boards have not taken a position on the bill. A discussion arose with the Board regarding the SB 103. Interim Board Counsel Donohue advised the Board of a few options with taking a position. The Board can take a position on the bill, submit a position paper on how the bill would affect the Board, or the Board could submit a letter of concern regarding the bill. Dr. Mertes suggested that Dr. Robinson inform Lillian Reese, Legislation and Regulation Coordinator, that the Board would like to submit a letter of

concern regarding the bill. Mr. Sheckells made a motion for the Board to participate in submitting a letter of concern regarding the bill. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The Board vote was unanimous to submit a letter of concern. Interim Board Counsel Donohue informed the Board that the hearing for the bill is scheduled for January 21, 2020.

**Executive Director's Report – Dr. Candace G. Robinson  
Announcement to licensees regarding Board vacancies for two Hearing Aid Dispenser (HAD)  
and one Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)**

Dr. Robinson informed the Board that Ms. DeLuca, SLP and Mr. Cummins, HAD are not available to serve a second term with the Board. Mr. Sheckells has served two terms on the Board and ineligible to be reappointed to the Board. Mr. Sheckells has agreed to serve on the Board after his term has expired until a replacement is found for the HAD position on the Board. Dr. Robinson informed the Board that the individuals ranked for the audiologist vacancy have been forwarded to the Governor's office to be vetted to serve on the Board. Additionally, Kim Bennardi, Office of Appointments informed Dr. Robinson that paperwork will not likely be reviewed by the Governor's office until February, 2020. Dr. Robinson estimated a date of the individual selected to officially be appointed to serve on the Board to be March, 2020.

**CEU Approval for Courses for Hearing Aid Dispensers (HAD)**

Dr. Robinson thanked the SLP Board members for reviewing the many SLP CE Applications. She also asked Mr. John Cummins and Mr. George Sheckells for CEU approval of the Beltone Master's Academy 2020. Both Mr. Cummins and Mr. Sheckells asked that a true certificate or proof of approval from IHS and/or AAA and/or ASHA be provided to Dr. Robinson, in order to approve the course for CEUs.

**House Bill 486 (HB 486), Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) – June 20,2019**

Dr. Robinson informed the Board that HB486 became effective in June, 2019. A speech-language pathology licensee inquired about the need to do anything regarding the bill while providing services in a school system. Dr. Robinson advised the licensee that per COMAR 10.41.02.02, (F) our Code of Ethics addresses sexual misconduct as a violation of such and further, per COMAR 10.41.04, (J), a licensee is required to inform the Board if they have reason to believe that another licensee has violated the Code of Ethics, which would include sexual misconduct. Dr. Mertes suggested putting information on the website regarding the bill should one wish to access the specifics of it.

**Audiology Speech-Language-Hearing Interstate Compact Conference Update from Dr. Tinita Kearney**

Dr. Kearney gave the Board a brief summary of the conference and informed the Board that the Compact has been approved, but will not go into effect until a total of ten (10) approved states have joined. Dr. Kearney informed the Board that the governing body is the commission that created the Compact. Any disciplinary actions will remove the licensee from the agreement. Interim Board Counsel Donohue informed the Board that the State would have to create regulations for the Compact Agreement if the Board joined the Compact Agreement. Dr. Kearney answered questions from the Board regarding the Compact. Dr. Kearney forwarded the information from the Compact Agreement Conference to Dr. Robinson and she uploaded it in to the Legislation Committee folder of the shared Drive.

**Continuing Education Credit Audits for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists**

Dr. Robinson informed the Board that audit notices have been mailed and that the Board will be

reviewing some of the applications for continuing education credit extension requests at this meeting.

**Treasurer's Report - Dr. Candace Robinson**

Dr. Robinson reported that the Board currently has a balance of \$273,812.71 as of the end of December, 2019.

**Chair Report- Dr. Jennifer Mertes**  
**Position Update for Office Staff Recruitment**

Dr. Mertes informed the Board that the position recruitment closes within the next week and that Dr. Robinson will be the Interview Chair and suggested that there should be an odd number of individuals on the interview panel. Dr. Mertes suggested that Board members who are interested in sitting on the panel should inform Dr. Robinson of their interest.

**Board & Commissions Chairs Meeting with Secretary Neall 1/6/19**

Dr. Mertes informed the Board of the Maryland Department of Health updates with Secretary Neall which were:

- The total cost of healthcare and looking at improved access to be equal access across the State.
- Quality care training for primary care physicians with new procedures and protocols.
- To continue ensuring that funds are effectively spent to make sure the care is equal.
- Being open to how the Department of Health can assist the Board to run efficiently.
- Diabetes healthcare and working with schools regarding healthy eating habits.
- The legislation session and how a position for a bill can easily be dropped during the session per Webster Ye, Director of Governmental Affairs.

**National Council of State Boards (NCSB)**

Dr. Mertes informed the Board that NCSB is a non-profit organization which helps to address topics of concern to licensing boards and engages in discussion with board administrators regarding relevant topics pertaining to the regulation of the professions of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Further, they have a listserv which serves as a forum for boards and they maintain a database of state boards, which is provided as part of membership in NCSB. Dr. Mertes inquired if the Board would like to join. The Board agreed to join to NCSB for a year. Dr. Robinson will work with Ms. Mouzone to process the Board membership.

**Correspondence & F.Y.I**

None

**Next Board Meeting – February 20, 2020**

**Adjournment**

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Mr. Sheckells made a motion to adjourn the open session of the Board meeting. Ms. Ellen Stein seconded the motion. The Board vote to adjourn was unanimous. The open session meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mertes, Au.D.  
Chair