

THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
MINUTES
Friday, January 25, 2013

The Virginia Board of Social Work ("Board") meeting convened at 10:12 a.m. on Friday, January 25, 2013 at the Department of Health Professions, 9960 Mayland Drive, Richmond, Virginia. Susan Horne-Quatannens, Chair called the meeting to order.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Blosser
Yvonne Haynes
Susan Horne-Quatannens, Chair
Arthur Mayer
Catherine Moore
Nettie Simon-Owens
Joseph Walsh
Bernadette Winters
Kristi Wooten

STAFF PRESENT: Howard Casway, Senior Assistant Attorney General
Catherine Chappell, Executive Director
Sarah Georgen – Administrative and Office Specialist
Charlotte Lenart, Administrative Assistant
Arne Owens, DHP Deputy Director
Elaine Yeatts, Senior Policy Analyst

ORDERING OF AGENDA

Ms. Chappell requested that the agenda be amended to delete the Discipline Deputy Executive Director's Report. An update on disciplinary activity would be included in the Board Staff Update.

Ms. Chappell suggested that discussion continue under Old Business regarding the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to plan an Educational Summit for graduate education programs in Virginia as well as in neighboring jurisdictions.

The Agenda was accepted as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. James Hinterlong, Dean of the School of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University, thanked Board staff for their ongoing efforts to communicate with the community and educational institutions regarding social work licensure. He expressed gratitude for Catherine Chappell's efforts in meeting with VCU students last fall regarding the licensure process for clinical social workers.

Dr. Hinterlong stated that VCU looked forward to being involved with the proposed Ad Hoc meeting and Educational Summit, which he felt would allow open dialogue about the educational requirements for licensure. He suggested that the Board invite the Council of Social Work Education ("CSWE") to

attend the meeting because they could provide helpful information regarding the accreditation standards and competencies for educational programs.

He asked the Board to consider a grandfathering provision to applicants who do not meet the current educational requirements. Ms. Horne-Quatannens responded that the Board had considered similar requests for grandfathering in the past and decided not to implement such a provision because ample time was provided during promulgation of regulations for students to obtain the required coursework needed for licensure.

Debra Riggs, Executive Director of the NASW, Virginia Chapter expressed the Chapter's concerns about the social work workforce in Virginia and she asked the Board to reconsider its educational requirements relating to hourly credits, doctorate degrees, explanatory theory requirements, and identification of a clinical degree. Ms. Riggs read a letter from NASW-VA which reiterated her concerns regarding educational requirements.

Rick Goodling, LCSW presented a letter on behalf of the Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work ("GWSCSW") which expressed the organization's support of the Board's current educational requirements and efforts to establish an Ad Hoc committee to review the "clinical course of study" requirements.

Joseph Lynch, LCSW spoke on behalf of the Virginia Society for Clinical Social Work ("VSCSW") and offered their support to the Virginia Board of Social Work in establishing an Ad Hoc meeting and educational summit to discuss the current educational requirements.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 30, 2012 Board Meeting

Dr. Walsh requested that the meeting minutes be amended to reflect that he was present at the November 30, 2012 Board meeting and to remove Patricia Smith-Solan's name from those in attendance.

Dr. Simon-Owens noted that the word "preventive" needed to be changed to "preventative" in the New Business section of the meeting minutes.

Ms. Chappell requested that the Credentials Committee Report be changed to reflect that Ms. Moore reported that Ms. Jennifer Blosser had been asked by the Board Chair and agreed to serve as the chair for the Credentials Committee for the coming year.

Dr. Simon-Owens moved that the minutes of the November 30, 2012 Board meeting be approved as amended. The motion was seconded by Dr. Walsh and passed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Arne Owens

Mr. Owens reported that the on-going activities at the General Assembly were the priority for the Agency in February. Mr. Owens stated that the Director's office was focused on the coming year and looking forward to each Board's success.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Catherine Chappell

Ms. Chappell recognized the Board members for their support and attendance at the quarterly meeting. She reminded members of the need to establish a quorum of at least five members at full board meetings in order to be able to render decisions.

Financial Report. A report on the Board's finances was provided as of December 31, 2012, which showed that the cash balance continued in a shortfall. The cash shortfall is a consistent trend every 18 months into a renewal cycle. The Board has proposed a fee increase and change in renewal cycle but those changes are still in proposed form. The other behavioral sciences boards use an annual licensure renewal period while the Board of Social Work continues to use a biennial renewal period. Renewal notices are anticipated to be mailed to licensees in early May, which should bring the cash flow to a positive level for another 18 months.

Staffing Issues. Ms. Chappell announced that recruitment had begun for the Licensing Deputy position, which was a mission critical position for the behavioral sciences boards. Ms. Chappell advised that the Discipline Deputy would be out of the office for a few weeks and that disciplinary cases and credentials appeals would be handled by another behavioral sciences staff member with a paralegal background, until her return.

Outreach Activities. She announced that staff continues to seek opportunities to reach out to the stakeholders of the three behavioral sciences boards. With respect to Social Work, a videoteleconference presentation was planned with Catholic University graduate students on February 4. Interest had also been received from students at West Virginia University, George Mason University, and Howard University in learning more about the licensure process. Interest in Virginia licensure from neighboring jurisdictions was growing because students often seek licensure in multiple jurisdictions.

Ms. Chappell announced that she would be participating in the NASW annual meeting in March in Williamsburg, with plans to talk with students about the application process on one day and then serve on a panel to discuss the disciplinary process at the Agency on the second day.

Board member training opportunities. Ms. Chappell announced several opportunities for board members to participate in board member training through the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) in 2013. Travel and participation for these meetings would be fully funded by the ASWB, but must be preapproved by the Secretary of Health and Human Services offices due to state travel requirements. Additionally, as a new administrator, she had been offered the opportunity to attend one of the upcoming educational meetings with full funding.

BOARD STAFF UPDATE – Sarah Georgen

Staffing Update. Ms. Georgen reported that board staff continued to work as efficiently as possible to administratively review applications, process calls and emails, and provide written responses from the Credentials Reviewers regarding recommended decisions. With the current two-person staff, the volume of applications received by the Board continued to be challenging. The volume of applications received in the past year increased by 22%.

Ms. Georgen stated that board staff had approximately 100 applications in queue to be evaluated by the Credentials Reviewers, and about 225 applications were considered “administratively pending” which were awaiting additional documentation required by applicants. She noted that the Credentials Reviewers evaluated files at least three times per month.

She stated that in 2012, the Credentials Reviewers approved almost twice as many applications than deferred. Specifically, the board had approved 488 applications for supervision and licensure and deferred 284 applications due to incomplete information, supervision deficiencies, and/or coursework concerns. Since the last board meeting in November, seventy-one (71) applications had been approved, while forty-four (44) applications have been deferred.

In addition to the applications, Board staff received approximately 475 calls, on average, per month, which was approximately 40% more than the previous year. Board staff also responded to approximately 500 emails per month, which was a 55% increase from the previous time period.

Ms. Georgen recognized Charlotte Lenart for her continuous dedication and excellent customer service skills. Ms. Georgen noted that she had received several compliments about Ms. Lenart’s patience and ability to assist callers with their specific questions.

Licensing Activity. Ms. Georgen reported that although the volume continued to increase, the Board had licensed 25% more LSWs and LCSWs in 2012 compared to 2011. To date, the Board was responsible for 6,103 licensees. Board staff received 988 new applications and registration requests, and licensed 387 new licenses in 2012.

Online Applications. As of November 27, 2012, the Board of Social Work has offered Registration of Supervision, Application for LCSW by Examination and Application for LCSW by Endorsement as online applications. There have been 131 online applications received to date. This process will allow applicants to view the status of their application via an online checklist and should reduce the need to call or email the Board office for an update.

Disciplinary Report. Ms. Georgen stated that since the last meeting, the Board had received nine (9) new disciplinary cases and closed four (4) old cases.

At the present time, there were twenty-nine (29) open, active cases for the Board of Social Work. Currently, fourteen (14) cases were being investigated by the Enforcement Division, twelve (12) cases were at Board level to be reviewed for probable cause, one case is to be scheduled for an informal conference, and one case was currently at the Administrative Proceedings Division level.

Additionally, she noted that there were six (6) credential informal conferences scheduled for March 1, 2013, and there is one credential case to be schedule for a formal conference.

REGULATORY/LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Elaine Yeatts

Ms. Yeatts stated that two sets of proposed regulations for the Board were awaiting approval: proposed regulations to provide for a fee increase and change in renewal cycle were at the Secretary’s office; and proposed regulations to clarify licensure requirements were at the Governor’s office.

She stated that the licensure requirements that were currently in the final stage at the Governor's Office appear to be beneficial to those applying for licensure by endorsement.

Ms. Yeatts presented a list of General Assembly bills that could impact the Behavioral Sciences Unit, specifically the Board of Social Work and the Board of Counseling. Ms. Yeatts reviewed the current bills with the Board and specifically noted that SB 1011 was proposed to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a new section 54.1-3707.1 relating to the educational requirements for licensure as a clinical social worker.

REGULATORY COMMITTEE – Yvonne Haynes/Elaine Yeatts

Ms. Haynes asked the Board to consider regulatory changes, as proposed by the Regulatory Committee, in conjunction with the Governor's Regulatory Reform Project initiative. Ms. Haynes reported that a thorough review of the regulations had been made by the Regulatory Committee to determine whether regulations could be amended in an effort to reduce regulation. Ms. Yeatts indicated that the Board approved regulatory reform amendments would be fast tracked.

Ms. Yeatts offered a review of the contemplated sections of the Board's regulations in which the goal was to eliminate any requirement that was deemed unnecessary while ensuring that the Board licensed qualified individuals in order to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

18VAC140-20-10: Definitions. The Board reviewed proposed changes to the definitions section, which added a definition of "Ancillary services" in order to provide an understanding of what activities constitute such services, and clarified the term "Face-to-face supervision" in order to address the use of technology which provided real-time, visual contact among the individuals involved.

18VAC140-20-30: Fees. Proposed changes to remove references to a one-time fee reduction were accepted.

18VAC140-20-40: Requirements for licensure by examination as a clinical social worker. The Board considered changes to application by examination requirements in light of implementation of online applications. Additionally, Dr. Simon-Owens moved to add "or certification" after "licensure" in the last line of that section. The motion was seconded and carried.

18VAC140-20-45: Requirements for licensure by endorsement. The Board considered changes to application by endorsement requirements, in response to the implementation of online applications. Additionally, the regulations were amended to accept as active practice, social work in an exempt setting, which may not require licensure. Further, the requirement to establish a passing score on the national licensure examination was eliminated because the Board relied upon the testing body to determine what score constituted passing a particular examination.

18VAC140-20-49: Educational requirements for a licensed clinical social worker. The Board considered proposed changes to the education requirements in order to clarify a "clinical course of study." However, Dr. Simon-Owens moved to defer discussion of the educational requirements until a later

date, and requested that an Ad Hoc committee discuss educational requirements and plan for an Educational Summit. The motion was seconded and carried.

18VAC140-20-50: Experience requirements for a licensed clinical social worker. The Board considered amendments to clarify experience requirements and face-to-face client contact. Dr. Simon-Owens moved to use the term “ancillary services” rather than “ancillary duties and activities” in order to be consistent with the definitions. The motion was seconded and carried.

18VAC140-20-51: Requirements for licensure by examination as a licensed social worker. The Board considered changes to application by examination requirements in light of implementation of online applications.

18VAC140-20-60: Education and experience requirements for licensed social workers. Language relating to supervision that began before 2008 and was accepted until 2012 was eliminated as it was no longer valid or necessary.

18VAC140-20-70: Examination requirements. The section was amended to clarify the examinations prescribed by the Board for licensure as an LCSW or an LSW and to eliminate language requiring the Board to establish a passing score on the examinations. The Board relied upon ASWB to determine the passing score.

18VAC140-20-100: Licensure renewal. An outdated phrase (beginning with the 2003 renewal) was eliminated.

18VAC140-20-106: Documenting compliance with continuing education requirements. The section was amended to eliminate the documentation required to verify completion of Category II activities because the documentation of such activities was unnecessary to achieve the intent.

Ms. Haynes moved to adopt the proposed regulations as proposed by the Regulatory Committee, and as subsequently amended by the Board. The motion was seconded and carried.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE – Jennifer Blosser

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Ms. Blosser was unavailable to provide the Credentials Committee report. The report would be provided at the April 19, 2013 Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Chappell suggested that a planning meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee be scheduled in the next few months with the goal of considering the definition of “clinical course of study” and preparing for an Educational Summit. Ms. Horne-Quatannens reminded the Board that she, Dr. Winters, Dr. Walsh, Ms. Haynes, and Dr. Simon-Owens had agreed to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Susan Horne-Quatannens, Chair

Catherine Chappell, Executive Director

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