Virginia Department of
Health Professions
Board of Counseling

Virginia Board of Counseling
DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes
July 17, 2026
9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, VA 23233
Board Room 2

PRESIDING OFFICER:	Terry Tinsley, Ph.D. LPC, LMFT, CSOTP, Chairperson
BOARD MEMBERS' PRESENT:	Benjamin Allison, Citizen Member Maria Anastasiou, LMFT L. Paul Bernard, Ph.D., LPC Marlo Burdge, Citizen Member Luanne Griffin, LPC Shannon Kuschel, Ph.D., LPC Gerard Lawson, Ph.D., LPC, LSATP Charlotte Markva, LPC, LMFT, CSAC Cyrus Williams, Ph.D., LPC, LSATP
BOARD COUNSEL PRESENT:	James Rutkowski, Assistant Attorney General
BOARD STAFF PRESENT:	Maria Stransky, LPC, CSOTP, CSAC, Executive Director Jennifer Lang, Deputy Executive Director Christy Palmore, Senior Discipline and Compliance Case Specialist
DHP STAFF PRESENT:	David Brown, DC, Agency Director Matt Novak, Agency Regulatory Coordinator
CALL TO ORDER/ ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:	Dr. Tinsley called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. With 10 members present, a quorum was established.
ADOPTION OF AGENDA:	The meeting agenda was adopted as presented.
PUBLIC COMMENT:	The Board received comment from Rebecca Kaderli, LPC, LSATP, on behalf of the Virginia Counselors Association, regarding concerns with the delayed implementation of the Counseling Compact.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES:	The Board reviewed the minutes from the quarterly board meeting held on January 16, 2026. ***Motion*:** Ms. Griffin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was properly seconded and passed with a unanimous vote.
AGENCY DIRECTOR REPORT:	David Brown, DC, Agency Director, thanked the board members for their service and reminded them of their responsibility to protect the public. He emphasized that the board speaks with one voice through its regulations, guidance documents, and case decisions. Dr. Brown also provided an overview of the programs established through the $185 million awarded to Virginia under the Rural Health Transformation Program

(RHTP). In partnership with collaborating organizations, four key initiatives were developed:

- **CareIQ** will leverage technology and data-driven solutions to modernize healthcare systems, reduce administrative burden on providers, and improve patient outcomes.
- **Homegrown Health Heroes** will strengthen the rural healthcare workforce by expanding education and training opportunities and supporting the recruitment and retention of healthcare providers.
- **Connected Care, Closer to Home** will improve access to healthcare through telehealth and mobile care services while reducing avoidable emergency department visits.
- **Live Well Together** will support healthier communities by expanding prevention initiatives and increasing access to nutritious food and wellness resources.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

Dr. Tinsley thanked staff for their support during his time serving on the board, and he encouraged the board to continue their work on important professional issues, such as telehealth and AI.

BOARD COUNSEL REPORT:

Mr. Rutkowski advised that he was recently promoted to the role of section chief in the health services division of the Office of the Attorney General and once a replacement is hired, he will no longer serve as the board's direct counsel. Dr. Tinsley thanked Mr. Rutkowski for his support to the board.

LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY REPORTS:

Legislative and Regulatory Updates:
Mr. Novak provided updates on pending regulatory actions as well as legislation passed by the 2026 General Assembly.

Adoption of proposed stage regulatory action – conversion therapy
Mr. Novak reminded board members that regulatory action was previously initiated to remove redundant references to conversion therapy from the regulations, because it is now addressed in §54.1-2409.5 of the Code of Virginia.

> ***Motion:*** Dr. Lester made a motion to adopt the proposed stage action as presented. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Adoption of NOIRA for periodic reviews of Chapters 20, 50, and 60
Mr. Novak provided recommendations from the Regulatory Committee regarding the ongoing periodic review of Chapters 20, 50, and 60.

> ***Motion:*** Dr. Lawson made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Regulatory Committee and adopt a NOIRA for periodic reviews of Chapters 20, 50, and 60. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Petition for Rulemaking (Branner)
Mr. Novak presented the petition from Arthur Branner, II, requesting allowance of some experience as a QMHP to count towards LPC licensure requirements. The

board considered the petition, public comments, and the recommendation of the Regulatory Committee.

> ***Recommendation*****:** Deny the petition because the scopes of practice and experience between QMHPs and counseling residents are different and such a change would negatively impact public safety.
>
> ***Motion:*** Ms. Griffin made a motion to accept the recommendation from the Regulatory Committee to deny the petition for rulemaking. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

<u>Petition for Rulemaking (Thomas)</u>

Mr. Novak presented the petition from Linda Thomas, requesting that CSAC experience in another jurisdiction meet the requirements to be a CSAC supervisor in Virginia. The board considered the petition, public comments, and the recommendation of the Regulatory Committee.

> ***Recommendation:*** Deny the petition because there is too much variation in certification state by state to reliably endorse experience for supervision.
>
> ***Motion:*** Dr. Lawson made a motion to accept the recommendation from the Regulatory Committee to deny the petition for rulemaking. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Stransky reported that the Deputy Executive Director of Licensing position became vacant following Charlotte Lenart's retirement on April 30, 2026. She thanked Ms. Lenart for her dedicated service to the Board and announced that the selected candidate for the position is expected to begin in August.

Ms. Stransky also reported that a vacant Licensing Specialist position has been filled, with the selected candidate scheduled to begin employment on July 27, 2026.

Ms. Stransky expressed her appreciation to board staff for their hard work and dedication during the period of reduced staffing.

Ms. Stransky reminded board members to sign travel reimbursement forms promptly to ensure that staff has ample time to process them within the 30-day requirement.

Ms. Stransky noted that the terms of Mr. Allison and Mr. Scott expired on June 30, 2026. However, they may continue serving on the Board until they are reappointed or successors are appointed.

Ms. Stransky further noted that Dr. Tinsley's second term expired on June 30, 2026, making him ineligible for reappointment. She thanked Dr. Tinsley for his dedicated service to the Board since his initial appointment in 2011 and noted that he served in two different Board seats during his tenure, having been appointed by four Governors.

DISCIPLINE REPORT:

Ms. Lang referenced the discipline report on page 50 of the agenda packet and reported that, since January 1, 2026, the Board of Counseling has received 268 new cases and closed 200 cases, with 357 cases currently open. She further noted that the three discipline staff members are actively processing a total of 734 cases for the Boards of Counseling, Psychology, and Social Work.

Ms. Lang reported that she attended the AASCB Hangout meeting on March 27, 2026, during which it was announced that 727 Compact privileges had been issued.

LICENSING REPORT:

Ms. Stransky reported that licensing staff is processing applications as quickly as possible.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Updates to Policy Documents

The Board reviewed submissions from training programs for

- BHT/BHT-A training from Rappahannock Community College,
- QMHP/QMHP-T training from Premier Mental Health Services,
- QMHP/QMHP-T revised training from Relias, and
- Supervisor training from Northern Neck Behavioral Health

Motion: Dr. Kuschel made a motion to approve the programs as presented and amend the policy documents. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Ms. Stransky advised the Board that staff have received numerous inquiries regarding QMHP supervisor training. She stated that the topic will be added to the agenda of the next Regulatory Committee meeting for further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Counseling Regulatory Boards Annual Summit

Dr. Williams provided a report on the 2026 Counseling Regulatory Boards Summit, hosted by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE), held on June 23-25, 2026,

Election of an Alternate Compact Commissioner

Motion: Ms. Griffin made a motion to nominate Maria Stransky to serve as the Alternate Compact Commissioner. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Election of Board Officers

Motion: Dr. Lawson volunteered to fill the position of Chairperson. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Motion: Dr. Williams volunteered to fill the position of Vice-Chairperson. The motion was properly seconded and passed unanimously.

Ms. Stransky discussed the possibility of moving Board officer elections to either the last meeting of the calendar year or the first meeting of the following calendar year to allow additional time for Board member appointments to be made. She noted that proposed amendments to the Bylaws will be presented at the next Board meeting for the Board's consideration.

RECOMMENDED DECISIONS AND CONSENT ORDER:

Closed Meeting: Mr. Allison moved that the Board of Counseling convene in a closed meeting pursuant to § 2.2-3711(A)(27) of the *Code of Virginia* to consider agency subordinate recommendations in the matters of Nabila White, Michael Brown, and Shameka Harris, and a Consent Order in the matter of Richard Davis. He further moved that James Rutkowski, Maria Stransky, and Jennifer Lang attend the closed meeting because their presence was deemed necessary and would aid the board in its deliberations. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Reconvene: Mr. Allison moved to certify that, pursuant to § 2.2-3712 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Board of Counseling heard, discussed, or considered only those public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as identified in the original motion.

Cases:

Nabila White, LPC, LSATP

Ms. White did not appear at the meeting but provided a written statement for the Board's review.

Shameka Harris, CSAC

Ms. Harris did not appear at the meeting and did not provide a written statement.

> ***Motion:*** Mr. Lester made a motion to approve the recommendations of Nabila White and Shameka Harris as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Michael Brown, LPC

Mr. Brown did not appear at the meeting and did not provide a written statement.

Richard Davis, LPC

The Board considered entry of a Consent Order for reinstatement.

Motion: Dr. Lawson made a motion to approve the recommended decision of Michael Brown and the Consent Order of Richard Davis, as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING DATE: The next full Board meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT: Dr. Tinsley adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.