

**State Board of Marriage And Family Therapy Examiners
Open Session Minutes
February 19, 2004**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by President Florence A. Schatten who read the notice of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Board President Florence A. Schatten Board Member Roland A. Alum Board Member Barbra Andrews Board Member Samira Haddad Board Member Margaret Pipchick Board Member Edward Reading Board Member E. W. Stroh Board Member James Verser Board Member Ronald K. Walthall

Staff Present:

Executive Director Elaine L. DeMars Deputy Attorney General Mileidy Perez Regulatory Analyst Danielle Swenson Administrative Staff Celeste Sweeper

III. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MINUTES

On a motion by M. Pipchick, seconded by J. Verser, the minutes of December 11, 2003 were approved with corrections.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Executive Director DeMars reported to the Board that according to N.J.S.A. 45:8B-13, the election of officers for the Board of Marriage and Family Therapy Examiners is to be held in June of every year. During the December 2003 Board meeting it was noted that the election of officers would be scheduled for today's meeting. Ms. DeMars also provided information on the requirement for reporting the new slate of officers to the Office of the Attorney General. The Board agreed to return to the original schedule for elections.

V. LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY

A. Assembly Bill 1913

Board members were provided with a copy of the proposed legislation with amendments as part of the agenda package. Board member Ed Reading provided background information on the proposal and suggested that the Board should respond in a question format rather than with critical comments. In response to the request for comments, the following questions were posed by the Board.

1. Consumer Protection: How is the public better served by the transfer of the responsibilities for licensure and regulation under the jurisdiction of the Board of Medical Examiners from the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety to the Department of Health and Senior Services or another agency of State government?
2. Clarification of the intent & purpose of A- 1913 is required.
3. An explanation for the proposal for the composition of the Commission would be needed. Why and how were the organizations/associations selected to participate on Commission?

4. Why is there no representation from any of the boards that are subject to the proposed legislation?
5. What criteria will be used by the Commission to determine whether a transfer from the Division of Consumer Affairs is warranted?
6. In what manner will a transfer serve to strengthen the function and mandates of the boards?
7. What, if any, impact will a transfer have on the State budget and costs to taxpayers & licensees?

On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Roland Alum, the Board voted to transmit the above questions to the Director of Legislation.

B. Continuing Education Regulations - Letter to Licensees

Executive Director DeMars informed the Board the letter that was reviewed by the Board will be posted on the Board's web page and will be mailed to each current licensees. In order to complete the 2006 renewal form, licensees will be required to respond to a question which requires a certification of the completion of the required 40 continuing education credits. Credits may be earned immediately following the June 30, 2004 expiration date. That is, credits earned from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2006 will apply to the 40 continuing education credit requirement.

C. Sunset Regulations.

Regulatory Analyst Danielle Swenson reported that there have been no comments received on the Sunset Regulations N.J.A.C. 13: 34. On a motion made by James Verser and seconded by Margaret Pipchick, the Board voted unanimously to move to adopt the regulations as proposed. Ms. Swenson advised the Board that an April publication date can be anticipated and she will report the specific date as soon as the information is available.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

A. Kathryn Kim

Ms. Kim e-mailed the Board asking the Board for specific requirements and process for licensure in New Jersey. Clarification is requested for the criteria by which this Board measures "related field." Ms. Kim is to be informed that the degrees must have the required curriculum. N.J.A.C. 13:34-4.3 sets for the requirement that applicants with a graduate degree in a related field must demonstrate the completion of substantial equivalents to the seven course work areas.

B. Meryl Seigel

Ms. Seigel e-mailed the Board asking the Board how she can obtain the experience she needs to become licensed as a marriage and family therapist. She states that she cannot find employment. Ms. Seigel will be advised by the Executive Director that she can seek the employment in an "exempt" setting, such as agencies and hospitals. The Board discussed the situation which now exists in the professional environment and will seek to obtain guidance on the effective and appropriate action to support adequate supervision opportunities for qualified candidates. This letter highlighted a possible trend that the profession may be turning away potential licensees at the consumers expense based on the current requirement for supervised experience.

VII. CREDENTIAL REVIEWS

A. Marla Matthews (Out of State applicant)

On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Ronald Walthall, Ms. Matthews was approved to take the exam.

B. Ben Beitin (Out of State Applicant)

Ben Beitin, submitted an out-of-state licensure application. Dr Beitin is licensed in Connecticut. On a motion by Edward Stroh, seconded by James Verser, the application was found to be incomplete and was not approved for the following reasons: (1) an official transcript must be forwarded directly to the Board office and (2) the Criminal History Background Check requirement must be satisfied. He is to be informed that to qualify for approval as a supervisor, it is required to have five years of experience. This application will be tabled until the receipt of the transcript and criminal report.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Out of State Licensure Application

Upon review of the revision made to delete the reference to semester quarter hours on the course distribution list, it was noted that such references must be deleted in the area description portion of the page. The reference to N.J.S.A. 13:34-4.3(b) is to be corrected to read N.J.A.C. 13:34-4.3(b).

B. E-therapy - Consumer Guide

The Executive Director provided a copy of the Internet Counseling Consumers' Guide that was created as part of the American Association of State Counseling Boards initiative. The process has begun for posting the guide. Ms. DeMars reported that the goal of the Division is to create a regulation that would govern all mental health licensed professionals. It was noted that substance abuse counseling precludes distance counseling. Board member James Verser noted a possible trend that jurisdiction will lie within the state where the counselor is licensed. DAG Perez noted that the Board has the jurisdiction to regulate and that there are also implications for sister-state actions. It was suggested that the standard requirement should be the therapist must be licensed in the State to counsel a New Jersey resident. It was noted that the document presented should be generalized to refer to all mental health counselors.

C. November 2004 meeting date

The meeting scheduled for November 11th has been changed to November 18, 2004 due to the Veteran's Day holiday.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2004-2006 Biennial Renewal

The Board reviewed a copy of the revised renewal application draft. The late fee has been corrected for the 2004-2006 renewal period. The renewal application is scheduled to be printed and mailed by April 15, 2004.

B. Division of Law Billing

The Board members reviewed a copy of the Division of Law Billing Quarterly report which was accepted as informational.

C. Licensure Requirement (supervision)

This matter was discussed in detail (see VI. B above) in response to correspondence regarding the lack of supervisors that are available to provide the required supervision to applicants.

D. Columbia-Pacific University

The Board reviewed a copy of an e-mail report indicating that a permanent injunction was issued by the State of California against Columbia-Pacific University located in California. The distance learning program was found to have awarded individuals fraudulent degrees. DAG Perez has requested information from Asher Rubin, Deputy Attorney General of the State of California, to determine what impact if any said action has on State licensees.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Alcohol & Drug Counselors Committee

Alcohol and Drug Committee Chairman, Edward Reading reported that the proposed regulation N.J.A.C. 13:34C are scheduled for a March 15, 2004 publication.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public present.

XII NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be March 11, 2004, at 9:00 a.m., 124 Halsey Street, Newark, New Jersey.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Margaret Pipchick , the Board voted to move into Executive Session to discuss pending disciplinary matters.

XIV. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

On a motion by Roland Alum, seconded by James Verser, The Board returned to open session at 11:05 a.m.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Edward Reading, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine L. De Mars
Executive Director