

**BOARD OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY EXAMINERS
OPEN SESSION MINUTES
MAY 13, 2004**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. by Board Chair Florence Schatten ,who read the notice of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

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

Staff Present:

Executive Director Elaine L. DeMars
Deputy Attorney General Mileidy Perez
Administrative Staff Celeste Sweeper

Announcement of Quorum

In accordance with Chapter 231 of Public Law 1975, more commonly referred to as the Sunshine Law, adequate notice of this meeting was provided by mailing to the Office of the Secretary of State, the Newark Star Ledger, the Trenton Times, the Bergen Record and the Courier Post.

III. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MINUTES

On a motion by Margaret Pipchick, seconded by Samira Haddad, the minutes of March 11, 2004 were approved with corrections.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Appearance:

Charleen Alderfer, EdD, NCC, LMFT, President, AAMFT-NJ
Kit Ng, Ph.D. Kean University, AAMFT-NJ
Robert Massey, Ph.D. Seton Hall University, AAMFT-NJ.
Corrie Goldblat. - student - Kean University
Jose Perez - student -Kean University

Representatives of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy of New Jersey attended the meeting to discuss the growing decline in licensed marriage and family therapists in New Jersey. Members of the Association informed the Board that a task force is being formulated to research the trend. The

Association believes that quick and drastic changes need to be made to secure the next generation of marriage and family therapists. Pursuant to statute, N.J.S.A. 45:8B-18(b), applicants who wish to obtain licensure in New Jersey must complete 8,750 hours of marriage and family and general counseling experience. New Jersey's experience requirement surpass all other states. The Association says that students drop out of the marriage and family therapy program due to the required experience hours.

Association members presented their perspective on why they believe there is a decline in the number of marriage and family therapists in this state and petitioned the Board for changes to the extensive experience requirement. While the Board is concerned about the drop in marriage & family therapists, the Board informed the association representatives that it does not have jurisdiction to amend statutory law and thus all changes to the licensure requirements must be done through the legislative branch. Due to the potential of a conflict of interest, the Board advised the Association that it is not authorized to endorse or participate in any aspect of the Association's efforts to bring about legislative reform.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Elaine DeMars provided the Board with copies of the recently published regulations N.J.A.C. 13:34. The Board was informed that 146 renewal applications have been processed for the 2004-2006 biennial licensure period.

VI. LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY

A. Assembly Bill 2740

Executive Director Elaine DeMars provided the Board with a copy of Assembly Bill 2740. This bill will make it a crime of the third degree to practice psychology, marriage and family therapy, chiropractic or State-certified psychoanalysis without an appropriate license or certification. The Board is asked to provide a statement of either support, opposition or no position. The Board noted the lack of uniformity in that it does not include all of the healthcare professions. The Board also noted that there is no statement as to how the public will be better protected under the provisions of the Bill.

On a motion by Edward Stroh, seconded by James Verser, the Board voted unanimously to oppose the legislation in the current version.

Executive Director DeMars will request clarification on the intent of the proposed bill.

Ms. DeMars' communication will also pose the following questions:

What criterion was used to determine the licensing boards chosen?

How will the statute be implemented?

In what way will the legislation impact the way in which the Board/Committee discipline licensees?

Will this new bill impose higher sanctions?

What methods will be used in effectively punishing unlicensed individuals?

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Joel H. Goldberg

The Board received a letter from Mr. Goldberg, who requested information on what is required to substantiate proof of participation at authorized continuing education programs. The Board will send Mr. Goldberg a letter informing him that he must receive a certificate of attendance and refer him to N.J.A.C. 13:34-8.5 for additional regulatory requirements. Credits may only be accumulated between July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2006.

Mary Jane Heron

The Board received a letter from Ms. Heron recommending that the American Association of Sex Educators Counselors and Therapists (A.A.S.E.C.T.), and the Sex Information and Education Council of U.S. (S.I.E.C.U.S.) be included among the acceptable sources of continuing education. The Board will inform Ms. Heron that approval must be granted by one of the organizations listed in the regulations (N.J.A.C. 13:34-8.3(b)). The Board will consider including the association when regulations are amended. .

Nicole Safonte-Strumolo

Mrs. Safonte-Strumolo, a New Jersey LMFT, completed a dissertation September 2003, for which she is requesting continuing education credit. Upon the Board's review, Mrs. Safonte-Strumolo has been denied continuing education credit for the dissertation. Dissertations must be published during the period in which continuing education is to be obtained, July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2006. When applying for such credit, dissertations that are published will be reviewed by the Board for continuing education approval.

VIII. EXAM SCORES

January 19, 2004 through February 14, 2004.

The exam scores submitted by the Professional Examination Service for the period of January 19, 2004 through February 14, 2004 were approved by the Board.

I. OLD BUSINESS

Seton Hall University

On April 19, 2004, Executive Director Elaine DeMars and Board Member James Verser went to Seton Hall University to give a presentation on the requirements for marriage and family therapy licensure. Ms. DeMars and Mr. Verser reported that the information was well received.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

AAMFT Educator's Summit July 2004

The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists is conducting "practice domain study" and will introduce its implementation at its Educator's Summit. Licensing board representatives have been invited to participate. On a motion by Edward Stroh, seconded by Barbara Andrews, the Board unanimously agreed to approve Board Member James Verser to represent the Board at the Summit.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Alcohol and Drug Counselor Committee

Committee Chair Edward Reading informed the Board that the Committee has received 844 applications for Alcohol and Drug Counselor licensure certification.

X. CREDENTIAL REVIEW

The Board moved credential review from Executive to Public Session.

Ben Beitin

Mr. Beitin's out-of-state application for licensure was reviewed by the Board. On a motion by Ronald Walthall, seconded by James Verser, the Board denied Mr. Beitin's application for licensure, at this time. Upon review, the application as presented did not document the marriage and family therapy or general counseling experience required by N.J.A.C. 13:34-4.2.

Patricia Colby

The out-of-state application of Ms. Colby was reviewed by the Board. On a motion by Florence Schatten, seconded by Margaret Pipchick, the Board approved Ms. Colby to take the New Jersey marriage and family therapy licensure examination.

Louis Monaco

Mr. Monaco's application for licensure was reviewed by the Board.

On a motion by Edward Stroh, seconded by James Verser, the Board approved Mr. Monaco to take the licensure examination.

Ellen Ryan

Ms. Ryan's application for licensure was reviewed by the Board. On a motion by Margaret Pipchick, seconded by James Verser, the Board approved Ms. Ryan to take the licensure examination.

Catherine Warren

Ms. Warren's out-of-state application of for marriage and family therapy licensure was reviewed by the Board. On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Edward Stroh, the Board approved Ms. Warren to take the licensure examination.

X. NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held June 10, 2004 at 9:00 a.m., 124 Halsey Street, 6th Floor, Newark, New Jersey.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 11:02 p.m., on a motion by James Verser, seconded by Roland Alum the Board moved into Executive Session to discuss pending disciplinary matters.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by James Verser, seconded by Edward Reading, meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine L. DeMars
Executive Director