

**BOARD OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY EXAMINERS
PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 17, 2005**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Board Chair Florence Schatten who read the notice of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Due to the lack of quorum, the Board members in attendance proceeded as a committee (the Committee) of the Board.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Board President, Florence Schatten
Board Member, Edward Stroh
Board Member, Samira Haddad
Board Member, John J. Verser, III
Board Member, Ronald Wathall

Excused:

Board Member, Roland A. Alum
Board Member, Barbara Andrews
Board Member, Edward Reading

Staff Present:

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by John J. Verser, seconded by Samira Haddad and agreement by all members in attendance, the minutes of July 14, 2005 and September 8, 2005 were recommended for approval as amended.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Elaine DeMars provided a report to the Board of a meeting that was held at the request of John Kohler, Senior Government Affairs Agent with Riker Danzig Hyland Perretti, LLP. A November 10, 2005 meeting was arranged through the office of Kimberly S. Ricketts, Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs. Mr. Kohler was accompanied by representatives of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists of New Jersey, and Robert Massey, Program Director, Seton Hall University.

The stated purpose of the meeting was to create a collaborative working relationship with the Board, to develop a strategic plan to expand the number of marriage and family applicants licensees in the State and to ensure input in the regulations which will address the revised requirements for licensure pursuant to Public Law 2005, Chapter 49.

Participants referred to the decline in the number of students in academic programs and the factors that may impact the trend. Mr. Kohler and the AAMFT-NJ representatives further proposed that the requirements for related activities; record keeping, report writing, etc. should take place during the academic training

programs and should not be a separate and additional requirement.

Dr. Massey reported that students sense an inequity for their preferred profession among other mental health professions and highlighted the need for specialists to deal with DYFS-referred cases. It was suggested that the requirements for supervised experience be made equivalent to the other mental health licensure requirements. Dr. Massey suggested that a decrease in the current supervised experience requirement would not effect the quality of services provided.

Director Ricketts related examples that highlighted the importance of competence in the report writing, client- records, etc. and emphasized the impact on both the consumer and the licensee. In conclusion, Ms. Ricketts advised that it is ultimately the Board's responsibility to set the standards for licensure and that the structure is in place for public input throughout the regulatory process.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Robert Massey, Ph.D., Director, Seton Hall University, Marriage and Family Therapy Programs and member of NJ-AAMFT, addressed the Board to support a mutual agreement regarding the new regulations. Dr. Massey emphasized the need for a competency-based approach to the experience requirement, rather than a fixed number of hours. He emphasized the role of the educational preparation, the need for increased supervisor responsibility especially in the area of developing competency in client records, report writing and other related activities. He also offered to work with the Board and AAMFT to develop continuing education opportunities to promote competency.

Dr. Massey suggested that the revisions being drafted should rely on the experience requirements of N.J.A.C. 13:34-4.2 which requires 1200 hours per year, rather than 1750 hours as specified in 3.4(b).

B. India Smith, a marriage and therapy student at the College of New Jersey attended to support the reduction of the required hours of supervised experience for licensure.

VI. LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY

A preliminary draft of the revisions of N.J.S.A. 13:34 was discussed. Upon a unanimous vote of the members in attendance, the Board determined to authorize a committee of the Board to continue working on the draft and present its recommendations at the December meeting.

VII. AAMFTRB ANNUAL MEETING

In his capacity of AAMFTRB Treasurer, Board member John J. Verser attended the Association's Annual Meeting which was followed by the Annual CLEAR Conference. Mr. Verser reported that an AAMFTRB committee was appointed to examine the possibility of establishing a program that would assist state boards in the evaluation of the licensure requirements of other states to determine equivalency.

The revision of the AAMFTRB by-laws was also discussed. Mr. Verser has been appointed to chair the Committee. The conference also included an annual report on the Professional Examination Service (PES) examination administration.

A brief summary of the the CLEAR conference and several workshops was provided. Mr. Verser emphasized the value of involvement in the two conferences.

VIII. CREDENTIAL REVIEWS

On a motion made by Ronald Walthall, seconded by John J. Verser, the Committee voted to approve the application of Dianne Neuman for licensure.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be December 8, 2005, at 9:00 a.m., 124 Halsey Street, Newark, New Jersey

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION On a motion by John J. Verser, seconded by Ronald Walthall, the Board moved to Executive Session at 10:55 a.m. to discuss confidential matters.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by James Verser, seconded by Edward Stroh, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine L. DeMars
Executive Director