

**PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR COMMITTEE MEETING  
PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 2, 2006**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Professional Counselors Committee was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Committee Chair, J. Barry Mascari.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present:

Committee Chair, J. Barry Mascari  
Committee Vice-Chair, Abbey F. Bradway  
Committee Member, Ronald Rossell  
Committee Member, Mark O'Sullivan  
Committee Member, Barbara Maurer

Excused:

Committee Member, Susan Devlin

Staff Present:

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

**III. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MINUTES**

On a motion made by Abbey F. Bradway, seconded by Ronald Rossell the Committee approved the January 5, 2006 minutes as presented.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nancy Benz, LPC - President, New Jersey Counseling Association (NJCA) Ms. Benz appeared on behalf of NJCA and informed the Committee that the organization is working on a code of ethics for its members.

**V. LEGISLATIVE/REGULATORY**

**A. Assembly Bill - 734**

This bill provides that information about the residence of persons applying for licensure or licensed by certain professional boards including the Professional Counselor Examiners Committee of the Board of Marriage and Family Therapy Examiners shall not be disclosed to the public unless the applicant or licensee waives his/her right to nondisclosure. Upon review and a motion made by Barbara Maurer, seconded by Abbey F. Bradway, the Committee voted unanimously to support the bill.

**B. Assembly Bill - 2016**

This proposed legislation would permit health care professionals to refuse to perform or assist in health care services that violate their religious, moral or ethical convictions. The purpose of the bill is to protect the right of

conscience of all health care professionals by allowing them to exercise that right without fear of coercion, retaliation, discrimination, disqualification, or liability. The bill expands the provisions of N.J.S.A. 2A:65A-1 et seq. Upon a motion made by Barbara Maurer and seconded by Abbey Bradway, the Committee voted unanimously to oppose the bill as written. The Committee expressed great concern for the lack of protection afforded to the public in that disclosure by the licensed health care professional is not mandated. Furthermore, the proposed language does not mandate referral of a client in need of mental health treatment to another provider for appropriate assistance and treatment. The Committee is concerned that without such protections clients in need of mental health treatment will be placed at risk and neglected by licensed professional of the Committee. Same would be contrary to the regulations of the Committee (N.J.A.C. 13:34-30.5b) which mandate that a "professional, associate or rehabilitation counselor shall not abandon or neglect a client in need of professional services without making reasonable arrangements for the continuation of such care or offering to help the client find alternative sources of assistance." The Committee also expressed concern, in that the proposed bill limits its jurisdiction to investigate and discipline licensees of the Committee in cases of client/patient neglect. Lastly, the Committee found that the provisions of the proposed bill are diametrically opposed to a counselor's training and ethics in providing unbiased assessments and referrals.

#### C. Assembly Bill - 3743

This bill limits the period for reimbursement from providers for overpayment on health care claims to 18 months. Upon review, the Committee voted to accept the proposed legislation as informational.

### **VI. REGULATORY ISSUES**

Executive Director Elaine L. DeMars explained the need to form a sub-committee to draft recommendations for changes to the regulations. Committee members Ronald Rossell and Abbey F. Bradway volunteered to serve in that capacity.

### **VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Elaine L. DeMars informed the Committee that J. Barry Mascari, Committee Chair, was appointed by Governor Codey to the Board of Marriage and Family Therapy Examiners to serve as a member of the Board and as the Committee's liaison.

### **VIII. CORRESPONDENCE**

Susan Obetz

In her letter, Ms. Obetz requested guidance on the application process for licensure. The Committee will refer her to the regulations pertaining to the profession and will advise her of the requirement to submit a complete application for licensure.

### **IX. OLD BUSINESS**

#### AASCB 2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

J. Barry Mascari, Committee Chair provided a brief summary of the annual meeting. A written report will be provided at the next meeting.

#### Portability Policies & Procedures

AASCB Credentials Databank- The Committee discussed the need to determine equivalencies and substitutions proposed by the AASCB and will continue to review this matter during its next meeting. New Jersey's current statute requires 60 credits (45 in counseling course work). AASCB anticipates the implementation of the credential databank to be complete within the next two years.

Mr. Mascari reported that the AASCB violations/disciplinary database has not functioned for a number of years, however, the American Counseling Association is looking into implementing a nationwide databank for the reporting of violations/disciplinary actions.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **X. CONTINUING EDUCATION**

The notice on Continuing Education was provided to the Committee members as a reference for discussion of N.J.S.A. 13:34-15.2 and questions regarding the continuing education requirement for individuals initially licensed between December 1, 2004 and November 30, 2006.

#### **A. Adria Trapani**

In an e-mail request Ms. Trapani writes to the Committee asking for clarification of the continuing education requirements for newly licensed individuals. Ms. Trapani will be informed those licensed during the period of December 1, 2004 and November 30, 2006 will not be required to complete continuing education in order to satisfy the renewal requirements for this biennial renewal period only.

#### **B. Sherry Macpherson**

Ms. Macpherson writes a letter to the Committee to request approval of a course she is teaching at Rowan University for continuing education credits. The Committee will refer Ms. Macpherson to the regulation at N.J.A.C. 13:34-15.4(a)2 which provides that continuing education credits may be accepted by the Committee if the licensee is "teaching or completing graduate coursework at a regionally accredited institution of higher education." The Committee will also advise Ms. Macpherson that the course she teaches must also fall within the content areas set forth in N.J.A.C. 13:34-15.4(c). The Committee will request that Ms. Macpherson provide proof that the course she is teaching is "graduate coursework" and that its content falls within one of the categories listed in N.J.A.C. 13:34-15.4(c).

#### **C. Shelley Doyle**

Ms. Doyle sent an e-mail requesting clarification as to whether a licensed Associate Counselor must complete continuing education for renewal of said license. The Committee will inform Ms. Doyle that licensed associate counselors are not required to complete continuing education for license renewal.

### **XI. NEXT MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee is March 2, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. at 124 Halsey Street, 6th floor, Newark, New Jersey.

#### **2006 Committee Meeting Dates**

April 6, 2006 September 7, 2006

May 4, 2006 October 5, 2006

June 1, 2006 November 2, 2006

July 6, 2006 December 7, 2006

August 3, 2006

### **XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 11:12 a.m., on a motion by Mark O'Sullivan and seconded by Barbara Maurer, the Committee voted to move to Executive Session to discuss pending disciplinary matters.

### **XIII. CREDENTIAL REVIEW**

On a motion by Barbara Maurer, seconded by Ronald Rossell, the Committee voted to approve the following applications as noted:

Professional Counselors:

Daniel, Robin Langefeld, Karen  
Grandcolas, David Manente, Melissa  
Hamm, Claire Rivera, Nilda  
Hollo, Mary E. Rodriguez, Maria L.  
Jones, Courtney Sardanopoli, Diane  
Kenny, Jennifer Strassler, Meryl

Associate Counselors:

Bandy, Yvonne Levesque, Sylvia  
Coleman, Kelly Rao, Vanessa  
Fox, Denise Raynor, Arlene  
Kowalski, Nancy Sbaratta, Christopher

Out of State

Levine, Arlene  
Martin, Sara

Reinstatement

Kerin, Ann Marie

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Abbey Bradway, seconded by Ronald Rossell, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine L. DeMars  
Executive Director