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**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
University Park Plaza  
Conference Room A – 4th Floor  
2829 University Avenue S. E.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414**

**Minutes**

**May 9, 2008**

**Members Present:** Kathleen Beehler, LSW  
Christine Black-Hughes, LICSW  
Robin Bode, LSW  
William Cullen, Secretary-Treasurer  
David Hallman, LSW, Chair  
Jacqueline Johnson, LICSW  
Rosemary Kassekert, Public Member  
Mary Casey Ladd, LICSW  
Peter Langseth, LSW  
Kenneth Middlebrooks, Public Member, Vice Chair  
Tamerlee Ruebke, LSW  
Beverly Ryan, LISW  
David Sandry, Public Member  
Antonia Wilcoxon, Public Member

**Members Absent:** Angie Stratig, LICSW

**Staff Present:** Louis Hoffman, Director of Compliance  
Brenda Mammenga, Recording Secretary  
Sheryl McNair, LICSW, Assistant Director  
Connie Oberle, Office Manager  
Kate Zacher-Pate, LSW, Executive Director

**1. PROPOSED AGENDA**

Chair Hallman called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.; a quorum was present. The Board unanimously approved the agenda.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS:** Christine Black-Hughes, Jacqueline Johnson, Angie Stratig, David Hallman, Casey Ladd.

Black-Hughes ("Chris") is an LICSW and Associate Professor in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Minnesota State University-Mankato and has been on the Board's Advisory Committee for several years. Johnson ("Jackie") is an LICSW and she said she is the Program Director for the College of Medicine of the Mayo Clinic Internship Program. Ladd is an LICSW and the Clinical Administrator at Family & Children's Services and she said she was first appointed to the Board in 2004. Hallman is an LSW and a Foster Care Licensing Specialist with Clay County Social Services in Moorhead and he said he was first appointed to the Board in 2004. Hallman asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

**3. MINUTES FOR MARCH 21, 2008 MEETING [Attached]**

The March 21, 2008 meeting minutes were approved. Beehler would like it noted that she will attend the ASWB Annual Meeting in November, and Sandry said he will attend the ASWB New Board Member Training in August. Langseth commented the Board needs to increase its delegation attendance at ASWB conferences.

**4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT [Attached]**

Zacher-Pate noted the reminder about the compliance video filming at this Board meeting and reported the following:

**A. Strategic Plan Status Report [Attached]**

- Frank Merriman used this chart as a reporting tool to the Board in terms of Strategic Plan initiatives, outcomes and accomplishments and she will continue to update the chart for the Board's information. Also, the Board will be working on the Strategic Plan, "Board Processes" as a group this afternoon.
- The new Continuing Education brochure was distributed and Zacher-Pate explained that it was developed to respond to feedback and questions about CE requirements, how to earn them, and what qualifies for CE credit.
- The Compliance Process brochure was developed more than a year ago and we are working on brochures for supervision and licensure requirements which will be quick and easy sources for use by the general public and licensees.

**B. Statistics [Attached]**

- About 65% of applications for licensure and renewal are processed online.

**C. BOSW Staffing Update [Oral Report]**

- We are pleased that McNair has been appointed as Assistant Director. She has been a great asset to the Board and staff.

- The Staff Social Work position has been posted. Documentation was submitted to DOER explaining this is a critical and essential position for the Board. We received 39 applicants and 15 have been selected with a final review and setting up of interviews in the near future. We hope to hire in June.
- We are pleased to announce that DOER approved an audit upgrade and promotion for Cheri Pittelkow, our Communications Specialist and front desk person. Cheri is extremely competent in her position and has taken on extra duties and discretion in her work. Her new working title is Office Coordinator, which more accurately describes her duties.
- There is a lot of transition in staffing as we will be hiring a staff social worker to fill McNair's former position. Also, Bethany Henshaw, our renewal coordinator and Jennifer Thuente, our office assistant will reduce their time in the office due to continuing their education. We will likely be hiring for Henshaw's position in the fall and possibly Thuente's position.

D. Legislation & Budget Bills [Attached]

- We do not have further information regarding the transfer of funds from the state government special revenue fund to the general fund. The initial transfer amount proposed by the house was \$2.2 million. It appears a recent proposal has increased the amount to \$3.2 million. No information is available about how the funds will be allocated amongst the Boards.

E. Notice to Licensees Regarding 2007 Legislation [Oral Report]

- We will be notifying licensees by mail in June about the new requirements and information resulting from the 2007 legislation. We will also have a question and answer section on our web site about the legislation and pertinent information. The 11,000 notices will cost about \$12,000, or about \$1 per licensee.

F. New Board Member Orientation [Oral Report]

- Training occurred yesterday for Black-Hughes and Johnson and was provided by staff, Zacher-Pate, McNair, Hoffman and Oberle.

G. Updated Lists and Contact Information [Attached]

5. **COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE:** David Hallman, Ken Middlebrooks  
Casey Ladd, Beverly Ryan [No cases for action]

On behalf of the Compliance Committee, Ladd noted the following: **The Compliance Committee recommends that the Board authorize Board staff to approve applications when the actions of the applicant indicate alcohol or chemical misuse, but no chemical dependency, as determined by staff review of**

**the court report and chemical dependency evaluation, was unanimously approved by the Board.**

**6. LEGISLATIVE MANDATE REPORT: Identification of Underserved Areas Served by Persons Licensed as Social Workers in Minnesota**  
Chris Black-Hughes [Attached]

- Black-Hughes said she served on the Board's Advisory Committee before she was appointed to the Board and she offered to spearhead the mandate issued to the Board by the Legislature in 2007 which provides the following: "The Board of Social Work shall study and make recommendations to the legislature by December 15, 2008, on how to increase the numbers of licensed social workers serving underserved communities and culturally and ethnically diverse communities. The study shall also explore alternative paths to licensure that does not include a standardized examination." She also said that Tony Bibus conducted research on the number of licensed and unlicensed county social workers.
- Black-Hughes showed a power point presentation and said the report mainly covers the SW, NE and NW portions of the state and a variety of fields of practice including child welfare, school social work, and medical social work. Maps in the report include the total number of licensees in greater Minnesota correlated to their primary employment site address, and includes county social workers.
- Zacher-Pate said the 226 page report is complex and the committee thought it was important to introduce information to the Board over time so that it would be in a better position to approve the final report at the November Board meeting. She also said today's power point presentation is a great way to introduce a summary of the data and concepts being worked on. She also referred to the draft executive summary, and said it is not complete at this time, but the information and report will be put together and will be an important part of the mandate. Also, based on the study, the Board will be making recommendations to the Legislature regarding how to deal with these issues.
- Wilcoxon thanked Black-Hughes for taking the lead on this project. Cullen asked that drafts and changes be directed to Wilcoxon.

**7. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS**

**A. Advisory Committee: Antonia Wilcoxon [To be Distributed]**

- Wilcoxon said the Advisory Committee is composed of representatives from different professional associations, including Alan Ingram, Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers, Minnesota Chapter, Pam Luinenburg, Coordinator of the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers, and previously Black-Hughes, and many other groups.

- Wilcoxon said the committee meets bi-monthly and works with the Board to provide input and recommendations in carrying out its charge of protecting the public. Currently, there is discussion about supervision in the social work community and implementing the Board's new legislation which is effective 2011. The Advisory Committee is also writing bylaws.
- The minutes are not prepared at this time.

**A motion was made by Black-Hughes, and seconded by Middlebrooks, to send a letter to Helen Washington, Chair of the Association of Black Social Workers, to join the Advisory Committee. The motion passed unanimously.**

**B. ASWB: Kathy Beehler**

- Beehler said the Association has a spring educational meeting and a fall business meeting. As a Board Delegate, she attends the fall business meeting.

**C. Compliance Education Outreach Committee: Antonia Wilcoxon**

- Wilcoxon reported the committee is the Board's effort to present information about the Board's compliance process and standards of practice to the community and that McNair and Hoffman have been wonderful in staffing and presenting at conferences, as well as some Board members.
- Hoffman said McNair presented at the Minnesota Psychological Association with the LMFT and Psychology Boards, with Nathan Hart representing the Boards from the Attorney General's Office, on the compliance process used by most of the Health Licensing Boards. McNair said Hart had an excellent compliance process power point the Board may be interested in seeing.
- McNair reported that she, Hoffman and Hallman presented at the MSSA Conference in March. She said there were good ethical questions from the floor and a good turnout of about 150 in attendance. She also said we have been approved to present at the DHS Age and Disabilities Odyssey Conference in August.
- McNair said a compliance presentation proposal will be submitted for the St. Louis County Conference in October.

**D. Council of Health Boards: Rosemary Kassekert**

- Kassekert said the Council is comprised of the Health Licensing Board's Executive Directors and it meets as needed to discuss common problems and legal issues that affect the Boards.

E. Finance Committee: Bill Cullen [To be Distributed]

- Cullen reported the committee meets bi-monthly, the day before the Board meeting. He said the Board's revenue is at 88.09% and total expenses are at 56.52%, which means the Board is in an excellent financial position.
- Cullen also reported on the legislative proposal to transfer funds. The Board does have surplus funds, so the proposed transfer does not greatly impact the Board's budget in this biennium. However, the transfer does impact the future budget as the surplus is spent down.
- While Board members are displeased with the proposed transfer of HLB surplus funds, the Board members also stated and were in agreement that as an Executive Branch agency, the Board cannot publicly oppose the proposed transfer. It was also discussed that the proposed transfer is public information, and licensees and the professional associations can provide their opinions to the Governor and their Legislators.
- Cullen read a statement regarding his concerns about the Legislative proposal transferring \$3.2 million from the state government special revenue fund to the general fund. He recommends the minutes state that this policy is seriously detrimental to the financial health of licensure boards across the State of Minnesota. He also said we should ask our elected leaders to find different solutions. Other Board members requested the minutes reflect that Cullen's opinion was not supported by all members.

*(Bode arrived at 12:10 p.m.)*

F. HPSP: Rosemary Kassekert

- Kassekert reported the committee meets quarterly and it has not met since the last Board meeting.

G. Legislation & Rules Committee: Casey Ladd

- Ladd said the purpose of the committee is to consider, develop and bring legislative issues and proposals to the Board. Currently, the committee is working to implement the clinical standard legislation. A meeting is scheduled at 4:30 on May 22<sup>nd</sup> with stakeholder groups regarding the legislation that was enacted in 2007.

H. Legislative Task Force: Peter Langseth

- Langseth said the committee meets monthly with the intent to develop legislation that would modify county social work exemptions.

- Tony Bibus' presentation at the MSSA Conference regarding his research was well received and there was discussion about licensure bringing credibility to county social workers. Some expressed concern that licensure may cause problems as their colleagues don't support licensure and not all employers provide supervision.
- The response to the question, "What is the Board willing to do for us?" was answered with "The Board regulates licensees and serves the public."
- AFSCME and MAPE will be contacted to discuss expanding licensure and modifying exemptions.
- Zacher-Pate said she contacted ASWB's e-mail list serve about other state's modifying exemptions and Ohio responded it is trying to remove civil service exemptions. Both practice issues and title issues are important in the exemptions issues. Merit System issues must also be considered.
- Zacher-Pate said the committee agreed to send post card reminders to licensees who have an expired or voluntarily terminated license, 60 days before the one year limit to reactivate the license occurs. In order to reactivate, they would not need to reexamine, but they would have to demonstrate compliance with requirements at the time of expiration, including continuing education credits and supervised practice, if applicable, and pay the reactivation fee. She also said that there are about 400 renewals per month and about 25-30 expire each month.
- The committee is trying to set up a meeting with DHS regarding the Board's proposal to modify county exemptions.

**A motion was made by Langseth, and seconded by Ladd, to have the Board approve numbers 1, 5 and 7 of Tony Bibus' report, "Recommendations to the Minnesota Board of Social Work, Destination Deferred: A Report to the Minnesota Board of Social Work on the Exemption from Mandatory Licensing for Social Workers in Minnesota County Social Services" dated November 25, 2007. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**I. Licensing Study Committee: Antonia Wilcoxon**

- Wilcoxon reported the committee meets the day before Board meetings and has been discussing the legislative mandate. The report is due to the Legislature December 15.
- Black-Hughes reported the first part of the mandate has been completed with her study.
- The second half of the mandate requires identifying alternative paths to licensure other than by examination as stated under the Finance Committee Report in section 7. E.
- Finding a researcher to conduct the second part of the study has been unsuccessful. Reasons were discussed, such as the \$5,000 allotment was not adequate as worker's compensation and liability insurance

must be secured by the researcher. The committee brought forward a motion to increase the contract amount to \$10,000 with a slight change in scope.

- Cullen reported the budget could afford the increase to \$10,000.

**The Licensure Study Committee recommends that the Board approve increasing its current \$5,000 Request for Proposal to \$10,000 in order to complete the Legislative report. The recommendation was unanimously approved by the Board, with two members momentarily absent.**

J. OMHP: Robin Bode

- Bode reported the committee meets once a month and the Board's Program Manager, Gina Green, has seen an increase in complaints.
- Green commented about whether OMHP should continue its work as OMHP is scheduled to sunset August, 2009. Also there was discussion about whether OMHP funding for OMHP should come from State funds or should fall under the Attorney General's Office. She said OMHP is the last place for mental health complaints, and if it sunsets, there will no longer be a place for these complaints to be handled in the county, state or private sector.
- Green staffed an informational booth at the Children's Mental Health Conference.

**8. LUNCH**

**9. FOLLOW-UP TO JULY 2007 BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING [Attached]**  
Review Strategic Plan Progress and Prepare for Implementation of Board Processes Initiatives: Cindy Greenlaw Benton [See Attachment]

Present: Beehler, Black-Hughes, Bode, Cullen, Hallman, Johnson, Kassekert, Langseth, Middlebrooks, Ruebke, Ryan, Sandry, Wilcoxon

Absent: Ladd, Stratig

Cindy Greenlaw Benton introduced herself and commented that the strategic plan has moved to an ongoing action plan which includes concrete goals. She said a number of the items of the plan have been implemented and today is a second meeting to the one occurring after the March Board meeting. There were introductions, attendees broke into groups, and they were asked to discuss three questions and make recommendations for action. The results of the discussion are attached at the end of the minutes.

## **10. ASSIGN "BUDDIES" FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

- Bode announced she will likely leave the Board in the fall as she begins graduate school full time, but she will mentor Black-Hughes until that time.
- Middlebrooks will mentor Johnson.

## **11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Pam Luinenburg, Coordinator of the Minnesota Coalition of Licensed Social Workers, said the Coalition includes seven different professional social work associations. Luinenburg said she would respond to Wilcoxon's question about the Advisory Committee and the clinical standards that will be implemented as a result of the 2007 legislation. She said the Coalition developed a questionnaire and sent it to the Associations, and she will bring a summary back to the Board.
- Luinenburg commented regarding the transfer of funds from the Board's Special Revenue Fund to the General Fund. The Coalition sent an action alert to the Associations about the facts relating to the transfer, and she asked individual social workers and the Associations to contact their Legislators and the Governor about their feelings on the transfer of funds. She encouraged them to be respectful, and she said the Coalition does not have feedback about how many people followed through. Luinenberg thought it would be good for the Governor to hear from his agencies about the impact of this policy.
- Luinenburg commented it is important to inform the Governor that licensing fees are collected to pay for the work of the Board and its mission is to protect the public.
- Alan Ingram, Executive Director, National Association of Social Workers, Minnesota Chapter, commented that NASW's National Association sent out an alert about the government taking money out of the health care access fund and that 600 member responses were forwarded to the conference committee as members are concerned about funds being taken from the working poor. He said we have the same concern for our license fees being transferred from the Special Revenue fund to the State's General Revenue Fund, and the licensing boards should address structural budget issues.
- In regard to licensing fees and the state's financial situation, Ingram said originally there was a transfer of funds in 2003. Even with the fee reduction in 2006, the Board has never generated a budget deficit. However, he asked if it would be better to have a biennial budget with fees set, so there wouldn't be the large budget surplus the Board currently spends down.
- Ingram welcomed the new Board members and thanked the Board members and staff for the work they do in serving the public.

## **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**13. ROUNDTABLE**

There was no roundtable discussion.

**14. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Cullen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William Cullen  
Secretary-Treasurer