MINNESOTA
BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK

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Protecting the Public

MARCH 15, 2024 – BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Members via WebEx:	Christopher Anderson, Public Member Thomas Brooks, Public Member-Arrived 10:10 am/Left 1:00 pm Dieu Do, Public Member-Arrived 9:05 am Jolene Engelking, LISW, Secretary/Treasurer-Left? Linda Gustafson, Public Member Heidi Holmes, LICSW Lori Thompson, LSW Pa Der Vang, LICSW
Members In-person:	Angie DeLille, LICSW Kate Goodman, LICSW, Vice Chair Stephanie Jacobson, LSW Yolonda Rogers, LICSW – Arrived at 9:20 am
Members Absent:	Tera Nelson, LSW
Staff In-person:	Youa Yang, LICSW, Executive Director Michelle Kramer-Prevost, LISW, Assistant Director Kassandra Slizewski, LSW, Licensing Coordinator Tammy Molitor, Communications & Executive Services Coordinator
Staff Via Web-Ex:	Connie Oberle, Office Manager Rebecca Moskow, JD, Compliance Unit Manager Jairus Ndulah, JD, Compliance Unit Investigator
Staff Absent:	NONE

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order & Approve Proposed Agenda**

   Goodman called meeting to order at 9:03am and read mission and value statements.
   Roll call attendance was taken. A quorum was present.

   ACTION: Holmes moved to approve the proposed agenda. Vang seconded, roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Consent Agenda:**
   A. Minutes January 19, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes
   B. Committee Reports
   C. Staff Leadership Reports

   ACTION: Engelking moved to approve the consent agenda. Anderson seconded, roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. **Public Comment**

   Public comments are public data under Minn. Stat. Ch 13.
   Written Public Comment: Submission of requests in advance are strongly encouraged, by 12:00pm (noon) on Thursday, November 16, 2023 by Noon, to the BOSW email address social.work@state.mn.us
   Oral Public Comment: At the discretion of the Chair, comments limited to 3 minutes per person
   Public Comment took place at 9:15am.
   There was no public comment.

4. **Member Roundtable**:
Jacobson led a roundtable discussion with board members regarding "Decisions or beliefs related to social work regulation that we once held that have since changed having served on the Board". Each board member shared reflections/introspections and examples of an old thought or belief they once held and how their work on the Board has changed their viewpoint or reformed their decision-making process.

5. **Staff Leadership Reports:**

A. Executive Director Report:
- Board member appointments are still open. Secretary of State's office is still accepting applications and encourage others to apply. These positions may possibly be open through June 30, 2024.
- Currently, the Board is in the process of testing Web 3.0 in ALIMS and JP Exam test. Board staff is working with MNIT and Lynmark regarding the updates. Board is hopeful the upgrades will be deployed soon.
- Additional details will be shared about legislative updates later in the agenda. Listed in the report are some bills of interest related to Health Licensing Boards and/or Board of Social Work. Currently, there are over 1,400 bills introduced this legislative session.
- HF 3990 / SF 4841 – This legislative bill has a fiscal impact on the board. The bill requires certain Health Licensing Boards (HLBs) to pay the Department of Human Services (DHS) for duplicate background studies on our licensees. The affected Boards will pay DHS a percentage according to the number of licensees to support this new database. The Board of Social Work does not receive general fund, so the licensees would be paying for another background check. The Boards are asking for the money to be allocated from the general fund to support DHS' efforts with this database. Licensees' data is public, and it would be redundant to repeat a background check. The Board has already paid for one year of this requirement because legislation passed in 2022 session.
- Board staff are in the process of hiring a new Compliance Coordinator.
- Nine variances were approved and 4 denied. Most request approvals are related to testing date reschedule.

B. Licensing Unit:
- Team is putting forth excellent customer service with licensees. We are current with renewals, supervision, and applications. Student presentations are done for this school year and will pick up again in late August/early September. The licensing team will be staffing a table at the Minnesota Social Service Association (MSSA) Conference.
- The Jurisprudence (JP) Exam is in the testing phase and much testing has been done with it. ALIMS is being upgraded to 3.0 in April 2024 and once it is completed, the JP Exam will be implemented if all goes smoothly. ALIMS 3.0 will give online users many more options to work with in their account. There will be training for the new version.

C. Compliance Unit:
- Things are proceeding well despite a vacancy for one team member. There are around 100 complaints this year since January 1, but the board is closing more complaints than the number received. There are only 156 open complaints as of the board meeting today.

6. **Oral Reports**

A. Legislation & Rules Committee -
The committee met in February but did not work on the County Exemption due to impending legislation. The committee and the Social Work Coalition discussed the number of supervision hours that is not consistent with both provisional license bills. The committee members including board chair and Social Work Coalition agreed to maintain the current number of supervision hours to keep provisional license legislation moving through the legislative process.

B. Finance Committee -
Connie Oberle (in Engelking's absence) gave the update for the committee. The finance committee had a routine meeting, reviewing the monthly summary report 54% of budget spent at 67% of the fiscal year. Attorney General spending is less than anticipated. The good news is revenues are 4% ahead of budget.

C. Community Education Outreach Committee (CEOC): -
CEOC met Thursday, February 1st, and minutes were approved from the previous meeting. The group spent worked on developing the strategic education initiatives by reviewing the 2021-2024 strategic framework. There was a brainstorming session of experiences and ideas related to the framework and legislative proposals. There is a date change for the next meeting to April 18, 4:30-6pm.

D. Leadership & Development Committee:
Did not have quorum, Jacobson had a one-on-one with the executive director about the charge of L&D committee.

7. **<u>Culturally Informed Culturally Responsive Mental Health Taskforce:</u>**
The taskforce was an initiative by the Governor's office, and the seats were designated in statute. One of the member seats is designated for the Board of Social Work. DeLille was appointed by the Board as the representative. The committee is in the final stages to review recommendations for Health Licensing Boards. DeLille presented recommendations that will affect the Board of Social Work.

Some of the things that may affect the Board are:

- Exploring alternative routes to licensure and address barriers to passing the licensure exam
  Reduce financial barriers to passing Licensure Exam
- Establishing guidelines so licensing boards can be specific in the requirements and clarity of what qualifies as cultural continuing education (CE) credits.
- Standardizing this definition across all mental health licensing boards.
- Set a minimum standard for all continuing education being submitted, not just culturally specific trainings, but to build in culturally diverse and specific case scenarios, informed by people from those communities.
- Make available and encourage more ongoing continuing education courses regarding DEI.
- Require a percentage of CEUs specifically related to BIPOC (race and ethnicity) communities.
- Collect data on completed CEUs related to cultural responsiveness. It would be helpful to analyze CE trends regarding what is approved or denied.
- Legislatively mandate licensing boards to collect demographic data-knowing data will help providers target people who need additional support.

Questions arose about who would be responsible for accountability for upholding these mandates.

- Increasing the number of mental health organizations owned, managed, or led by BIPOC individuals would be a lengthy process that would not happen overnight.
- Concerns about not including Disabled Veterans – this specific taskforce does not cover this demographic.
- How would these recommendation be funded? There are concerns regarding funding because the board is funded solely through license fees paid by licensees.
- Other items were addressed that could be added to the initiative such as supporting licensees to pass the national exam but are struggling financially to purchase study materials, need daycare options, find study groups for support, or need transportation to exam prep classes, etc.
- A key partner in this process would be the higher education system to recruit more BIPOC students interested in pursuing social work career as the Board can only license those who graduate with a Social Work degree.
- Related to the national exam, could the Board grant a license to someone who missed the passing score by a few points? Does the Board have to go by the passing score set by the testing vendor? If not, could the Board review those applicants who were a few points from passing and consider circumstances and other factors to determine if the individual could pass the examine and be granted a license?
- Regarding CEs, will the Taskforce consider adding more requirements or further define what exists in statute? Currently, the Board has cultural competency CE requirement in statute.
- DeLille will share the Board's discussion items to the taskforce for consideration. DeLille will share the document with the Advisory Committee to engage a wider network in the conversation.

8. **Health Professionals Services Program (HPS) Presentation:**
   - Gustafson presented on the minutes/report from the last HPSP Committee meeting that she attended. Navarre, from HPSP, gave a presentation on the Health Professionals Services Program.
   - HPSP is a program of the Minnesota health related licensing boards that provides monitoring services to health professionals with illnesses that may impact their ability to practice safely which includes physical and medical health conditions, substances use conditions, mental health conditions, and chronic pain – anything in between any of those items. There are seven people in their office with two office support people, and 5 case managers. She gave updated information on statistics specific to Social Work and trends they are seeing.
   - Navarre presented from PowerPoint presentation included in the Board's packet.
   - Navarre offered to address universities during the presentations that the Board gives to students. She is also willing and appreciates getting references for relevant vendor events – we give out a brochure with a first license.
   - Navarre broke down the costs for HPSP services per month which is about $1,000 annually and about 2.84% of their expenses. This is not an optional service; it is part of our statutory obligation to participate in the program.

9. **11:47am to 12:20pm Lunch Break**

10. **Legislative Update/Discussion**
    - Social Work Interstate Compact
      - This bill is co-sponsored with NASW and had a Senate committee hearing. There may not be a House hearing. The first deadline date is Friday, March 22nd. Concerns raised related to immunity. There was a draft amendment, and it will be heard in Judiciary Committee. There are other HLB compacts being heard this session. The compacts have similar language. The HLB Boards worked collaboratively to create the fiscal note. The actual fiscal impact for BOSW is unknow because there is no compact commission. However, BOSW estimated the potential fiscal impact for the fiscal note.
      - Yang will be sending out the information on each hearing via email if Board members would like to follow along.
    - Provisional License
      - The bill was approved and laid over in both the House and Senate Committees. The issue was there are two separate bills, one bill from NASW and one bill from the Board of Social Work. BOSW bill, has technical changes to provisional license statute. The Senate Health and Human Services Committee heard the bill. It was referred to State and Local Government Committee due to the disciplinary changes for provisional license. Senator Hoffman is working with State and Local Government Committee to schedule a hearing.
      - For the Health Finance and Policy Committee hearing, BOSW and the Association compromised to one bill. The disagreement was with the number of supervision hours required. Discussion took place in Legislation& Rules Committee to agree to maintain the 37.5 supervision hours as the compromise. An amendment was introduced to add provisional license to 148E.055 as a license type. The bill was not referred to other committees. It is waiting to be amended to the omnibus bill. The Board was asked to provide a fiscal note for the bill. BOSW knows there will be a fiscal impact including costs for ALIMS/MNIT to process provisional applications online and increase staff time.

- **Legislative Bill of Interests:**
  - HF 4289
    - This bill had an initial hearing in the Human Services Policy Committee and referred to Health Finance Policy Committee. It does not have a Senate file yet. The bill is proposing to amend the Board of Social Work statute to allow LGSWs to engage in clinical practice without supervision when working with crisis response services. It has a sunset date through August 1, 2026. The bill was introduced to address the crisis response services workforce shortage for rural Minnesota. From a public protection lens, there was discussion on this topic by board members.
    - Crisis response services statute is found in Minnesota Statute 256B.0624. Concerns raised regarding waiving licensing supervision vs. crisis supervision requirements to deliver crisis services. There is no proposal to amend the crisis statute.
    - Bill author has not reached out to Board of Social Work for technical assistance on the bill language.

MOTION: Anderson made a motion for the Board to have the position to oppose the HF 4289 bill amendment. Gustafson seconded, Roll call was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

- Yang thanked the HLB legislative liaison, Lindsay Franklin, for her assistance in tracking the bills that affect the Board of Social Work.

11. Action Items:

- ASWB Education Conference on May 2-5 in Arlington, VA – Scholarships are available through ASWB. The Board is proposing to send one board member and one staff member to this conference. Please let the board know if you are interested in attending before the end of next week. A selection will be made from the names submitted.

  MOTION: Approve to pay for one board member and one staff member to attend the ASWB Education Conference in Arlington, VA. Roll call was taken and passed unanimously.

12. Executive Session (Closed to Public):

ACTION: Anderson moved to close the meeting for executive session. The motion was seconded by Rogers. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

ACTION: Compliance Panel A moved to adopt the Stipulation and Consent Order for Conditions for Teresa Mary Anderson, LICSW, License #2581. Votes to approve: Anderson, DeLille, Do, Goodman, Gustafson, Holmes, Jacobson, Rogers, Thompson, and Vang.

ACTION: Compliance Panel B moved to adopt the Stipulation and Consent Order for Conditions for Samantha Paige Flowers, LSW, License #29619. Votes to approve: Anderson, DeLille, Do, Goodman, Gustafson, Holmes, Jacobson, Rogers, Thompson, and Vang.

ACTION: Compliance Panel A moved to adopt the Stipulation and Consent Order for Conditions for Jaime M. Herman, LGSW, License #23984. Votes to approve: Anderson, DeLille, Do, Gustafson, Holmes, Jacobson, Rogers, Thompson, and Vang. Abstain: Goodman.

ACTION: Compliance Panel B moved to adopt the Stipulation and Consent Order for Conditions for Blaire Marie Hysjulien, LICSW, License #22426. Votes to approve: Anderson, DeLille, Do, Goodman, Gustafson, Holmes, Jacobson, Rogers, Thompson, and Vang.

ACTION: Compliance Panel A moved to adopt the Stipulation and Consent Order for Conditions for Tricia Mae Zimmerman, LSW, License #28091. Votes to approve: Anderson, DeLille, Do, Goodman, Gustafson, Holmes, Jacobson, Rogers, Thompson, and Vang.

ACTION: A motion was made by DeLille to reopen the meeting and was seconded by Thompson. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Adjourn

ACTON: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Holmes to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jolene Engelking, LISW
Secretary/Treasurer