

Minutes

Arkansas State Board of Optometry

Regular Board Meeting

Freeway Medical Tower Building

Little Rock, Arkansas

February 15, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Board President, Dr. Bryant Ashley at 1:30 p.m.

The following board members were present: Dr. Bryant Ashley, Dr. Susan DeBlack, Dr. Robert Fitzhugh, Dr. Dan Hennessey, and Dr. Beatrice Reed. Also in attendance were: Suzette Weast, Board Director; Amber LeClerc, Fiscal Support Specialist; Lacie Kirchner, Asst. Attorney General and Board Counsel; Dr. Allison Hall, Dr. Rebecca Simmons Brown, Dr. Sarah Duong, Dr. Nicole Monroe.

Dr. Ashley introduced the new Board Director, Mrs. Suzette Weast.

Dr. Reed presented the minutes from the November 16, 2023 Board Meeting. Dr. DeBlack made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Hennessey noted that he sent the information regarding the November 14, 2023 ARBO Webinar as he stated he would at the November Board meeting to be discussed at today's meeting. The information summarizes the material presented by Attorney Dale Atkinson, founder of the Atkinson Firm, regarding applications for licensure. The Atkinson Firm is very involved in national regulatory issues, and Attorney Atkinson is utilized by ARBO for his regulatory legal expertise.

The State Board Update, including the financial report was presented by Mrs. Weast. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to approve. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

The update on illegal contact lens sales was presented by Mrs. Weast. Joty Thread and Wax (2 locations, Little Rock and Pine Bluff) needs follow-up. Lux Eyebrow Threading and Spa (Little Rock) has ceased the sales of contact lenses. Rose Eyebrow Threading (Little Rock) has not been addressed at this time.

Dr. Ashley introduced the new licentiates: Licensure by Examination- Dr. Rebecca Simmons Brown and Dr. Sarah Duong. Licensure by Endorsement- Dr. Nicole Monroe. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to accept the new licentiates. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed.

Mrs. Weast presented Advanced Procedures: Surgery Procedures Outcomes. Discussion ensued. It was noted that the Procedures Outcomes Report must be submitted whether any procedures were performed or not. The form will be added to a page on the Online Renewal Application so that it can be completed along with licensure renewal. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion that Surgery Procedures Outcomes be reported annually by January 31st. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed.

The License Renewal Update was presented by Mrs. Weast and Dr. Ashley. Dr. Ashley reported he has accepted a waiver request for license renewal which was submitted by a doctor who is undergoing medical treatment which has prohibited him from attaining in-person CE. The waiver allowed the doctor to acquire all CE online and waived the requirement for in-person CE for the

current licensure renewal, pending Board approval. Dr. Fitzhugh moved to accept the licensure renewal CE waiver. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

A doctor has requested license renewal as a late filer due to extenuating circumstances. Discussion ensued. Dr. Hennessey moved to request additional information to be considered at the April 2024 Board meeting. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Fitzhugh presented the Complaint Committee Update. Recommendation of dismissal of complaint has been made in reference to three doctors. In the case of each doctor, recommendation to dismiss was made due to lack of violation of the Rules based on the evidence presented. The following motions were made to accept the recommendation of the committee: Dr. J.L.; motion made by Dr. Hennessey; Dr. DeBlack made a second; the motion passed. Dr. M.H.; motion made by Dr. Hennessey; Dr. Fitzhugh made a second; the motion passed. Dr. E.L.; motion made by Dr. Hennessey; Dr. DeBlack made a second; the motion passed.

Dr. Hennessey presented the Regulatory Review Recommendations, which included guidance regarding applications for licensure and delegation of authority. Discussion ensued. Dr. Hennessey made a motion for the Board members to be provided blank copies of all applications, to be reviewed by the Board prior to the April 2024 meeting. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

The discussion of Rules changes was tabled to the next regular meeting.

The discussion of medical marijuana was tabled to the next regular meeting.

Next Meeting Dates:

Board Meeting- April 25, 2024

Arkansas Optometric Association Jurisprudence Course- Friday, April 26, 2024, 4:30 p.m.

ARBO Meeting- June 16-18, 2024, Nashville, Tennessee

Advanced Procedure Testing- June 13, 2024

Proctors- Dr. David Hall, Dr. Chris Wroten.

Dr. Hennessey made a motion for per diem and mileage. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed.

Attorney Kirchner notified the Board that due to a job change, this will be her last meeting as Board Counsel.

Dr. Hennessey made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.