

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY EXAMINERS
6201 Florida Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806
MINUTES
October 4, 2024

I. Roll Call/Call to Order/Confirmation of posting of notice and agenda

The roll was called at 9:07am with present: Drs. Kasovich, Lamar, Anastasio, Jong, and Mrs. Wicker. Dr. Gerdes arrived at 9:26am. Also present were Executive Director Anna Cahill, Public Guests/OAL Members and Board counsel Mr. AJ Herbert.
Declaring a quorum was present, Dr. Kasovich called the meeting to order.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt updated agenda (Wicker/Lamar) - approved/adopted without objection.
Passed unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Kasovich motioned for the approval of the minutes from the August 26, 2024 meeting.
Dr. Lamar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. Secretary's Report

- a. **Finance and Budget Report** – Ms. Cahill provided an update to the Board regarding the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss documents.
- b. **License Activity**
 - a. **Renewals** – Ms. Cahill notified the Board of licensees who have not yet renewed and those at which attempts at contact have failed.
 - b. **Applicants/new licensees** - Ms. Cahill notified the Board that two candidates still need to obtain their license and have until October 10, 2024 to do so without having to retake the exam.
 - c. **Endorsement request** – One request.
 - d. **Inactive requests** – One request.
 - e. **Hardship requests** – No new requests.
 - f. **Request for reinstatement** - No new requests.
 - g. **Complaints** – discussed during executive session
- c. **Required Training**
 - a. Ms. Cahill reminded the Board to take their sexual harassment prevention and ethics training resources from BOE.
- d. **Requests for Guidance**
 - a. Mr. Herbert informed the Board of three requests for guidance the Board received. The first was from a female OD who asked whether she was required to use her married name professionally after her marriage (no). The second was whether an OD can impose a facility charge (defer to applicable insurer). The third was whether an out of state OD could obtain a “temporary license” to practice in Louisiana (no).

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OLD BUSINESS

V. Update on Status of 2022 & 2023 Audit

Dr. Kasovich discussed the draft report that was received from the Auditor. Findings for reimbursement of travel expenses for Board members was the only finding. All previous findings were addressed properly. Mr. Herbert notified the Board that a response was sent regarding the corrective action being taken for these findings.

VI. Update on LSBOE Rules in Development

- a. **Continuing Education (per Act 194 of 2023)** – Dr. Kasovich discussed the draft document of the rule he plans to send. Dr. Anastasio suggested a change to add the word “approved” before source in two instances on the document. Dr. Anastasio made a motion to accept the proposed rule with the suggested changes and submit as soon as possible. Dr. Lamar seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- b. **Dispensing Pharmaceuticals** – No new updates.
- c. **Alternate Path to Licensure (NBEO)** – No new updates.
- d. **Disability Accommodations (per ACT 393 OF 2023)** – Dr. Kasovich notified the Board that he signed the document and the Board is now in compliance with the new law.
- e. **Telehealth** – Dr. Lamar reached out to three states with similar scope of practice as Louisiana (Oklahoma, Kentucky and Arkansas). A brief discussion was held regarding each state’s telehealth rules, fees and policies. Dr. Kasovich suggested to have a representative/consultant come present to the Board regarding telehealth rules.

VII. Update on Newsletter

No new updates.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion Concerning Insurance Premium- Dr. Kasovich notified the Board of the increase in insurance premium from the Office of Risk Management. The invoice can be paid monthly or quarterly due to the large increase. Mr. Herbert notified the Board that according to ORM, this increase will possibly be in effect for the next five years, and that it was driven in part by the increase in the size of the board resulting from the 2023 legislation but mostly due to the OAL litigation.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion (Wicker/Jong) – A roll call vote was held to go into executive session; the motion passed unanimously. (Entered 9:38am) Dr. Gerdes, excused himself from the room for discussion of the OAL litigation during executive session.

VIII. Litigation

- A. By OAL v Heitmeier, et al No C-729018 19th JDC State of Louisiana
- B. By LSBOE v OAL et al No. C-729434 19th JDC State of Louisiana
- C. Report on September 6 meeting between LSBOE & OAL members
- D. Meeting with LLA set for October 22

IX. Update on Complaints

- a. Pending Complaints
 - b. New Complaints since last Meeting
- X. Requests for Reinstatement from Prior Disciplinary Action**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – (Exited 10:08am)

XIV. Report on Items Discussed in Executive Session

No votes were taken in Executive Session.

XVI. Public Comment

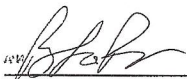
No public comment.

XVII. Next Meeting


Board members agreed that the next meeting/hearing will be scheduled for November 8, 2024 in Baton Rouge for 9:00am.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:20am.



Paul Lapoint, O.D.
Secretary LSBOE



Kevin Kasovich, O.D.
President LSBOE