

## Minutes of the June 30, 2023 Board of Hearing Instrument Specialists Meeting

### **1. ROLL CALL**

Chairperson, Ed Granger, called the meeting of the Board of Hearing Instrument Specialists to order at 1:17 p.m. on June 30, 2023, in the Lower-Level Conference Room A, at the Nebraska State Office Building located at 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska. In accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411 of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, copies of the agenda were e-mailed to the Board members and other interested parties, posted on the DHHS web site at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>, and posted in the Licensure Unit on June 15, 2023.

Granger announced that this is an open meeting, and the Open Meetings Act is posted.

**Members Present:** The following members answered roll call:

Misti Lutt-Chmiel, Secretary  
Dr. Aaron Robinson, Vice-Chairperson  
Ed Granger, Chairperson  
Dr. Kelly Pritchett, Member (via Webex)

**Members Absent:**

Cameron Ellison, Member

**Others Present:**

Suzanna Glover-Ettrich, DHHS Attorney (via Webex)  
Claire Covert-ByBee, Program Manager  
Amy Blinston, Health Licensing Coordinator  
T.J. O'Neill, Assistant Attorney General

### **2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Lutt-Chmiel moved, seconded by Robinson, to adopt the agenda. Voting aye: Granger, Lutt-Chmiel, Robinson, and Pritchett. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE 2.24.2023 MEETING MINUTES**

Pritchett moved, seconded by Lutt-Chmiel, to approve the 2.24.2023 meeting minutes. Voting aye: Granger, Lutt-Chmiel, Robinson, and Pritchett. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

### **4. INVESTIGATIONAL & CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION/REPORTS – CLOSED SESSION**

The Board did not move into closed session.

### **5. BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS ON APPLICATIONS**

No recommendations were made.

## **6. IHS PRACTICAL EXAM**

Covert-ByBee indicated that if Nebraska adopted the International Hearing Society's practical exam in lieu of the current exam, there is a \$200.00 fee per candidate and providing proctors would still be necessary. Currently, Nebraska uses an exam developed by the Board and does not charge a fee to take the exam. Covert-ByBee advised that switching to the IHS exam would require a change in regulations and costs would increase for the applicants. Using the IHS practical exam would also provide more uniformity between jurisdictions, potentially making it less prohibitive to obtain licensure in multiple states. Covert-ByBee will contact IHS and ask them to do a presentation at the October 2023 Board meeting.

## **7. UPDATE ON THE NEW LICENSURE DATABASE**

Covert-ByBee advised that the Department signed an emergency contract with System Automation to help stabilize the current database, LIS. The project kicked off on June 15<sup>th</sup> and completion of this phase is set for January 1, 2025. Simultaneously, the Department is working of revamping an RFP for the second phase, expansion of services.

## **8. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Covert-ByBee stated that approximately thirty bills were amended into LB227, which became the DHHS omnibus bill, and largely does not affect Hearing Instrument Specialists. A bill was introduced to expand the scope of practice for Hearing Instrument Specialists to include cerumen management however that bill did not progress, and will be held over until the next legislative session. The 407 Credentialing Review Program is the preferred method for regulation promulgation, and would allow the Board to include the IHS practical exam in regulations. More information about that process can be found here at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/credentialing-review.aspx>. Covert-ByBee also advised that any questions regarding LB574, the Let Them Grow Act, may be directed to Dr. Timothy Tesmer, CMO.

## **9. LICENSURE AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 22-08**

Covert-ByBee advised Executive Order 22-08 expired June 30, 2023. A guidance document regarding the expiration of this order can be found here: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Documents/ExecutiveOrdersExpiringGuidance.pdf>

## **10. LICENSURE APPLICATION PROCESSING REPORT**

This report was provided for informational purposes only.

## **11. TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING**

Topics identified for the next meeting include APR, IHS Practical Examination Presentation, LIS Update, Schedule 2024 Meetings, and Credential Review Report.

*These minutes were approved by the Board of Hearing Instrument Specialists via mail ballot on 7.18.23.*

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:42p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Misti Lutt-Chmiel, Secretary