

Board of Hearing Instrument Specialists Virtual Meeting Minutes February 21, 2025

1. Roll Call

Cameron Ellison, Vice Chair, called the meeting of the Board of Hearing Instrument Specialists to order at 1:07 p.m. on February 21, 2025, in the Otoe Conference Room at the Nebraska State Office Building located at 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska. Pursuant to 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 Nebraska State Office Building East Vestibule on February 10, 2025.

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

Members Present

Cameron Ellison, HIS, COHC, Vice Chair (via Webex)
Tomeka Johnson, Secretary (via Webex)
Dr. Nicole Kopetzky
Scott Jones, BC-HIS, CPD (via Webex)

Members Absent

Dr. Aaron Robinson

Staff Present

Claire Covert-ByBee, Program Manager
Kirsten Coniglio, Health Licensing Specialist
Teresa Hampton, DHHS Legal Attorney
Jeff Newman, Investigator

Jeanne Burke, Assistant Attorney General, joined the meeting at 1:32 p.m.
Kim Hitzel, Health Licensing Coordinator, joined the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Ellison moved, seconded by Kopetzky, to adopt the agenda. Voting aye: Jones, Kopetzky, Ellison, Johnson. Voting nay: none. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

3. Reaffirmation of Mail Ballot

The meeting minutes of November 15, 2024, were approved November 21, 2024. Voting to approve the minutes as written: Jones, Kopetzky, Robinson, Ellison, Johnson, and Ed Granger, former Board Chair.

4. Closed Session

Ellison moved, seconded by Kopetzky, to move into closed session at 1:11 p.m. to hear discussions regarding confidential information and to protect the reputation of individuals named or referenced in such discussions. Voting aye: Jones, Kopetzky, Ellison, Johnson. Voting nay: none. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

Board returned to open session at 2:32 p.m.

5. Board Recommendations

No recommendations were made.

6. Legislative Update and LB 154 Discussion

Covert-ByBee reported that LB 154, which proposes to change the scope of practice of hearing instrument specialists licensed in Nebraska and to require additional educational requirements to perform such expanded scope, was introduced in the Legislature on January 13, 2025, and that the Health and Human Services Committee held a public hearing on this bill on February 5, 2025.

7. ASLP Compact Update

Covert-ByBee reported that the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact has entered into a tripartite agreement with the Occupational Therapy Compact and the Counseling Compact to form Compact Connect, a collaborative, open-source project to develop a licensure compact data system, and that the ASLP-IC hopes to become operational in late summer of 2025.

8. Update on New Licensure Database

Covert-ByBee reported that the new licensure database will go live on February 25, 2025.

9. Licensure Application Processing Report

The Application Processing Report is offered for informational purposes only.

10. Voting for Officers

Kopetzky moved, seconded by Jones, to elect the following slate of officers and consultants to a one-year term pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-169 and Department request: Cameron Ellison, Chair; Scott Jones, Vice Chair; Tomeka Johnson, Secretary; Dr. Nicole Kopetzky, Educational Consultant; Dr. Nicole Kopetzky, Investigative Consultant. Voting aye: Jones, Kopetzky, Ellison, Johnson. Voting nay: none. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

11. Per Diem

Jones moved, seconded by Ellison, that, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-171, each member of the Board shall receive in 2025 a per diem of \$50.00 and that each Board meeting shall include one day of preparation. Voting aye: Jones, Kopetzky, Ellison, Johnson. Voting nay: none. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

12. Notice of Publication

Kopetzky moved, seconded by Ellison, that, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411 of the Open Meetings Act, the notice of meetings of this Board be posted virtually on the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Licensure Board Meeting Agenda page, posted physically on the Board Meeting Agenda billboard in the lobby of the Nebraska State Office Building, and disseminated to a list of stakeholders and interested parties. Voting aye: Jones, Kopetzky, Ellison, Johnson. Voting nay: none. Absent: Robinson. Motion carried.

13. Topic for Next Meeting

Topics identified for the next meeting include, legislative update, licensure database update, ASLP Compact update, and Licensure Application Processing Report.

14. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tomeka Johnson, Secretary