

Minutes of the June 28, 2024 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 1:00 p.m. on June 28, 2024, in the Goldenrod Conference Room, Lower-Level, 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 11, 2024.

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

Members Present: The following members answered roll call:

Ed Granger, Chairperson
Cameron Ellison, Member
Tomeka Johnson, Member
Nicole Kopetzky, Member
Scott Jones, Secretary

Members Absent:

Dr. Aaron Robinson, Vice-Chairperson

Others Present:

Suzanna Glover-Ettrich, DHHS Attorney (via Webex)
Claire Covert-ByBee, Program Manager
Kim Hitzel, Health Licensing Coordinator
Jeanne Borger, Assistant Attorney General

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: Ellison moved, seconded by Scott to adopt the agenda. Voting aye: Granger, Kopetzky, Johnson, Ellison, and Jones. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

3. REAFFIRMATION OF MAIL BALLOT

Covert-ByBee stated that this is the opportunity for the Department to read into the minutes any votes that occurred by mail ballot in between regularly scheduled Board meetings.

The following mail ballots occurred:

1. Approval of the February 23, 2024 Board meeting minutes. Voting to approve: Ellison, Granger, Jones, and Johnson. The minutes were approved on March 4, 2024.
2. Appoint Board Member Ellison to replace Board Member Johnson to represent the Board at the public hearing for LB 1417 before the Government, Military, and Veteran's Affairs Legislative committee. Voting to approve: Ellison, Johnson, Jones, Robinson, and Granger. Voting to abstain: Kopetzky. Ballot approved February 26, 2024.

4. CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: Kopetzky moved, seconded by Ellison to move into Closed Session to hear discussions regarding confidential information and to protect the reputation of individuals named or referenced in such discussions. Voting aye: Granger, Kopetzky, Johnson, Ellison, and Jones. Voting Nay: none. The Board went into closed session at 1:02 p.m.

5. BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS ON APPLICATIONS

The board returned from closed session at 1:34 p.m.

1. **MOTION:** Kopetzky moved, seconded by Ellison to recommend issuing a Hearing Instrument Specialist license by reciprocity from the State of Illinois for Shaunna Colombo. Voting aye: Kopetzky, Jones, Johnson, Ellison, and Granger. Voting nay: none. Motion carried
2. The board tabled a decision on the application for Brett Griffin.

6. Advanced Hearing Aid Professional Program (AHAP)

This material was presented to the board for informational purposes only.

7. Legislative Update

1. LB 1417 was postponed indefinitely. This bill proposed to dissolve the Hearing Instrument Board and move regulation of hearing instrument specialists under the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Board.
2. LB 593 was postponed indefinitely. Kopetzky and Jones offered information regarding the Credentialing Review Process to expand the scope of practice for HIS licensees in Nebraska as it is directly related to this legislation. That credentialing review report was not approved by the Credentialing Review Committee, nor the Board of Health.
3. LB 16 passed. This adds language to the Occupational Board Reform Act to outline the convictions termed "disqualifying convictions", outline the circumstances under which the Board/Department may disqualify an applicant for licensure, and provides a new pathway to licensure for reciprocity. The Department has determined that a denial of a license on the basis of convictions would be subject to the new requirements in LB 16. It will become operational on January 1, 2025

8. Update on New Licensure Database

Covert-ByBee advised that the Department of Health and Human Services is working with the contractor to validate data and prepare for the new database. Training on the new database is planned in August 2024. Projected date for implementation is late 2024 or early 2025.

9. Licensure Application Processing Report

The Application Processing Report was provided for informational purposes only.

10. Topics for Next Meeting

The following topics for the next board meeting are Update on the Legislative Update, New Licensure Database, Public Comment, and Application Processing Report.

11. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

12. Closed Session

MOTION: Ellison moved, seconded by Granger to move into Closed Session to hear discussions regarding confidential information and to protect the reputation of individuals named or referenced in such discussions. Voting aye: Granger, Ellison, Johnson, Jones, Kopetzky. Voting nay: none. Closed session entered 1:49 pm.

The board returned from closed session at 2:06 p.m.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tomeka Johnson, Secretary