

Minutes of the September 5, 2019 Board of Registered Environmental Health Specialists Meeting

1. ROLL CALL

Jeremy Collinson, Secretary, called the meeting of the Board of Registered Environmental Health Specialists to order at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 5, 2019 in the Lower Level Conference Room B at the Nebraska State Office Building located at 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska. The meeting was duly publicized by distribution of the Notice of Meeting and Agenda at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and posting the agenda at the entrance of the Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting.

Collinson announced that this is a public meeting and the Open Meetings Law is posted.

Members Present: The following members answered roll call:

Jeremy Collinson, Secretary
Dr. Larry Hardesty, Member
Nathan Hartman, Member
Kathy King, Member
Sarah Pistillo, Member
Mike Wentink, Member

Others Present:

Ami Huff, Assistant Attorney General
Claire Covert-ByBee, Program Manager
Antonio Carranza, Health Licensing Coordinator

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: Pistillo moved, seconded by Hartman, to adopt the agenda. Voting aye: Collinson, Hardesty, Hartman, King, Pistillo and Wentink. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2017 MINUTES

MOTION: Pistillo moved, seconded by Collinson, to approve the minutes from the September 7, 2017 meeting. Voting aye: Collinson and Pistillo. Voting nay: None. Abstain: Hardesty, Hartman, King and Wentink. Motion carried.

4. INVESTIGATIONAL & CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION/REPORTS – CLOSED SESSION

There were no items to discuss in closed session.

5. BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS – OPEN SESSION

There were no recommendations.

6. REAFFIRMATION OF MAIL BALLOTS

The Board reaffirmed the mail ballot to approve the revisions made to the regulations regarding licensure of Registered Environmental Health Specialists. Collinson, King, Pistillo and Wentink voted to approve. Hartman voted to abstain. Hardesty voted not to approve. The revisions were approved with four votes.

The Board also reaffirmed the mail ballot to approve the initial application for licensure as a Registered Environmental Health Specialist for Jennifer Loeffler. Ms. Loeffler attested to practicing 379 days without a license. Collinson, Hardesty, Hartman, King, Pistillo and Wentink voted to approve her application. The mail ballot was approved with six votes.

7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Covert-ByBee provided a legislative update. LB 29 became operational September 1, 2019 and allows for telehealth for a number of different professions. Registered Environmental Health Specialists were not included. LB 112 provides waiver of initial licensure fees for applicants between the ages of 18-25, low income as defined by the bill and active duty military and dependents. It is operational as of January 1, 2020. LB 409 adopts design standards for health care facilities and is operational as of September 1, 2019.

8. REGULATIONS UPDATE

Covert-ByBee provided a regulation update. 172 NAC 10 was approved and promulgated, the Uniform Credentialing Act (UCA) general chapter that applies to all occupations under the UCA. The regulations regarding the licensure of Registered Environmental Health Specialists were submitted to department legal and then on to the Governor's Policy Research Office (GPRO). The GPRO completed their review and a public hearing was scheduled for Monday, September 30, 2019 to receive any comments from the public. The Department scheduled a meeting with the Board to meet October 15th to respond to any public comments.

9. HOT TOPIC DISCUSSION: DEREGULATING OF PROFESSIONS

Covert-ByBee started the conversation by discussing the trend of deregulating professions nationwide. She highlighted a few examples where that has taken place within the state as well. She stated it applies specifically to Registered Environmental Health Specialists because they have a national certification but it may not require all of the same qualifications and continuing education, as well as disciplinary history as a state license. King stated her support of the credential for many reasons but especially attaining continuing education and making sure each credential holder is staying up to date and expanding their knowledge base.

10. BOARD APPOINTMENT CRITERIA

Covert-ByBee stated that the Board of Health is looking for input from board members to indicate what criteria they consider most important for new board members. She suggested the Board of Health would use this information to help make decisions if a few candidates are very close in qualifications as a potential "tiebreaker." The Board provided feedback.

11. APPLICATION PROCESSING REPORT

These minutes were approved by the Board of Registered Environmental Health Specialists on October 15, 2019.

Covert-ByBee provided an application processing report. It was for informational purposes only.

12. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Wentink moved, seconded by Collinson, voted to elect a slate of King as Chairperson, Pistillo as Vice-Chairperson, Hartman as Secretary and Pistillo as Investigative Consultant. Voting aye: Collinson, Hardesty, Hartman, King, Pistillo and Wentink. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

13. NOTICE OF MEETING PUBLICATION

The Board is required to inform the public each year the method by which it will provide notice of meetings. In the past, the Board has chosen to post meeting agendas at the Nebraska State Office Building, to email agendas to the interested parties list, and to post agendas on the Department's website.

MOTION: Pistillo moved, seconded by Wentink to continue these methods of publication. Voting aye: Collinson, Hardesty, Hartman, King, Pistillo and Wentink. Voting nay: None. Motion carried.

14. TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

Suggested topics for the next meeting included information on LB 732 the Mobile Food Unit Act and a regulation update.

15. SCHEDULE MEETING FOR NEXT YEAR

The Board scheduled the meeting for next year for September 9, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

16. RECOGNITION OF JEREMY COLLINSON, LARRY HARDESTY AND MIKE WENTINK

The Board and Department recognized Jeremy Collinson, Larry Hardesty and Mike Wentink for their service to the Board. All three members are completing their first term on November 30, 2019 but are eligible to reapply for a second term.

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Collinson, Secretary