NEBRASKA BOARD OF NURSING
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
September 10, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Nebraska Board of Nursing was called to order by Brenda Smidt, Board President, at 8:30 a.m., September 10, 2026, at the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment's Hearing Office, 245 Fallbrook Blvd., Lincoln NE 68521. Copies of the agenda were emailed to the Board members, emailed to interested parties, posted in the east entryway of the Nebraska State Office Building, and posted on the Department of Health & Human Services website on August 28, 2026. Smidt announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act was available in the room.

ROLL CALL

The following board members were present and answered roll call:

- Holly Chandler, APRN-CRNA
- Gina Crudden, APRN-CNS
- Theresa Delahoyde, RN
- Kathy Harrison, RN, *Board Secretary*
- Angela Kula, LPN
- Kandis Lefler, LPN
- Elizabeth Mollard, APRN-CNM
- Patricia Motl, RN
- Eric Rogat, RN, *Board Vice-President*
- Kristin Ruiz, RN
- Jules Russ, *Public Member*
- Brenda Smidt, RN, *Board President*

The following board member was absent: Indra Sukhram, APRN-NP

Two board positions were vacant.

The following staff members from the Department and the Attorney General's Office were present during all or part of the meeting:

- Ann Oertwich, RN, *Executive Director*
- April Minster, RN, *Nursing Education Consultant*
- Danielle Dohrmann, RN, *Nursing Practice Consultant*
- Sherri Joyner*, Health Licensing Coordinator*
- Jeanette Peterson, *DHHS Compliance Monitor*
- Mindy Lester, *Assistant Attorney General*
- Elli Rohr, *Attorney, DHHS Legal*
- Andrew Rodriguez*, DHHS Legal*
- Tricia Allen*, Investigations Program Manager*
- Brittany Bigham*, RN Investigator*
- Susan Held, RN, *Investigator*
- Mendy Mahar-Clark, *Investigator*

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Motl made the motion, seconded by Chandler, to adopt the agenda for the September 10, 2026, Board of Nursing meeting.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

These minutes were approved by the Board of Nursing on October 8, 2026.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: Ruiz made the motion, seconded by Harrison, to approve the consent agenda.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: Kula made the motion, seconded by Delahoyde, for the Board to go into closed session for the purpose of reviewing and discussing investigative reports, licensure applications, and other confidential information, and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of the individuals.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

Smidt announced that the Board was in closed session for the purpose of reviewing and discussing investigative reports, licensure applications, and other confidential information, and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of the individuals.

8:35 a.m. *Meeting went into closed session.*
8:57 a.m. *Smidt left the meeting.*
9:01 a.m. *Smidt returned to the meeting.*
9:53 a.m. *Meeting went into recess.*
10:03 a.m. *Meeting reconvened.*
10:29 a.m. *Meeting returned to open session.*

LICENSURE RECOMMENDATIONS

CHRISTIAN G. BELVIN – RN APPLICANT

MOTION: Motl made the motion, seconded by Rogat, to recommend issuing an unrestricted RN license to Christian Belvin.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, and Smidt. Voting No: Kula and Russ. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

CHRISTIN L. CARSON – RN APPLICANT

MOTION: Chandler made the motion, seconded by Ruiz, to table Christin Carson's application for an RN license in order to obtain additional information.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: Lefler. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

MEGAN A. TRAGESER – RN REINSTATEMENT FROM DISCIPLINE

MOTION: Ruiz made the motion, seconded by Harrison, to recommend reinstating an unrestricted RN license to Megan Trageser. The recommendation for reinstatement is based on positive letter of reference from employer, completion of education courses, and completion of PBI Boundaries course.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

PRACTICE COMMITTEE

MOTION: The Practice Committee moved, seconded by Rogat, that the Board approve revisions to the *Safe Practice: Fitness to Practice* Advisory Opinion.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

MOTION: The Practice Committee moved, seconded by Rogat, that the Board approve revisions to the *Safe Practice: Staffing Assignments* Advisory Opinion.

Voting Yes: Chandler, Crudden, Delahoyde, Harrison, Kula, Lefler, Mollard, Motl, Rogat, Ruiz, Russ, and Smidt. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Sukhram. Motion carried.

NCSBN UPDATES

Members who attended the NCSBN Annual Meeting in August reported on their experiences. The Delegate Assembly voted to approve changes to NCSBN's Model Rules, which can be viewed on the NCSBN's website. The Delegate Assembly also approved raising the NCLEX exam fee to $350 starting in February 2027. Delahoyde noted that some participants wanted to phase in the fee increase, but she thought the "pull the band aid" approach was preferable

Motl was re-elected to the Succession Leadership Committee. Oertwich received an award for ten years of service as a member board Executive Director.

Motl and Rogat attended a breakout session on how states handle discipline. They noted that discipline processes vary widely among states.

Delahoyde appreciated the keynote address, which emphasized that NCSBN and its member boards are guardians of public protection, that true leadership is based on listening, and the regulators should remember the core values of vision, integrity, and humility.

Motl reported that NCSBN has created a task force to examine med spas and IV hydration businesses.

Motl reported that NCSBN has a new platform for collaboration between boards called the Loop. Rogat encouraged members to look at the coursework available on NCSBN's Meridians site. Coursework previously offered through NCSBN's International Center for Regulatory Scholarship (ICRS) website will be available on Meridians starting October 1st.

APRN ITEMS

172 NAC 98 – Oertwich reported that she expects that only minor changes will be needed to the Regulations Governing the Practice of Advanced Practice Registered Nursing (172 NAC 98). Based on her discussions with the DHHS Office of Radiological Health, the majority of the revisions needed to allow Nurse Practitioners to utilize fluoroscopy will occur in the radiation regulations.

Certified Nurse Midwives Credentialing Review – Mollard reported that the Committee reviewing the Nebraska Certified Nurse-Midwives Association's request for full practice authority will meet on October 6th and October 29th. The October 29th meeting is a public hearing at which any interested party, such as the the Board of Nursing, may testify.

APRN-Clinical Nurse Specialist Role – Crudden gave a presentation on the APRN-Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) role. The first master's program for Clinical Nurse Specialists was started in 1954, led by Hildegard

Peplau, who is often credited with establishing the CNS profession. A CNS is an expert clinician whose primary goal is to improve patient outcomes through a combination of providing direct patient care, championing evidence-based nursing practices, and facilitating inter-professional teams. Among APRNs practicing in the U.S., Clinical Nurse Specialists represent the second largest groups after Nurse Practitioners. Crudden noted that some might find the numbers surprising given the relatively low number of Clinical Nurse Specialists in Nebraska.

Like other APRN roles, Clinical Nurse Specialists are certified in one of six population foci (family, gerontology, women's health, pediatrics, neonatal, and psychiatric/mental health) and must have a graduate-level education. There are Clinical Nurse Specialists with master's degrees, but a Doctor or Nursing Practice (DNP) is now required. Crudden noted that there is a common misconception that all people with DNP degrees are Nurse Practitioners. It takes approximately 3-5 years for someone to earn a DNP degree in a Clinical Nurse Specialist program. Most CNS students have at least 2-3 years of practice in a nursing specialty before entering a DNP program.

In terms of advocacy for the CNS role, one issue of concern is title protection. Crudden noted that there are people who call themselves clinical nurse specialists even though they do not have the required education and certification. Another issue of concern is prescriptive authority. Clinical Nurse Specialists do not have prescribing privileges or authority in Nebraska, but they do in 41 other states. Clinical Nurse Specialists working for Veterans Affairs have full prescriptive authority.

In the past year, a number of milestones have been achieved in promoting the role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist in Nebraska. The Nebraska Clinical Nurse Specialists (NECNS) Mutual Interest Group was approved by the Nebraska Nurses Association, creating a forum for statewide CNS collaboration and advocacy. NECNS has also been approved as an affiliate of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists. In addition, the week of September 1-7, 2026, was formally declared as Clinical Nurse Specialist Week by Governor Pillen.

RN & APRN RENEWALS

Oertwich reported that approximately 3,278 RN licenses have been renewed. Joyner noted that there were approximately 500 RN who have applied for renewal and are in the queue for processing. Although the online renewal platform used by licensees has not changed, the back-office processing of renewals is a bit slower in the Licensure Unit's new database. The difference was not notable during LPN renewals in 2025, but staff are experiencing a backlog in processing the RN and APRN renewals due to the significantly higher volume. Staff are working with the database vendor to make the process more efficient. Joyner also noted that staff need to run an address change report before processing the RN renewals in order to identify nurses who may no longer be eligible for multistate status under the rules of the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). It will generally take at least two days after a nurse applies for renewal online before their updated expiration date appears on the DHHS License Lookup website.

There was a big jump in the number of RN renewals submitted online on September 1st, which Joyner thought might be connected to renewal notifications sent via text and email to RNs already enrolled in Nursys eNotify. The mailing of postcard notifications will be delayed until the State's print shop receives a new shipment of cardstock, as their current supply will not cover the approximately 40,000 postcards that need to be sent to RNs and APRNs.

Crudden suggested adding a question during the renewal process asking if the applicant was a military spouse. Delahoyde recommended adding "education" as an option to the specialty question on the renewal survey. Kula asked if there were any updates about the Nurse Licensure Compact. Oertwich noted that Rural Health Transformation Program grants incentivize states to join licensure compacts. She also noted that Alaska is receiving pressure to join the NLC.

COMMUNICATION

Nursing News –Oertwich reported that content for the winter edition of *Nursing News* is due at the publisher on October 14th. She will contact new Board members about submitting biographical articles for publication in the newsletter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received.

CONCLUSION

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sherri Joyner
Health Licensing Coordinator