

Minutes

Arkansas State Board of Optometry
Regular Board Meeting
Freeway Medical Tower Building
Little Rock, Arkansas
February 16, 2023

Dr. Bryant Ashley, Board President, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

All Board members were present. Also in attendance were: Tanya Ford, Board Director; Dawanna Walls, Fiscal Support Specialist; Lacie Kirchner, Assistant Attorney General and Board Counsel; Vicki Farmer, Executive Director, ArOA; Debbie Henley, Executive Assistant, ArOA; Dr. Allison Hall; Dr. Ada Noh, Dr. Valerie Arnold; Dr. Griffin Smith; Dr. Briley Hearn.

The minutes from the November 17, 2022 meeting were presented by Dr. Reed. Dr. Hennessey made a motion to approve. Mr. Gentry made a second. The motion passed.

Ms. Ford presented the financial report, which included budgetary changes have been made whereas the money market investment funds have been transferred to the general fund. Ms. Ford also discussed other revenue and expenditure items. Mr. White made a motion to approve. Mr. Gentry made a second. The motion passed.

Ms. Ford presented the license renewal update including the number of licensed doctors and the number which are certified in advanced procedures. Dr. William Cheek has requested to renew his license under special circumstances. The Rules require the doctor to present his case to the board for consideration. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to interview the doctor for license renewal at the next board meeting. Mr. White made a second. The motion passed.

Ms. Ford presented the Doctor Lookup on the Website. She is meeting with the company which does our online tests in an effort to improve the doctor information on the website.

Ms. Ford notified the board that the Dispensing Ophthalmic Bill, Senate Bill 82, has been filed but is not on the agenda as of today. Ms. Ford will stay abreast of the progress of the bill.

Ms. Ford discussed that the Online Jurisprudence has been going well and is a significant improvement over the paper tests.

Ms. Ford gave an update on Divas Beauty Supply. The business has not yet made any payments toward the assessed fine.

The definition of optometry on the license renewals was discussed. The Rules require the definition of optometry to appear on the license renewals. In light of the 2020 expanded scope of practice, the definition has become lengthy and the previous definition is obsolete. Attorney Kirchner informed the board that ACA 17-90-101(a) was added to address the issue. The Rules may change so that the placement of the definition of optometry is no longer required.

Dr. Ashley presented the topic of the Charles Crosslin OD- Malpractice Suit. The suit was settled out of court with disputed liability, no admission of guilt. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion that no further action is required by the board. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Ashley introduced the new licentiates, Dr. Briley Hearn and Dr. Griffin Smith.

Dr. Ada Noh made a request to the board to determine whether platelet replacement plasma (PRP) eye drops are within the scope of practice. Discussion ensued. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to table the discussion pending additional information. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Ashley and Ms. Ford presented the 2022 Laser Procedures Outcomes Report. 1,821 procedures were performed with no negative results.

License renewals for two doctors were discussed. Dr. Courtney Cobb requested additional time for CE hours due to mix up with COPE approved hours in Texas. Motion to approved license renewal was made by Mr. Gentry. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second and added the friendly amendment of requiring the completion of the CE hours prior to license renewal. The motion passed. Dr. Richard Jackson requested reinstatement of therapeutic privileges. The board recommendation is for the doctor to apply for licensure by endorsement.

Dr. Allyson Mertins sent a letter to the board regarding 1-800-contacts and online vision exams. Due to the contact lens prescription was approved and signed by an ophthalmologist, the issue will be sent to the medical board. Dr. Hennessey made a motion to send to the medical board. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Ashley presented shadowing hours at MD locations. Shadowing may be done with a board certified ophthalmologist located either in state or out of state.

Next meeting date is April 27, 2023.

Advanced Procedure Testing is June 15, 2023. The proctors and lasers have been arranged.

Dr. Hennessey made a motion for per diem and mileage. Mr. White made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Hennessey made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Dr. Beatrice Reed, Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Bryant Ashley, President