

Minutes

Arkansas State Board of Optometry
Regular Board Meeting
Freeway Medical Tower Building
Little Rock, Arkansas
June 23, 2022

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

Board members present: Dr. Beatrice Reed, Dr. Susan DeBlack, Dr. Robert Fitzhugh, Mr. William White; Dr. Dan Hennessey via teleconference. Absent: Mr. Mitchell Gentry.

Also in attendance were: Ms. Tanya Ford, Board Director; Ms. Lacie Kirchner, Asst. Attorney General; Mr. Matt Gilmore, Arkansas Department of Health; Dr. Melia Robertson, President, Arkansas Optometric Association, Mrs. Vicki Farmer, Executive Director, ArOA; Mrs. Debbie Henley, Executive Assistant, ArOA; Dr. Allison Hall, Dr. Patrick Tate, Dr. Richard Castillo.

Ms. Ford presented the Financial Report. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to accept the financial report. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed. Ms. Ford reported the Rules Promulgation is complete. Ms. Ford also reported that 15 doctors took the online optometry jurisprudence test.

Dr. Patrick Tate, a licensure by endorsement candidate, was interviewed by the Board. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to approve licensure by endorsement for Dr. Tate pending satisfactory completion of all other requirements. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Richard Castillo made a presentation entitled Cryosurgery for Optometric Surgeons. He stated that during the COVID pandemic, Northeastern State University College of Optometry discontinued electrocautery. Cryosurgery was implemented as it does not aerosolize tissue. NSU offers a three hour cryosurgery course.

Dr. Dan Hennessey, a member of the OE Tracker Committee, gave the ARBO report, which highlighted several topics. Bullet points will be sent to the Board Director, and topics will be discussed at Board meetings going forward.

Dr. Robertson presented the topic of continuing education and discussed the need to clarify the ways by which CE may be obtained. The CE requirements as stated in the Optometry Rules and Regulations were discussed. The terms live, virtual, synchronous, and interactive were discussed. The need to update methods of obtaining CE that are consistent with newer technology was also discussed. It was confirmed that optometric physicians may receive 8 hours of COPE approved interactive education as written in the Optometry Rules and Regulations, as part of the total minimum requirement of 20 hours of continuing education, per year.

A complaint has been filed against a beauty supply business located in Jacksonville, Arkansas for selling contact lenses. A patient incurred a severe eye infection due to purchasing contacts from

this establishment. Dr. Hennessey made a motion to send a Consent Agreement to the business owners. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed. If the Consent Agreement is not accepted, a Hearing for this complaint will be placed on the October Board meeting agenda.

Ms. Kirchner discussed the topic of the O.D. complaint process and recommended the formation of a Complaint Committee. Dr. Fitzhugh was appointed by Dr. Ashley to join Ms. Kirchner and Ms. Ford to comprise the O.D. Complaint Committee.

Next Meeting Date: August 18, 2022

Motion made by Dr. Fitzhugh for the Board members to be paid per diem and mileage. Mr. White made a second. The motion passed.

Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Fitzhugh. Dr. DeBlack made a second. The motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

Dr. Bryant Ashley, President

Dr. Beatrice Reed, Secretary-Treasurer