

Minutes

Arkansas State Board of Optometry

Regular Board Meeting

Freeway Medical Tower Building

Little Rock, Arkansas

August 17, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Board President, Dr. Bryant Ashley at 1:30 PM.

The following Board members were present: Dr. Bryant Ashley, Dr. Dan Hennessey, Dr. Robert Fitzhugh, Dr. Beatrice Reed. Also in attendance were: Tanya Ford, Board Director; Lacie Kirchner, Asst. Attorney General and Board Counsel; Vicki Farmer, ArOA Exec Dir.; Debbie Henley, ArOA Exec Asst.; Amber Leclerc, Fiscal Support Specialist; Dr. Allison Hall. The following licensure by endorsement candidates were also in attendance: Drs. Tram Nguyen, Amy Ruzicka, Ginny Schaffner, Matthew Schaffner, Markiel Yakubov.

The minutes from the June 15, 2023 meeting were presented by Dr. Reed. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to accept the minutes. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

The Board Update including the Financial Report was presented by Ms. Ford. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to accept the Financial Report. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed. Ms. Ford reported that Divas Beauty Supply completed the payments for its fine July 2023. Amber LeClerc was introduced as the new Fiscal Support Specialist. The position of Director has changed from GS 6 to GS 8. New legislation (Act 313 of 2023) requires posting of the notice stating Attacking a Healthcare Provider is a Felony.

Five doctors have completed all requirements and were granted licensure by endorsement. One doctor was approved for licensure by endorsement contingent upon completion of fingerprinting.

DEA continuing education requirements were discussed. A one time 8 hour course is now required. It is not required for graduates within the past 5 years.

Radio Frequency/Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) was discussed. Radio frequency may be performed only by doctors certified in Advanced Procedures.

Act 137 of 2023 was discussed. The Act adds consideration of national certification for uniformed service members, uniformed service veterans, and spouses, when moving to the state. Optometrists who hold an equivalent license will be granted an Arkansas license without the licensure by endorsement process. They are required to complete Jurisprudence. The law does not apply to Advanced Procedures certification. Dr. Hennessey made a motion to accept. Dr. Fitzhugh made a second. The motion passed.

Ms. Kirchner stated that it is time to review proposed Rules changes for any necessary updates and clarifications.

The ARBO and AOA Meetings reports were given by Dr. Hennessey and Dr. Reed. Topics discussed include the Model Practice Act, OE Tracker, NBEO, CELMO, and legislative meetings.

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) grant contracts were discussed. SREB currently has contracted slots at Northeastern State University and Southern College of Optometry. The Board has received a letter from the Division of Higher Education relative to the University of Missouri-St. Louis, which currently does not have any contract slots, but have had them in the past. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

The Board meeting dates for 2024 are as follows: February 15, April 25, June 13 (includes licensing examinations), August 15, October 17, November 21. Dr. Fitzhugh made a motion to approve the dates. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

The next Board meeting date is October 19, 2023.

Dr. Hennessey made a motion for mileage and per diem. Dr. Fitzhugh 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 3:08 p.m.

Dr. Beatrice Reed, Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Bryant Ashley, President