

State of Alaska  
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development  
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

Alaska State Board of Social Work Examiners  
April 22, 2019

*These are drafted minutes prepared by staff of the Alaska State  
Board of Social Work Examiners  
They have not been reviewed or approved by the Board.*

**Written meeting minutes only reflects a brief overview of the business conducted during the boards meeting. For a more detailed account, please request a copy of the meeting recording.**

By Authority of AS 08.01.070(2) and in compliance with the provisions of AS 44.62, a regularly scheduled meeting of the Alaska State Board of Social Work Examiners was held April 22, 2019. The meeting was held via teleconference originating at 333 Willoughby Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Conf. Room A, Juneau, AK 99811.

**April 22, 2019**

**Agenda item #1                      Call to order/Roll Call**

This meeting was called to order by Chairperson **Danielle LaFon** at **8:30AM**.

**Board Members present, constituting a quorum:**

Danielle LaFon, Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker, Chairperson  
Geoffry McCormick, Licensed Master Social Worker  
Mindy Swisher, Licensed Clinical Social Worker  
Colleen Vague, Public Member

**Division Staff present were:**

Lauren Osborn, Occupational Licensing Examiner

**Agenda Item #2                      New Board Member(s)**

With new board members in attendance, the board took some time making introductions and welcomed the two newest members: Ms. Colleen Vague and Ms. Mindy Swisher.

**Agenda Item #3                      Review Agenda**

The board made suggestions to add a Board Interview at 2:00PM, to remove Ms. Angela Christiansen's name from the list of board members within the header, and to add Ms. Mindy Swisher's.

**A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Ms. Colleen Vague, and approved by unanimous consent, was:**

**Resolved to approve the agenda as amended.**

**Agenda item #4                      Review Meeting Minutes**

The Board reviewed the drafted minutes presented in the Board Book. Ms. LaFon noted minor corrections to the minutes on pages 1, 2, and 10 of the December 10-11, 2018 minutes. Ms. LaFon also minor corrections to the



97 With time left before the Division Update, Ms. Osborn asked Mr. McCormick to speak a little about his experience  
98 at the ASWB New Board Member Training.  
99

100 Mr. McCormick stated that it was an outstanding meeting in which he gained a lot of knowledge. The meeting's  
101 message was directed at the role of the professional board as a regulator. The experience of networking and sharing  
102 problems with other jurisdictions that were experiencing similar issues with rules and regulations was very  
103 enlightening. Mr. McCormick noted it would be helpful to attend a few board meetings prior to attending this  
104 training.  
105

106 **ASWB Spring Education Conference:**

107 Ms. Osborn then spoke a little about her experience at the ASWB Spring Education Conference and concluded she  
108 had the same experience: "I did not know how much I did not know." The conference included topic discussions  
109 regarding updates being made to the ASWB website, an ASWB Supervision Task Force with the goal to look at  
110 supervision and competency requirements of each state and jurisdiction, and how to eliminate barriers to licensure.  
111 New Board Member Training is again being offered through ASWB in May and in August.  
112

113 The board discussed sending both Colleen Vague and Mindy Swisher to the next available session for New Board  
114 Member Training. Ms. Mindy Swisher elected to attend the August session while Ms. Colleen Vague would attend  
115 the session in May. The board also decided that Ms. Osborn should attend the New Board Member Training with  
116 Ms. Vague as well. The board determined that if Ms. Osborn is unable to attend the training in August, then she  
117 would attend the session in May with Ms. Swisher.  
118

119 **A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Ms. Mindy Swisher, and approved by**  
120 **unanimous consent, was:**  
121

122 **Resolved to send Colleen Vague to the ASWB New Board Member Training on May 30 – June 1, 2019**  
123 **and send Mindy Swisher to the ASWB New Board Member Training on August 22-24, 2019.**  
124

125 **A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Ms. Colleen Vague, and approved by**  
126 **unanimous consent, was:**  
127

128 **Resolved to send Lauren Osborn to the ASWB New Board Member Training on May 30 – June 1,**  
129 **2019 and the pending board member should one be appointed to the ASWB New Board Member**  
130 **Training on August 22-24, 2019.**  
131

132 **Agenda item #8** **Investigative Report**  
133

134 *Erika Prieksat joined the meeting at 9:45 a.m.*  
135

136 Ms. Prieksat informed the board that there were four (4) matters opened and six (6) matters closed. Three (3)  
137 matters remain ongoing and under active investigation. And Ms. Prieksat noted that case #2017-000824 was closed  
138 on 04/10/2019. With no further questions from the board, the Investigative Report ended.  
139

140 *Erika Prieksat exited the meeting at 9:49 a.m.*  
141

142 With just a few minutes before the Division Update, Ms. Osborn discussed continued glitches experienced by the  
143 board members when using OnBoard to review mail-ballots. Ms. Osborn let the board know that an update was  
144 pending with OnBoard that would hopefully fix the loading errors happening.  
145

146 **Agenda item #9** **Division update**

147  
148 *Accountant III, Marylene Wales joined the meeting at 9:57a.m.*

149  
150 Ms. Marylene Wales presented the FY19 second quarter financial report to the board. Ms. LaFon questioned where  
151 in the FY19 second quarter a \$181 reimbursement came from. Ms. Wales discovered it was a reimbursement for  
152 travel.

153  
154 *Accountant III, Marylene Wales exited the meeting at 10:05a.m.*

155  
156 With just a few minutes before the Consent Agreement Review, Ms. Osborn spoke more about OnBoard issues  
157 presented by some board members and possible solutions to review mail ballots. Ms. Osborn suggested that the  
158 ballots be reposted and reviewed again to ensure that every board member could review the ballot.

159  
160 *Jodie Menish joined the meeting at 10:16 a.m. to inquire when Public Comment was.*

161  
162 Ms. Osborn stated the Public Comment period was at 1:30PM.

163  
164 *Jodie Menish exited the meeting at 10:17 a.m.*

165  
166 The board realized Public Comment was set for 1:00PM today and elected to re-open Public Comment at 1:30PM if  
167 Ms. Menish returned.

168 **Agenda item #10** **Consent Agreements**

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170  
171 *Paralegal, Marilyn Zimmerman joined the meeting via telephone at 10:26 a.m.*

172  
173 **A motion duly made by Ms. Colleen Vague, seconded by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, and approved by**  
174 **unanimous consent, was:**

175  
176 **Resolved to enter Executive Session at 10:30AM in accordance with 44.62.311(c) for the purposes of**  
177 **discussing consent agreements and voluntary surrenders. Board staff to remain present: Lauren**  
178 **Osborn and Marilyn Zimmerman.**

179  
180 *Paralegal, Marilyn Zimmerman exited the meeting at 11:21a.m.*

181  
182 **A motion duly made by Ms. Colleen Vague, seconded by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, and approved by unanimous**  
183 **consent, was:**

184  
185 **Resolved to exit Executive Session at 11:22AM.**

186  
187 Ms. Osborn conducted a roll-call upon exiting executive session.

188  
189 **Board Members present, constituting a quorum:**

190 Danielle LaFon, LBSW, Chairperson  
191 Geoffrey McCormick, LMSW  
192 Mindy Swisher, LCSW  
193 Colleen Vague, Public Member

194  
195 **Division Staff present were:**

196 Lauren Osborn, Occupational License Examiner  
197

198 A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, seconded by Ms. Mindy Swisher, and approved by  
199 unanimous consent, was:

201 Resolved to approve the consent agreements presented by Marilyn Zimmerman for Cathy DiMaria  
202 (#CSWS1359) and Jessie Hathorne-Cantil (#CSWS1010).

204 A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, seconded by Ms. Colleen Vague, and approved by  
205 unanimous consent, was:

207 Resolved to accept the voluntary license surrender presented by Marilyn Zimmerman for Tara Haas  
208 (#CSWS1401) and Sheila Smith (#CSWS904).

210 A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, seconded by Ms. Colleen Vague, and approved by  
211 unanimous consent, was:

213 Resolved to approve the continuing education and clear the audits presented by Marilyn Zimmerman  
214 for Theresa Tanoury (#CSWS157) and for Susan O'Dell (#124628).

216 A motion duly made by Ms. Colleen Vague, seconded by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, and approved by  
217 unanimous consent, was:

219 Resolved to table the continuing education for further review presented by Marilyn Zimmerman for  
220 Suzanne Findlay (#CSWS1039).

222 Agenda item #11 Application Review Training

224 Ms. LaFon went over the process of reviewing applications via OnBoard for board members new to the process.  
225 The board reviewed an application together page-by-page. Mr. Geoffrey McCormick questioned when the licensing  
226 fee is missing from the application, if the ballot should still be voted approved-pending. Ms. LaFon stated that when  
227 the licensure fee is missing, but the application is determined complete - the ballot should always be approved-  
228 pending the licensure fee to be sure that the vote placed is accurate and documentable. It should not be used for  
229 missing documentation from the file or invalid documentation – this would mean that the application should be  
230 tabled until additional documentation can be provided. The approved-pending vote should only be used when the  
231 board is waiting for receipts of licensure fees. Upon receipt of the licensure fees, Ms. Osborn may issue the license.

233 Ms. Mindy Swisher inquired regarding when ballots containing applications would be received and how to process  
234 those votes on OnBoard. Ms. LaFon explained that ballots are sent to the board by Ms. Osborn via OnBoard and  
235 are followed up with an email. The board has 15-25 business days to return the completed ballot. Votes are placed  
236 within OnBoard and, if necessary for siting statutes/regulations, is followed up with an email back to Ms. Osborn.  
237 Ms. Swisher then asked if the board member has questions regarding the application who would they ask? Ms.  
238 LaFon directed her to Ms. Osborn and reminded the board, citing the Open Meetings Act, two or more board  
239 members cannot meet and discuss board business without an official meeting.

241 Agenda Item #15 New Business  
242 Monitoring Continued Treatment for Application “Yes” Answers:

243 With just a few minutes before lunch, the board discussed the monitoring of continued treatment for applications  
244 with “yes” answers. Mr. Geoffrey McCormick had previously asked the question on how can the board verify that  
245 the individual maintains treatment that is being received at the time of the application. After attending the ASWB  
246 New Board Member Training and learning more about his role as a regulator, Mr. McCormick has withdrawn the  
247 question.

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249  
250  
251  
252

Ms. LaFon gave some historical background to the new board members regarding “yes” answers on professional fitness questions for applicants and stated that the New Board Member Training is so valuable because of the perspective shift from professional to regulator.

253

Agenda Item #14 Old Business

254

Informed Decision-Making:

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The board continued with reviewing the Informed Decision-Making document presented. Mr. Geoffry McCormick asked if supervision concerning exceptions for board approval should be added to the document. Ms. LaFon suggested that maybe the Position Statements already posted could be added to the document. Ms. LaFon briefly explained the Position Statements to the new board members: as reoccurring issues/problems come up with the board, there will be drafted memos/statements by Ms. Osborn that are then reviewed by the board before being publicly posted.

260

*The Board started lunch at 12:00 p.m.*

262

*The Board returned from lunch at 12:57 p.m.*

263

264

Ms. Osborn conducted a roll-call upon returning from lunch.

265

266

267

Board Members present, constituting a quorum:

268

Danielle LaFon, LBSW, Chairperson

269

Geoffry McCormick, LMSW

270

Mindy Swisher, LCSW

271

272

Division Staff present were:

273

Lauren Osborn, Occupational License Examiner

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Agenda item #13 Public Comment

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Public comment period opened at 1:00 PM.

277

278

*Regulation Specialist, Jun Maiquis joined the meeting at 1:03 p.m.*

279

With no persons present for public comment, the public comment period closed at 1:04 p.m.

280

281

Agenda Item #14 Old Business

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283

Statutes and Regulations Discussion:

284

Regulation changes were Public Noticed on March 28, 2019 – the written comment period is open until May 1, 2019. Oral testimony was scheduled for 1:00PM during this meeting. However, with nobody present, the board moved on to discuss the progress of these changes.

288

289

Danielle LaFon presented a question for Jun Maiquis regarding the newly updated Model Social Work Practice Act that ASWB updated with the 2018 amendments, asking how long it would take to amend the current language within the proposed regulations. Mr. Maiquis stated that another regulation project would have to be started to amend the updates and that could be started at the next board meeting set to take place in July.

292

293

*Colleen Vagne joined the meeting at 1:09 p.m.*

294

295

296 Mr. Maiquis suggested when the Public Comment period ends for the regulation project that the board table the  
297 regulation changes to 12 AAC 18.160 to start a new project for this section, then modify and include the newest  
298 amendments made.

299  
300 Ms. LaFon asked what cost would be associated with continuing to move forward with the regulation changes in  
301 place, then creating a new regulation project to include the amendments or if it would be more cost beneficial to  
302 table the regulation until a new project could happen. Mr. Maiquis stated that the board would still incur cost due to  
303 the Public Notice needing to be posted for either option – the Public Notice, the letters to licensees, and the like.

304  
305 Mr. Maiquis asked if the board could see any more regulation changes that may be proposed to be included with the  
306 12 AAC 18.160 update to include the 2018 amendments and Ms. Lafon answered that there would be. Ms. LaFon  
307 stated that it would be best to proceed with the regulation project as-is in order to update it as much as possible,  
308 and later pursue another regulation project to include the 2018 amendments to the Model Social Work Practice Act.

309  
310 The board discussed having a teleconference during May before meeting in July to better discuss the Regulation  
311 Project oral testimonies received and review the 2019 Annual Report. The meeting will only be a couple of hours  
312 and will not include a Public Comment period.

313  
314 *Regulation Specialist, Jun Maiquis joined the meeting at 1:20 p.m.*

315  
316 **Agenda Item #15** **New Business**

317  
318 **Specifics for Exam Extension Requests:**

319 A question was submitted by previous board member Angie Christiansen regarding requests for exam extensions.  
320 An applicant had previously sat for and failed the exam multiple times during the 1-year approval period allowed,  
321 submitted a new application for examination, and was sent to be reviewed by the board. Ms. Christiansen asked if it  
322 was necessary for the applicant to have reapplied, and inquired why the applicant didn't request an exam extension.

323  
324 The board had historically discussed placing a cap on how many times an applicant may request exam extensions;  
325 however, there was no determination on if the board may take this action. In accordance with 12 AAC18.100(c), the  
326 board can, at its discretion, grant a written request from an applicant for an extension of time to sit for the exam.

327  
328 Ms. Osborn asked the board whether there should be specifics to exam extensions or limitations to how many times  
329 an applicant can request and extension. Ms. LaFon stated that she'd want time to research ASWB's thoughts on the  
330 process since they proctor the exam. Ms. Osborn stated that there was a 90 day wait period before retaking the  
331 exam, but was unaware of any other limitations that might be set. Ms. LaFon asked when an application is  
332 considered abandoned to which Ms. Osborn answered applications are considered abandoned after a year from the  
333 date the last correspondence with the applicant was received. The board determined it would be best to not place  
334 limitations on examination extension requests in order to continue reviewing exam extension requests as is.

335  
336 *Jodie Menish joined the line at 1:29 PM.*

337 Public comment period opened at 1:30 PM.

338  
339 Ms. Jodie Menish requested a status update on her application to which Ms. Osborn stated would be provided at  
340 the end of the day.

341  
342 With no other persons present for Public Comment, the public comment period closed at 1:35 p.m.

343  
344 *Jodie Menish exited the meeting at 1:36 PM.*

ASWB Registry/Compact Licensure & Correction to ASWB Mobility Readiness Evaluation

The board reviewed an email sent to ASWB regarding clarification on regulations. ASWB has been working hard on mobility on social work license and has been compiling regulations from different jurisdictions.

Ms. LaFon mentioned ASWB is also looking at licensure renewals for people who have retired/suspended licenses. As ASWB begins pushing for this, it may be a new regulation project and application process as the Alaska Social Work Board does not currently have anything set in place for this.

Agenda Item #16 Board Interview

A motion duly made by Ms. Colleen Vague, seconded by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

Resolved to enter Executive Session at 1:57PM in accordance with 44.62.311(c) for the purposes of discussing consent agreement of Susan O'Dell. Board staff to remain present: Lauren Osborn. Public to remain present: Elizabeth Friedman, attorney, and Susan O'Dell.

A motion duly made by Mr. Geoffrey McCormick, seconded by Ms. Mindy Swisher, and approved by unanimous consent, was:

Resolved to exit Executive Session at 2:17PM.

Ms. Osborn conducted a roll-call upon exiting executive session.

Board Members present, constituting a quorum:

Danielle LaFon, LBSW, Chairperson  
Geoffrey McCormick, LMSW  
Mindy Swisher, LCSW  
Colleen Vague, Public Member

Division Staff present were:

Lauren Osborn, Occupational License Examiner

Agenda Item #17 Administrative Business

*The board went on break at 2:20PM.*

*The board returned from break at 2:30PM.*

Correspondence:

Legislative Update – The board reviewed an email sent by the Division Director Sara Chambers regarding the legislative updates. The board had no questions or comments regarding this update.

CEU Provider Application Question – Ms. LaFon submitted a question to board staff regarding preapprovals for Continuing Education Provider Application. Ms. LaFon had previously attended a Substance Abuse training course over a week and received certificates, but the providers had not gained preapproval from the board for Continuing Education hours. Ms. LaFon asked if the providers may still apply for these hours even though the course has already occurred. Historically, the board has approved courses that have already happened in the past. The board agreed that providers should be able to apply for the hours to count after the course has already occurred.

Future Meeting Dates:

The board discussed conducting a teleconference in May so that the 2019 Annual Report and Regulation Check-In could take place. A Doodle Poll will be sent to the board to determine what dates work best. The board also discussed future lengths of meeting dates and if it would be more beneficial to the board to meet more frequently with shorter meetings. Ms. LaFon expressed concerns that travel was more likely to be denied and may be more expensive for the board. Mr. McCormick stated a preference for two-day meetings as information received from the first meeting day is still “fresh” the second meeting day.

The board determined future in-person board meetings shall be set to take place in Fairbanks as it would be the most cost-effective location for the board.

The 2019 meeting dates are tentative scheduled as follows:

- July 8-9, 2019 in Fairbanks, AK
- October 7-8, 2019 in Fairbanks, AK

Task List:

**Task** – Lauren Osborn will be updating Jodie Menish on her application regarding her public comment.

**Task** – Lauren Osborn will be sending future meeting dates to Glenn Hoskinson to book rooms in Fairbanks for board members whose duty station is there.

**Task** – Danielle LaFon will complete the portions of the 2019 Annual Report assigned to Angela Christiansen at the December meeting.

**Task** – Geoffry McCormick will complete the Goals & Objectives section of the 2019 Annual Report.

**Task** – Lauren Osborn will create a May teleconference for the board to further discuss the 2019 Annual Report and Regulation Check-In.

**Task** – Travel requests will be submitted by Lauren Osborn for Colleen Vague, Mindy Swisher, and Lauren Osborn to attend the ASWB New Board Member Trainings.

**TASK** - New board members will print and sign the Board Member Expectations and return them to Ms. Osborn.

**TASK** - Ms. Osborn will mail the revised final minutes to Chairperson Danielle LaFon to sign and return. Upon receipt of the signed minutes, Ms. Osborn will post them to the State of Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners webpage.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Geoffry McCormick and seconded by Ms. Colleen Vague, and approved by unanimous consent, it was:**

**RESOLVED to adjourn the Alaska State Board of Social Work Examiners.**

**Adjourned at 3:06 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted By:

Lauren Osborn  
Occupational Licensing Examiner  
State of Alaska, DCCED, CBPL

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Date

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Danielle LaFon  
Board Chairperson  
Alaska State Board of Social Work Examiners

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Date

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