



## BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS - August 8, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes

Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
8/8/2025 4:00 PMAKDT

By authority of AS 08.01.070(2), and in compliance with the provisions of AS 44.62, Article 6, a scheduled meeting of the Board of Dental Examiners was held.

### **Attendance**

#### **Present:**

Members: Megan Ferguson, Board Secretary Christina Hansen, Kenley Michaud, Dominic Wenzell, Board Chair Jonathan Woller

Staff: Rachel Billiet, Sydney Baranov-Kaderman

Presenters: Josh Hardy, Investigator

#### **Absent:**

Members: Traci Elison, Bradley Heaston, Jesse Hronkin, Newell Walther

1. Zoom Information

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87606256984?pwd=IXQHO1DsQ1DIhdiKMhLoVBa9SiO54C.1>

2. Call to Order/Roll Call

Board Chair Jonathan Woller called the meeting to order at 4:17 p.m.

### **Attendance**

#### **Present:**

Members: Megan Ferguson, Board Secretary Christina Hansen, Kenley Michaud, Dominic Wenzell, Board Chair Jonathan Woller

#### **Absent:**

Members: Traci Elison, Bradley Heaston, Jesse Hronkin, Newell Walther

- A. Ethics Report

Dr. Woller reported as the designated ethics supervisor for the board he had not received any notification of ethics violations. Dr. Wenzell was a reviewing member for the voluntary license surrender on the agenda and is recused by the chair.

- B. Review/Approve Agenda

Board staff requested the addition of an item relating to coronal polishing renewals be added to the agenda as the last item if time allows.

Dr. Walther joined the meeting at 4:24 p.m.

#### **Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE agenda with the addition of item #7, Coronal Polishing Renewals as requested by board staff as time allows

Motion moved by Dominic Wenzell and motion seconded by Newell Walther. Motion passed via unanimous consent.

3. Public comment

Ms. Gail Walden spoke and inquired when the board meeting was scheduled and if it's following the requirements for scheduling meetings. Board staff responded that the five-day notice requirement was met via the board website and a notice was published on the State's Online Public Notice website.

Mr. Sean Siegel, representing the Alaska Dental Society (ADS), addressed the board regarding concerns about the memo on ownership and use of handheld radiological devices sent on July 21, 2025, by Irene Casares from the Department of Health Radiological Program.

Mr. Siegel stated the way this was handled has left many in the dental profession confused and uncertain about the Department of Health's ability to oversee dental radiology in Alaska.

He said that the letter incorrectly stated that the ADS was informed of the regulatory changes made in March of 2024, by email and verbal briefing. No such records of communication were found by Mr. Siegel.

He stated that the ADS was also surprised and concerned that the Department appears to be shifting responsibility by believing that notifying dental facilities is the responsibility of the ADS. That is certainly not the case. The ADS is a professional organization not a regulatory entity. It should not be the role of ADS to be making these kinds of notifications.

Not all dental clinics were notified. Some received notice and some did not. The lack of communication has caused concern about the ability of the Department of Health's ability to oversee the regulation of dental x-ray devices. It is hard to have confidence in a regulatory department that operates with this level of disorganization and ambiguity.

The ADS wants to comply with the agency and protect patients, but unclear communication and misplaced responsibility are concerns.

Mr. Siegel thanked the board for the opportunity to speak.

4. Investigations (Presenters: Josh Hardy)

A. Consent agreement/License reinstatement for DEND393

**Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE entering into executive session to discuss the consent agreement for T.J. in accordance with the provisions of Alaska Statute 44.62.310 (c) for the purpose of discussing subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person, provided the person may request a public discussion. Board staff to remain during the session.

Board went off record at 4:36 p.m. and returned on record at 4:41 p.m.

Motion moved by Newell Walther and motion seconded by Board Chair Jonathan Woller. Motion passed via unanimous consent.

## **Attendance**

### **Present:**

Members: Megan Ferguson, Board Secretary Christina Hansen , Kenley Michaud, Newell Walther, Dominic Wenzell, Board Chair Jonathan Woller

### **Absent:**

Members: Traci Elison, Bradley Heaston, Jesse Hronkin

### **Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE consent agreement order for case no. 2025-000487

Motion moved by Dominic Wenzell and motion seconded by Kenley Michaud. Motion passed unanimously via roll call. Yes votes: Kenley Michaud, Dominic Wenzell, Newell Walther, Megan Ferguson, Board Chair Jonathan Woller, Board Secretary Christina Hansen

#### **B. Voluntary license surrender DEND1138**

As the reviewing board member, Dr. Wenzell was recused from discussion but was present during the deliberation.

Dr. Daniel Long requested to have the discussion on the public record.

Investigator Josh Hardy presented the case to the board. In 2022 the division received a complaint about treatment by Dr. Long. In February of 2024 Dr. Long accepted a consent agreement the terms of which required payment of a fine and completion of additional continuing education within 90 days of the agreement adoption. The division did not receive payment or any verification of completion of continuing education courses.

The division later received another, separate, complaint. When speaking with Dr. Long, he expressed that due to health concerns he was stepping away from dentistry and he wished to voluntarily surrender his license to close out the investigation into these matters.

The board did not have any questions for Mr. Hardy.

### **Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE to accept the voluntary surrender of license DEND1138

Motion moved by Jonathan Woller and motion seconded by Kenley Michaud. Motion passed via roll call vote with Dr. Wenzell abstaining as the reviewing board member on the case. Yes votes: Kenley Michaud, Newell Walther, Megan Ferguson, Board Chair Jonathan Woller, Board Secretary Christina Hansen

#### **5. Alaska Dental Society - Discussion regarding continuing education courses**

Dr. Woller provided background by stating that during continuing education audits, there were Alaska Dental Society (ADS) certificates from meetings, specifically in Fairbanks two years ago, which we were hesitant to honor because the ADS had not applied for approval of the continuing education courses.

He stated that under 12 AAC 28.410(1), "courses, workshops, or symposiums approved, provided, or sponsored by the American Dental Hygienist's Association (ADHA), Academy of General Dentistry (AGD), or American Dental Association (ADA)" would be accepted in lieu of board approval.

He expressed that he'd like to have it on record that these institutes do not have to go through board approval for their courses.

ADA is a tripartite membership, it is a national, state level, and local organization with individual components around the state. He said that historically, they have not applied for course approval.

Ms. Billiet requested clarification and asked if it is the board's opinion that ADS is a subsection of the ADA.

Chairperson Woller replied yes, it is.

Ms. Billiet commented that ADS regularly applies for continuing education course approvals and asked if the board wants to continue being presented with these applications or if ADS can just provide CE without approval.

Chairperson Woller replied that ADS can provide any CE it sees fit. He also stated that he has only recently, perhaps in the last 2-3 years, seen course approval applications from the ADS and that might be due to some transition with the ADS. So, it should be made clear to them that they do not have to apply for approval.

Dr. Wenzell stated he's curious how the ADS is vetting speakers. He said he has noticed that courses are being submitted for approval well after the course has taken place.

Dr. Woller said that we want to encourage "live" CE and there must be a level of trust in the ADA and ADS that they will provide quality courses.

**Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE the clarification that American Dental Association (ADA) as it pertains to CE consists of a national society called the ADA, a state society, Alaska Dental Society (ADS), and local components and all are approved as CE providers.

Motion moved by Jonathan Woller and motion seconded by Newell Walther. Motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. Yes votes: Kenley Michaud, Dominic Wenzell, Newell Walther, Megan Ferguson, Board Chair Jonathan Woller, Board Secretary Christina Hansen

6. Memo from Department of Health Radiological Health Program

Dr. Michaud had asked for this topic to be added to the agenda. He stated that it does not affect him directly and he did not receive the memo, but he has had others reach out to him about it.

He said the concerns he heard are the same as what Mr. Siegel from ADS brought up earlier, that the State is going through improper methods (using the ADS) to try to advise the people that they are supposed to be regulating.

FDA approved devices are being regulated by the Department of Health, who is saying that they're no longer safe to be used in the State of Alaska. This is contradictory to the research Dr. Michaud has seen and to the regulations by the FDA.

He stated that historically, the dental board gave up regulating radiology because of lack of manpower more than 5 years ago. But it also appears that the State does not have the ability

or manpower to regulate it as well. So, it may not have put dental offices in the best position, nor has it made offices safer as a whole.

He expressed that he thinks it is important to acknowledge the memo, issue a statement, and perhaps discuss a plan of action to address the matter. His personal belief is that the memo will not increase safety or decrease hazards to those working in the dental field or those receiving dental x-rays.

Dr. Wenzell said that the dental board tried to get someone to inspect radiology equipment but statutorily a PhD was required. He seems to recall Dr. Higgin was going to travel around the state and do inspections. He stated that the problem is two-fold, we had the manpower, but the state would not allow it because of statutes, and the department never gave an answer as to how they decided on the fee dentists would be charged per piece of equipment. His understanding is that handheld devices are legal to use in all 50 states, except now not in Alaska.

Dr. Woller also stated that the problem is overall how the transition to the Department of Health, Inspection of Radiological Services in Dentistry Program was handled and specifically the State limiting the use of FDA approved devices.

Dr. Walther stated that although he does not have a stake in the matter, he agreed with Mr. Siegel's comments representing the ADA's viewpoint. He stated that the confidence in the efficacy of the department of health program has been shaken for dentists and maybe even the public. How these devices can be safe in all other states, but not Alaska, he does not understand. There have been many studies proving them to be safe. It's not just dentists, but also the public that will be affected by this.

Dr. Michaud stated that if you take a Nomad (handheld x-ray) and mount it to the wall, it is the same exact device. It does not change the use. He stated he also agrees with Mr. Siegel's statements and although well done, he does not think the letter should be written by the ADS, it should be written by the board.

Dr. Walther clarified his statement, saying that he thinks the dental board should write the letter, but that it could use some of the points brought up by Mr. Siegel.

Dr. Michaud expressed understanding and agreed.

Dr. Woller has concerns about how the radiological program is being run, he stated he was around when the hand-off was made to them from the dental board and the outcome does not seem what was intended in regulation. There was a promise from the department of health to work with the dental board to establish statutes and regulations. He stated he is unaware of any of that happening. He said speaking personally, dental radiology inspections are now by far the biggest regulatory burden on dentistry in the state over everything else that is required.

There are problems with one, how the program was devised and being run, and two, specifically the letter sent in July.

Dr. Woller proposed writing a letter to the Department of Health, which could be voted on in OnBoard, outlining the board's concerns with these two topics.

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**Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE Dr. Woller to write a letter to the Department of Health to be voted on in OnBoard before being sent by staff

Motion moved by Kenley Michaud and motion seconded by Dominic Wenzell. Motion passed unanimously via roll call vote. Yes votes: Kenley Michaud, Dominic Wenzell, Newell Walther, Megan Ferguson, Board Chair Jon Woller. Christina Hansen was temporarily unavailable via Zoom and did not vote.

7. Coronal polishing renewals

Ms. Billiet informed the board that previously, late renewal coronal polishing applications had been going to the board for review and voting. After reviewing regulations, it does not appear that this is necessary. There are no requirements for continuing education or other documentation such as there are for late renewals of dental license or dental hygiene licenses. She wanted to bring this to the attention of the board and get an opinion before changing any procedures.

Dr. Wenzell suggested consulting with the law department.

Dr. Woller asked her to read the regulation below:

12 AAC 28.840. RENEWAL OF CORONAL POLISHING CERTIFICATE.

(a) A dental assistant certificate to perform coronal polishing must be renewed biennially on or before February 28 of odd-numbered years. In order to renew a certificate to perform coronal polishing, a dental assistant must submit to the department a

(1) completed application for renewal on a form provided by the department; and

(2) \$60 certificate renewal fee.

Dr. Woller commented that it sounds well within the purview of staff to renew coronal polishing certificates and several members of the board agreed.

Board Chair Woller indicated, no motion was needed, but that having this clarification on the record for board staff would suffice.

8. Adjourn

**Motion:**

RESOLVED to APPROVE adjourning the August 8, 2025 Board of Dental Examiners Meeting

Motion moved by Board Chair Jonathan Woller and motion seconded by Dominic Wenzell.

Motion passed via unanimous consent. Meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

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| Date Final Meeting Minutes Approved by<br>Board: Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> OnBoard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Board Ballot PASS 8/26/2025 |
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