



# Board of Veterinary Examiners

Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
April 11, 2024 at 9:00 AM AKST via Zoom

**These minutes were approved at the June 20 meeting of the board.**

Members Present: Rachel Bergartt, DVM, Chair; Denise Albert, DVM; Hal Geiger, PhD; Ciara Vollaro, DVM

Staff Present: Tami Bowman, Occupational Licensing Examiner; Rachel Billet, Program Coordinator 1; Reid Bowman, Program Coordinator 2; Sara Chambers, Boards and Regulations Advisor; Stefanie Davis, Regulations Specialist

## Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:02am by Dr. Bergartt. A quorum was established. She read the board's mission statement into the record. All members declared they had no conflicts of interest to report.

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to approve the agenda.** Seconded by Dr. Vollaro. **Passed by unanimous consent.**

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to approve the minutes of March 8, 2024.** Seconded by Dr. Albert. **Passed by unanimous consent.**

## Regulations

Regulations Specialist Stefanie Davis joined the meeting to hear/observe board member discussion on current regulations projects.

### State examination and military licensing

The board reviewed edits to the draft regulations made by Dr. Vollaro on March 30 following the board's review and suggested changes to a previous version at the March 8 meeting of the board.

**Motion by Dr. Albert to adopt edits to the working draft dated 4.2.24 as written.** Seconded by Dr. Vollaro. **Discussion of edits requested before a vote is taken.**

The board spent considerable time reviewing the changes and making further edits to the working draft. Members sought to further clarify who is responsible for notifying applicants of their national and state exam scores, and who is responsible for notifying the sponsoring veterinarian of an applicant's national exam score and temporary license status under 12 AAC 68.030. It was ultimately decided that staff would be responsible for notifying the sponsoring veterinarian of an applicant's national exam score and that the applicant's temporary license has

subsequently expired under Sec. 08.98.180. It was also noted that section (a) referenced notification of state exam results to the applicant, but section (b) did not reference who would be notifying the applicant of their national exam scores, so it was suggested that an additional item (c) be added to the regulation to clarify that ICVA will notify the applicant of their national exam scores. The board pointed out that the section title “notification of applicants” was insufficient as the drafted regulations now include notification to a sponsoring veterinarian as well and asked the title to be changed to some variation of “notification of examination scores/results.”

The board opted to continue reviewing the working draft while Boards and Regulations Advisor Sara Chambers rewrites the edits to 12 AAC 68.030 to clarify the boards changes.

While reviewing further changes the board asked that an edit be made to 12 AAC 68.043(b)(6) as it currently reads “as required by 12 AAC 68.010(a),” which would require an applicant for a temporary military courtesy license to submit the same documentation required for a full veterinarian/ veterinary tech license, which is not the boards intent. 12 AAC 68.034(b)(6) to be edited to read “as required by 12 AAC 68.010(a)(3),” which will require an applicant to provide evidence of having passed the NAVLE within 60 months of the application date.

The board asked for a slight edit to 12 AAC 68.045(c) for clarification purposes that an applicant can take the state exam as many times as needed until a passing score of 90 percent or above is achieved.

During the review of edits to 12 AAC 68.310(b)(3), which adds the requirement that veterinary technicians take the state exam in addition to the national exam, the board discussed whether the state exam was necessary as it pertains mainly to veterinarians. The board came to the agreement that the exam content is just as valuable for technicians as veterinarians. Dr. Geiger suggested that the regulation be edited to refer to the required exams by name as opposed to just citing the relevant regulations, so it is easier to read, and the board agreed with this suggestion.

#### VCPR

The board discussed that they had previously reviewed the current draft updates to the VCPR regulations, and staff reminded them that—for efficiency—those changes would be rolled into the other regulations they were working on at this meeting.

The board completed the rest of their review of the working draft and at staff request opted to take a break so that suggested edits could be made and presented to the board for final review after the break.

The board took a break from 10:23 a.m. – 10:46 a.m. All members were present.

During the review of edits made to the working draft during the break, there was a discussion regarding notifying the sponsoring veterinarian that a veterinary temporary license holder's license

has expired while notifying them of the exam scores, as Sec. 08.98.180 dictates the temporary license expires once examination results are posted. It was decided to leave the draft of 12 AAC 68.030(c) as written, stating that the division will notify the sponsoring veterinarian that the temporary license is no longer valid, but the Board would like LAW to pay special attention to the matter when reviewing the proposed changes to determine if the sponsoring veterinarian has to be notified.

Dr. Bergartt voiced concern that the proposed changes to 12 AAC 68.310 (b)(3) cite 12 AAC 68.015 (b) for the state exam requirement, but 12 AAC 68.015 covers examination requirements for veterinarians, and directing technicians to a regulation written for veterinarians may cause undue confusion. The board decided in the sake of clarity to edit 12 AAC 68.315 to include the state exam requirement in addition to the already required national exam, therefore editing 12 AAC 68.310 (b)(3) to cite 12 AAC 68.315 for all required exams. Sara Chambers indicated she's actively making these edits to the working draft and will have them ready shortly to present to the board as while they continue their discussion.

Dr. Vollaro asked if the board needed to go over the state exam and make changes before handing it over to AAVSB, but licensing examiner Tami Bowman confirmed that changes discussed back in 2023 have already been made. The board asked Mrs. Bowman if there have been any questions consistently missed on the exam that may benefit from a revision – she said there are a couple and that she will email the current exam to the board members along with notes regarding the questions being missed most often.

Dr. Bergartt asked the board if they'd like to table the next discussion topic on new proposals as the original meeting end time had passed or if they'd like to continue the meeting into the afternoon.

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to continue meeting until 2 p.m. Seconded by Dy. Vollaro. Passed by unanimous consent.**

Sara Chambers presented changes made to 12 AAC 68.310(b)(3) and 12 AAC 68.315 and with no further edits suggested the board concluded their review of the working draft.

The board was prepared to vote on Dr. Geiger's earlier motion to adopt the draft regulations as written and amend the motion to include the edits made, but staff clarified that the original motion needed to be withdrawn because the board is not "adopting" regulations but opening a project to send to LAW.

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to withdraw the earlier motion to adopt and move to initiate a regulations project regarding examinations, military licensing, and veterinarian-client-patient-relationships as discussed and request that any changes by Department of Law or by staff be referred to the board for approval before releasing for public comment. Seconded by Dy. Albert. Passed by unanimous consent.**

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to assign the regulations project opening questionnaire for completion to Dr. Bergartt. Seconded by Dy. Albert. Passed by unanimous consent.**

The board took a break from 11:57 a.m. – 12:17 p.m. All members were present.

## **New Proposals**

### *Maintenance of Medical Records*

The board reviewed Dr. Vollaro's proposed changes to medical records regulations, leading to the consensus that the board needs to revisit the topic after further research to establish a more identifiable goal for this regulations project. Chief concerns heard from members were difficulty determining what should be required in an animal's medical record, concerns that there are no current established methods for correcting errors in medical records, concerns that what can be performed/documented/maintained in a brick and mortar facility may not be doable for remote operations (i.e. spay and neuter clinics, vaccine clinics, etc.), as well as concerns about defining emergency service veterinarians. Before the next meeting members will research medical records regulations in other states and review the rabies compendium. Dr. Vollaro will reach out to colleagues that perform spay/ neuter clinics to be able to provide the board with a clear understanding of how these clinics provide services in remote areas, and Dr. Albert said she planned to reach out to Alaska veterinarians who sponsor other vets who participate in clinics in the state to gain their expertise. The board may opt to create a survey of some kind to send out to providers to gain more information without making individuals feel like they're being singled out for their practice.

### *12 AAC 68.230(b): Definition of "scientific"*

Dr. Albert pointed out the RACE Standards have very clear definitions of what is and isn't scientific, and proposed the board cite these exact definitions in 12 AAC 68.230(b). Members were largely in favor of doing so, and Dr. Albert will draft language to be reviewed at the next meeting.

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to table discussion on time limit to file a complaint and recommendation to division for euthanasia regulations until next regularly scheduled board meeting. Seconded by Dy. Vollaro. Passed by unanimous consent.**

## **Annual Report**

Program Coordinator Rachel Billiet informed the board that the FY 24 Annual Report still needs to be completed by a member of the Board by the middle of June to meet the June 30 deadline. Dr. Bergartt volunteered to complete the report.

## **Licensing examiner update**

Because it was a special meeting, licensing examiner Tami Bowman did not have a official update to present to the board at this time.

### **AAVSB Annual Meeting Delegate Selection**

Rachel Billiet informed the board that the AAVSB delegate selection for their Annual Meeting has opened and that the board needs to select at least one member to attend as a voting delegate. Ideally the board would like to have new members appointed by the time the annual meeting takes place in the fall and give them an opportunity to attend over current members, but as there isn't a timeline of when appointments might happen it may not be possible. Due to this uncertain timeline they also do not wish to appoint Dr. Bergartt or Dr. Geiger as a delegate as their time on the board is dependent on new appointments. Dr. Albert is attending the meeting as a member of the finance committee and is not sure if her place on the committee constitutes as a conflict of interest, but she will look into it. Dr. Geiger is attending but as part of another committee. Dr. Vollaro was noted as the most suitable candidate as it stands, but she will need to look at her calendar before committing to the dates. Nominations are open until May 29<sup>th</sup>. The board also discussed sending a member of staff, and if a staff member could hold a seat as a voting delegate if need be.

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to recommend sending one or two members of the Board of Veterinary Examiners or a member of staff to the AAVSB Annual Meeting with the following priority order: New member, preferably a veterinarian; failing that, an existing member; failing that, a staff member, whether they can vote or not.**

Seconded by Dy. Vollaro. **Passed by unanimous consent.**

**Motion by Dr. Geiger to endorse sending staff to the AAVSB Annual Meeting by any possible method.**

Seconded by Dy. Vollaro. **Passed by unanimous consent.**

### **Set next meeting date**

The next meeting of the Board of Veterinary Examiners will be held on Thursday, June 20, 2024. The board also discussed the fall meeting date is always scheduled to take place at the same as the Alaska VMA Conference, but since that conference takes place at the same time as the AAVSB Annual Meeting, a quorum will not be possible for a meeting during that time.

### **Legislative Audit Update**

Dr. Bergartt indicated that the legislative audit is progressing well and that she is waiting on a letter of their findings, to which she will respond. Due to confidentiality reasons the audit could not be discussed further.

### **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.