

1 State of Alaska
2 Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
3 Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing
4

5 Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners
6 June 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes
7

8 **Written meeting minutes only reflects a brief overview of the business conducted during the**
9 **boards meeting. For a more detailed account, please request a copy of the meeting**
10 **recording.**
11

12 **By authority of AS 08.01.070(2), and in compliance with the provisions of AS**
13 **44.62, Article 6, a scheduled meeting of the Board of Social Work Examiners**
14 **was held via videoconference through zoom.**
15

16 **Agenda Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call Time: 9:07 a.m.**
17

18 The **June 22, 2020** meeting day was called to order by Chair, Danielle Lafon at 9:07 a.m.
19

20 Board members present, constituting a quorum:
21

22 Denielle Lafon, Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker – *Chair*
23 Geoffry McCormick, Licensed Master Social Worker
24 Mindy Swisher, Licensed Clinical Social Worker – *Vice Chair*
25 Eleanor Vinson, Public Member
26

27 Board members absent:
28

29 Brandon Ercanbrack, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (Joined later)
30

31 Division staff present:
32

33 Andy Khmelev, Acting Records and Licensing Supervisor
34 Marilyn Zimmerman, Paralegal II
35 Melissa Dumas, Administrative Officer II
36 Amber Whaley, Investigator II
37
38

39 **Agenda Item 2 Review/Approve Agenda**
40

41 Upon review of the agenda, Board Chair Danielle Lafon called for a motion to approve the
42 agenda.
43

44 On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Colleen Vague, and
45 approved unanimously, it was

46
47 **RESOLVED** to approve the amended agenda for the June 22, 2020 meeting as
48 amended with the addition of the items listed by the chair.
49

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
51 Danielle Lafon	x			
52 Geoffry McCormick	x			
53 Mindy Swisher	x			
54 Colleen Vague	x			
55 Brandon Ercanbrack				x

56
57 The motion passed with no further discussion.
58

59 **Agenda Item 3** **Review/Approve Mintues from January 27-28, 2020 meeting**

60
61 Upon review of the minutes from the January 27-28, it was determined that they were
62 incomplete. There were a few sections missing, and Acting RLS Andy Khmelev informed
63 the board that he will get in touch with the examiner to get those finished and voted at the
64 next quarterly meeting
65

66 The voting for the meeting minutes has been set aside.
67

68 **Agenda Item 4** **Ethics**

69
70 No ethics to report.
71

72 **Agenda Item 5** **Investigative Report**

73
74 Investigator II Amber Whaley joined the meeting to deliver the investigative report. The
75 report covered January 15, 2020 through June 10, 2020. There are nine open cases in various
76 statuses, and three were closed. No license actions to present.
77

78 **Agenda Item 7** **New Business**

79
80 **A. COVID-19/Renewal Discussion**
81

82 Since Administrative Officer Melissa Dumas had not joined the meeting yet, the board
83 moved on to agenda item new business. At the prior emergency meeting, the board voted to
84 extend the lapse date for social workers from June 30, 2020 to October 30, 2020. This was
85 done per a clause in SB 241, and the board made this decision because of the COVID-19
86 pandemic causing continued education opportunities to cancel on a massive level. With the

87 extended date, it will give social workers more time to accrue the necessary continued
88 education they need in order to remain in compliance. Board Chair Danielle Lafon asked
89 RLS Andy Khmelev how the social worker licensee base was reacting to the change. Mr.
90 Khmelev informed the board that so far there were three different responses. One of which
91 was the group of licensees that didn't know the renewal was extended, and were frequently
92 contacting the division to find out where the renewal forms are. The second group of
93 licensees were the ones that knew about it, but were not happy about the later renewal. In
94 most cases, those licensees had already completed their continued education before the
95 pandemic, and were looking to renew right on the spot. In some cases, some of the licensees
96 sent an outdated renewal form from 2018 with payment, only to receive a notice back
97 explaining to them that this is the incorrect form, and they will need to request a refund. The
98 third group of licensees who responded were happy with the change, but wanted proof of
99 extended date to reflect on their license. Mr. Khmelev referred those licensees to the license
100 search page on the CBPL website.

101
102 Overall the response was more positive than negative, as licensees were grateful that they
103 had more time to complete their continued education. Board member Geoffry McCormick
104 wanted to know if the next round of continued education would begin on July 1, 2020, or
105 October 31, 2020. It was discussed and interpreted that any continued education completed
106 by 10/30/2020 will count for the current licensing period, as this was the whole reason the
107 renewal date was pushed back.

108
109 The board also asked Mr. Khmelev how the courtesy licenses were coming along, and if
110 people were applying. Mr. Khmelev informed the board that the license has been issued in
111 decent numbers. In some cases, social workers mistook the courtesy license for a renewal
112 and had to get refunded, however mostly the courtesy licenses have been successful.

113
114 **Agenda Item 6 Division Update – FY 2020 2nd Quarter**

115
116 Administrative Officer II Melissa Dumas joined the meeting to present the boards financial
117 report for the second quarter of FY 2020. The revenue for the board through March of 2020
118 \$49,656, and the direct expenditures for the board were \$71,278. The boards total
119 expenditures were \$119,846, and a carry-over of \$87,843 in surplus from the prior year.
120 Currently the deficit for the board is \$70,191, however Miss Dumas did indicate that this was
121 nothing to be concerned about, as that revenue will bounce back in the upcoming renewal.

122
123 Miss Dumas informed the board that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all out of state travel
124 for the entire state has been cancelled through January of 2021 at this time.

125
126
127
128
129
130

131 **Agenda Item 7** **New Business**

132

133 **B. ASWB Update RE: Conferences and Testing Centers**

134

135 The board discussed any upcoming travel to conferences. As stated during the division
136 update by Miss Dumas, all out of state travel for the year 2020 has been cancelled by the
137 office of the governor through January of 2021.

138

139 Acting RLS Andy Khmelev also reminded the board that if any of the scheduled 2020
140 conferences or trainings ended up going virtual, it is still important to put in a request as if
141 travel was happening. The board of Professional Counselors had a similar scenario where a
142 conference that was thought to be cancelled ended up going to zoom instead, and by the
143 time the request was submitted, the registration deadline had passed.

144

145 The board moved onto potential travel in 2021 for ASWB, since there was no possibility to
146 travel in the remaining 2020 year.

147

148 The board appointed Mindy Swisher to attend the 2021 ASWB Education Conference in
149 Philadelphia on April 29-May 1, 2021.

150

151 The board appointed Mindy Swisher and Geoffry McCormick (tentatively) to attend the
152 ASWB Delegates Assembly in New Orleans on November 18-20, 2021.

153

154 Board Chair Danielle LaFon also suggested that if there is a quarterly meeting between now
155 and October, it would be good for Vice Chair Mindy Swisher to chair that meeting, as after
156 October, Miss LaFon has no intention of renewing her license, and as a result will lose her
157 place on the board.

158

159 **Agenda Item 8** **Annual Report**

160

161 As opposed to prior years, when the annual report was divided between board members, this
162 year the entirety of the annual report was written by board chair Danielle Lafon, due to the
163 COVID-19 pandemic causing a rise in demand for mental health needs in the state. The
164 board has been sent the annual report approximately a week prior to the meeting for review.

165

166 Board member Brandon Ercanbrack let RLS Andy Khmelev know via email that the only
167 error he found in the report was that his new location was Kotzebue, and not Nome.

168

169 There were a few more errors that were found on the report, such as on page 44, to take out
170 the word “the” on the recommendations sentence, and on page 48, correct the word
171 regulations.

172

173 Aside from those minor errors, the board members were very impressed at the well written
174 document.

175 On a motion duly made by Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Mindy Swisher, and
176 approved unanimously, it was

177
178 **RESOLVED** to approve the 2020 Annual Report for the Board of Social Work
179 **Examiners with corrected changes.**
180

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
181				
182	Danielle Lafon	x		
183	Geoffry McCormick	x		
184	Mindy Swisher	x		
185	Colleen Vague	x		
186	Brandon Ercanbrack			x

187
188 The motion passed with no further discussion

189
190 **Agenda Item 10** **Application Review**

191
192 With the meeting going ahead of schedule, the board moved to application review before the
193 lunch hour. The board reviewed applications that they had previously tabled during online
194 board review.

195
196 The board discussed with Acting RLS Andy Khmelev on the proper procedure for reviewing
197 applications. After discussion, it was decided that only applications that are complete with all
198 the information available should be sent to board review. This would create less tabled
199 applications, and less approved pending applications.

200
201 In regards to LCSW applicant 157486, the board determined that one of the supervisors
202 indicated that he does not recommend the applicant for licensure, and the verification
203 cannot then be used to satisfy licensure requirements. He will need to obtain the remaining
204 three months of supervision from another supervisor. Letter to be sent.

205
206 Applicant 143564 requested an extension for their exam for one year. After reading the
207 petition, the board agreed to give the extension.

208
209 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Geoffry McCormick, and**
210 **approved unanimously, it was**

211
212 **RESOLVED** to approve the request from applicant 143564 to extend their
213 **exam deadline by one year from 9/18/2020 to 9/18/2021.**
214

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
215				
216	Danielle Lafon	x		
217	Geoffry McCormick	x		

218	Mindy Swisher	x	
219	Colleen Vague	x	
220	Brandon Ercanbrack		x

221

The motion passed with no further discussion

223

224 The board reviewed request for alternate supervision from applicant Josh Stein. The board
 225 determined that not enough information was provided, and that more will be needed. The
 226 board will need to know if the potential supervisor is within the same agency or not, and the
 227 method of delivery is unclear. The board will need to know how it will be administered (ie
 228 through zoom, phone, etc.). Applicant will be notified.

229

230 Prior to recessing, the board members noticed an error on the website. The CBPL website
 231 indicated that the board is called the “Board of Clinical Social Work Examiners” and it will
 232 need to be corrected to remove the word “Clinical”.

233

234 *Off the record for lunch at 11:28 am.*

235

236 **Agenda Item 9 Lunch**

237

238 *Back on the record at 12:32 pm.*

239

240 **Agenda Item 13 Old Business**

241

242 Brandon Ercanbrack joined the meeting at 12:32 pm. Colleen Vague did not rejoin the
 243 meeting.

244

245 Due to some extra time prior to the arrival of the paralegal, the board moved to old
 246 business.

247

248 **Right Touch Regulation Touch Base:**

249

250 Due to the COVID-19, the work that the board did at the prior quarterly meeting was put
 251 on hold with the right touch regulation project, as the board was in and out of emergency
 252 meetings to accommodate the issues created by the pandemic. The board was wondering if
 253 the pandemic would end up causing this project to be terminated. Acting RLS Andy
 254 Khmelev informed the board that this is a project that could easily be paused, and picked up
 255 at any time. Especially given that any statutory changes would require the lobbying of
 256 legislators, and currently the legislators main focus was the pandemic.

257

258

259

260

261 **Agenda Item 14** **Administrative Business**

262

263 **Correspondence:**

264

265 The correspondence was the board going over the ASWB Examination passing rates. Upon
266 reviewing the passing rates, the board discussed ways of improving the rates for LBSW, as
267 the license type already has low numbers, and no exam rates as nobody has taken it recently.
268 The board considered reaching out to universities such as University of Alaska Anchorage,
269 and University of Alaska Fairbanks to possibly create a course, or a presentation on the
270 pathway to licensure. Not many students know about the LBSW option, as it seems most
271 social work students focus on the masters and clinical licenses. If either UAA or UAF had
272 the presentation or a course on pathway to licensure, there could be more interest in an
273 LBSW as well as more knowledge of the licensing process itself. After some discussion on
274 lobbying the universities, the board appointed members to lobby each university to push
275 through more bachelors licenses:

276

- UAA – Brandon Ercanbrack
- UAF – Geoffry McCormick

277

278

279

280 **Agenda Item 11** **Consent Agreements Review**

281

282 Paralegal II Marilyn Zimmerman joined the meeting to present the consent agreements for
283 the board to review. The board moved into executive session to discuss the agreements.

284

285 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Geoffry McCormick, and**
286 **approved unanimously, it was**

287

**RESOLVED to enter executive session in accordance with AS 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.**

288

289

290

291

292

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Danielle Lafon	x			
Geoffry McCormick	x			
Mindy Swisher	x			
Colleen Vague				x
Brandon Ercanbrack	x			

293

294

295

296

297

298

299

The motion passed with no further discussion

300

Off the record at 1:02 pm for executive session.

Back on the record at 1:21 pm.

303

304 After return from executive session, the board was ready to vote on the consent agreements.

305

306 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Geoffry McCormick, and**
307 **approved unanimously, it was**

308

309 **RESOLVED to adopt the consent agreement for 2018-001197.**

310

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
311				
312	Danielle Lafon	x		
313	Geoffry McCormick	x		
314	Mindy Swisher	x		
315	Colleen Vague			x
316	Brandon Ercanbrack	x		

317

318 The motion passed with no further discussion

319

320 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Geoffry McCormick, and**
321 **approved unanimously, it was**

322

323 **RESOLVED to adopt the consent agreement for 2018-001328.**

324

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
325				
326	Danielle Lafon	x		
327	Geoffry McCormick	x		
328	Mindy Swisher	x		
329	Colleen Vague			x
330	Brandon Ercanbrack	x		

331

332 The motion passed with no further discussion

333

334 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Geoffry McCormick, and**
335 **approved unanimously, it was**

336

337 **RESOLVED to adopt the consent agreement for 2020-000404.**

338

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
339				
340	Danielle Lafon	x		
341	Geoffry McCormick	x		
342	Mindy Swisher	x		
343	Colleen Vague			x
344	Brandon Ercanbrack	x		

345
346 The motion passed with no further discussion

347
348 **On a motion duly made by Mindy Swisher, seconded by Brandon Ercanbrack, and**
349 **approved unanimously, it was**

350
351 **RESOLVED to reinstate license # 109568.**

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
354 Danielle Lafon	x			
355 Geoffry McCormick	x			
356 Mindy Swisher	x			
357 Colleen Vague				x
358 Brandon Ercanbrack	x			

359
360 The motion passed with no further discussion

361
362 *Off the record for recess at 1:46 pm.*
363 *Back on the record at 2:01 pm.*

364
365 **Agenda Item 12 Public Comment**

366
367 After recess, Board Chair Danielle LaFon opened up public comment at 2:01 pm once on
368 the record. The board kept the line open, and proceeded with the next agenda item, as
369 nobody had called in at this time.

370
371 **Agenda Item 14 Administrative Business**

372
373 The board scheduled a tentative one day meeting for October 5, 2020.

374
375 The board decided on a one day meeting for October due to the fact that originally the
376 board anticipated having to do audits, but with renewal being pushed back to 10/30/2020,
377 the audits will be reviewed at the spring board meeting. When discussing the type of meeting
378 to have in the spring, the board was wanting a two day meeting in order to review audits.
379 Acting RLS Andy Khmelev recommended going what the counselors board did, which is
380 review the audits via onboard, and then discuss the tabled ones at the meeting. Mr. Khmelev
381 reminded the board that most of the audits are straightforward, and it's the unusual ones
382 with the questionable continued education that require board discussion. The board was in
383 support of this idea.

384
385 The board settled on tentative dates for March 1-2, 2021 in Anchorage for their spring
386 meeting.

387

388 Board Chair Danielle Lafon closed public comment at 2:16 pm with no one calling in during
389 the period.

390
391 Task List:

- 393 • Follow up with regulations specialists on right touch regulation.
- 394 • Make corrections to annual report.
- 395 • Reach out to the applicant who requested alternate supervision.
- 396 • Brandon Ercanbrack to contact UAA, and Geoffry McCormick to contact UAF.
- 397 • Follow up with Marilyn regarding ongoing issue incorrectly licensed individual that
398 was discussed in executive session.
- 399 • OLE Lauren Bales will need to finish the January 2020 minutes.

400
401 Board Chair Danielle Lafon stated on the record that Brandon Ercanbrack had an excused
402 absence for the first half, however, Colleen Vague’s absence for the second half of the
403 meeting is unexcused.

404
405 **On a motion duly made by Geoffry McCormick, seconded by Mindy Swisher, and**
406 **approved unanimously, it was**

407
408 **RESOLVED to adjourn the June 22, 2020 meeting.**

	APPROVE	DENY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
410 Danielle Lafon	x			
411 Geoffry McCormick	x			
412 Mindy Swisher	x			
413 Colleen Vague				x
414 Brandon Ercanbrack	x			

415
416
417 The motion passed with no further discussion.

418
419 *Off the record at 2:28 pm.*

420
421 
422 _____
423 Stefanie L. Davis for Andy Khmelev
424 Acting Records and Licensing Supervisor

1/13/2022
Date

425
426 
427 _____
428 Mindy Swisher for Danielle Lafon
429 Board of Social Work Examiners Chair

1/11/2022
Date