

STATE OF NEVADA BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINERS
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION
MEETING MINUTES

October 8, 2021

1. Call to Order/Roll Call to Determine the Presence of a Quorum.

Call to Order: The work session of the Nevada State Board of Psychological Examiners was called to order by President Whitney Owens, PsyD, at 12:24 p.m. at the office of the Board of Psychological Examiners, 4600 Kietzke Lane, Ste B-116, Reno, Nevada 89502. Due to COVID-19 and Governor Sisolak's Emergency Mandate to Stay at Home for Nevada, this meeting was also conducted online via "Zoom."

Roll Call: Board President Whitney Owens, PsyD, Secretary/Treasurer Stephanie Woodard, Psy.D., and members Monique Abarca, LCSW, Stephanie Holland, PsyD, and Soseh Esmaili, PsyD, were present.

Also present were Dr. Gary Lenkeit, Board Investigator, Dr. Sheila Young, Board Investigator, and Lisa Scurry, Executive Director.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this time. Lisa Scurry, Executive Director, stated no public comment had been received by the Board Office as of the start of the meeting.

3. (For Possible Action) Discussion and Possible Action to Revise the Strategic Plan of the Nevada Board of Psychological Examiners. Discussion and possible action may be taken on the goals and objectives as outlined on Attachment A to this notice.

The strategic plan of the Board of Psychological Examiners was reviewed and revised. The strategic plan was adopted in 2018 and last reviewed in 2019. The following goals were discussed with individual objectives added, deleted and revised.

Goal A: Enhancing Communication with Psychologists and Students

- Improving communication Through Database and List Serve.

The Board discussed improving the ways in which information is distributed and made available to licensees, registrants, and applicants.

There was discussion about the effectiveness and limitations of the online database. The database provides a way for the public to check on licensure, and for licensees to update their directory/public and mailing addresses without assistance from the Board office. It is also provides the means for electronic license renewal.

The database limitations described were based on comparisons with other similar services. Many of the “off the shelf” products allow individuals to apply for licensure or registration within the system. With the current Board database, office staff must manually enter the applicant information to the database once an application is received. Other systems will also allow licensees to upload documents, such as continuing education certificates, to a “digital wallet.” The current database does not offer that functionality.

Ms. Scurry explained any changes to the current database will be an added initial expense of approximately \$2,500. Other database companies charge an annual fee of at least \$10,000 but changes to the system are more easily accomplished. This cost, however, would be 5 times what the Board is currently paying.

Lastly, Ms. Scurry suggested that much of the information that should be tracked by the Board office cannot be placed within the database and is, instead, kept within spreadsheets. Improvements to the database would allow for improved sorting and tracking of information.

The Board discussed researching the cost of making improvements to the current system versus switching to a new technology resource. Ms. Scurry suggested looking at the item in the Spring when more will be known about the Board’s finances for the next fiscal year, as well as the Board’s needs versus what is readily available.

Secretary/Treasurer Woodard stated she would partner on this item as the financial implications are of high importance and will need to be considered.

- Creation of a Quarterly Newsletter

The Board discussed creation of a quarterly newsletter as a means of increasing communication with licensees. A newsletter would be posted to the Board’s website and/or distributed to all licensees with information about issues being addressed by the Board as well as procedural updates from the Board office.

Discussion included whether a newsletter was necessary and its creation a good use of the executive director’s time. Alternatively, a newsletter could be created only once or twice each year; and/or, in lieu of a newsletter, distribution of monthly Board meeting highlights to licensees.

It was recommended that a newsletter be created twice each year, in the spring and fall, to provide licensees and registrants with updates and reminders. The list of proposed topics would be presented to the Board in advance of publication.

Board Member Monique Abarca volunteered to work on the newsletter in conjunction with her duties as the continuing education coordinator. She will review topics and coordinate with the executive director.

- Website – Update and Revise

Ms. Scurry suggested conducting a review of the website including who is visiting the site and for what reasons. Based on that information, information that is most sought after will be moved to the more central locations within the site. Examples include moving the online application to the top of the licensing page, posting the policies and procedures being adopted by the Board, and making verification of license easier to find for the public.

Board President Whitney Owens volunteered to review the website with the executive director to identify areas for revision and update.

Goal B: Improving Office Policies and Processes

- Go Paperless

Director Scurry suggested expanding the movement of documents from paper to electronic versions. Primarily, applications for licensure and registration should be online only. Such a move will reduce the amount of time processing applications as paper applications often result in back-and-forth communication with the office to receive all of the necessary information.

It was suggested that licensure renewal packets not be mass mailed in the Fall of 2022. Instead, all licensees will either renew online or they can download the renewal packet from the Board's website. A packet would also be mailed to the licensee upon request. Ms. Scurry stated that mass mailing the renewal packets, in addition to the online reminders, caused confusion and unnecessary expense in 2020. She suggested this topic be considered when renewals are discussed in the spring of 2022.

President Owens volunteered to review the renewal policy and procedures.

- Review and revise employment and employee policies regarding time off (sick/vacation), evaluation and discipline

Director Scurry explained that the employment and performance review policies were created and adopted by the Board earlier in the year. Those documents will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Dr. Woodard, as Secretary/Treasurer, was suggested as the reviewer of those documents.

- Create Frequently Asked Questions online/ make a video using different topics quarterly

This item was deleted as the frequently asked questions is part of the communications objectives and website review. There are no plans to create a video and the FAQ information will be maintained as part of website revisions.

- Update Office Procedure Manual

Ms. Scurry explained that the office procedure manual was drafted in 2019. Some of the content has been moved into stand-alone policies and procedures that were adopted by the Board. Other sections are in various stages of review and revision. She added that the intent is to create step-by-step procedures for both daily and ongoing operations of the Board office.

Depending on the category of information, members of the Board and the Board investigators will be asked to review sections. For example, the Secretary/Treasurer will be responsible for the review of any financial sections and the CE chair will be responsible for continuing education information.

- Set up Legislative Training

Ms. Scurry stated that she was not in need of additional training on the legislative session and bill drafting process. She added that the area of regulation development will be written as a procedure to ensure those steps are documented and easy to follow in the future. Those procedures will be put into the office procedure manual.

- Social Media Policy – completed

The social media policy was previously adopted by the Board. This objective will be removed from the Strategic Plan.

- Hire a Bookkeeper – completed

A bookkeeper was hired in 2020 to add financial support and oversight to the Board office. This objective will be removed from the Strategic Plan.

- Endorsement Language

Ms. Scurry explained that, although procedures have been written related to application for licensure by endorsement, the final document has not been presented to the Board due to recent changes to the application process. It was expected to go to the Board for adoption in the December meeting.

Adoption of the regulation on endorsement are pending final approval by the State.

- Continuing Education – review guidelines

Draft procedures for the review and approval of continuing education course applications are being created. The draft will be reviewed by the Continuing Education Chair, Ms. Abarca. Ms. Abarca agreed that such guidelines should be adopted to ensure understanding and consistency of the approval process. The proposed end date for adoption of the guidelines would be February / March 2022.

Goal C: Complaint Investigation and Procedure for Disciplinary Proceedings

Ms. Scurry stated that the policy on disciplinary proceedings was reviewed in the past year by the Board investigators and the Board's legal counsel. Office procedures are being drafted and will be reviewed by the investigators. Those procedures will document the step-by-step process used by the Office to process and handle investigations.

Dr. Lenkeit suggested the policy should be reviewed as it was adopted several years ago. Ms. Scurry added that a possible revision to the current policy centers on when correspondence to a respondent must be sent by the Board's legal counsel versus the Board office, particularly when the respondent has obtained their own legal counsel.

- Establish policy for ensuring security of confidential or sensitive documents during working phase of investigation and centralizing storage at the board office after investigations are resolved.
- Adopt policies and procedures manual for investigators, for processing complaints, for conducting hearings, and for standardizing discipline, including disciplinary supervision contracts

Dr. Woodard left the meeting at 2:00.

Goal D: Future Legislative Needs

The Board discussed the status of legislative needs in the Strategic Plan as well as objectives to be added for changes to both Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC).

- Develop Tracking system to identify needed regulation changes

Ms. Scurry explained that the Legislature has an electronic tracking system for use during the legislative session. The process for use of the system as well as the tracking of proposed legislation will be added to the office procedures manual.

- Endorsement Language

This regulation is pending final approval by the State. Development of procedures for processing applications for licensure by endorsement are included in Goal B (above).

- Regulation Changes

New items

Proposed new regulations were added to the Strategic Plan for discussion over the next year included registration of psychological interns; supervision of trainees, interns, and post-doctoral students, including the definition of primary and secondary supervisors; and the registration of supervisors.

- NRS 641.390, Representation or Practice Without License or Registration Prohibited

The Board previously recommended a change to NRS 641.390, Representation or Practice Without License or Registration Prohibited. The item was recommended for inclusion in the strategic plan for consideration during the 2023 Session of the Nevada State Legislature. The proposed change would specifically require psychologists employed by the Nevada Corrections Department to be licensed by the Board. President Owens explained that the proposed change will involve the Human Resources Department for Corrections and there could be a cost associated with the analysis of job descriptions, titles, salaries, etc.

- Master's Level License

President Owens explained that the development of accreditation for a Master's Level License for psychologists is being considered by the American Psychological Association (APA). She stated that the Board should have discussions about the topic, including the potential future drafting of legislation, prior to APA and others making recommendations. This will allow the Board to take the lead in whether or not to fully pursue development of such a license.

In addition to Dr. Owens, Dr. Lenkeit and Dr. Esmaeili volunteered to be part of the team individually researching the issue for future discussion by the Board.

- Registration of psychological interns

A proposal to change the registration of psychological interns from permissive to mandatory was added to the Plan. It was stated that the issue had been discussed previously and the decision was made to not mandate registration of interns at the request of some licensees/groups who stated mandatory registration could cause conflicts. It was decided that further research would be done to determine if registration should be mandated with exceptions available as needed for those groups.

There was discussion about whether a change to the statute would be necessary or just to the NAC. The Board's legal counsel will be consulted to make that determination.

Dr. Holland volunteered to take the lead on this objective.

- Limitation on number of assistants, interns and supervisors. (NAC 641.158)

As a result of discussion during the Board's regular meeting, the potential revision of the number of trainees, interns and/or assistants per supervisor was added as an objective. Discussion was held related to the reasons the NAC was adopted and, specifically, how many students are appropriate for a supervisor to oversee and still maintain adequate quality of care for all patients/clients.

Additionally, it was suggested that the definition of primary supervisor and secondary supervisor be considered for addition to the NAC. The current NAC only refers to "supervisors" generally without distinguishing between the two.

President Owens suggested adding language that consideration of an exception to the number of supervisors may only be approved by the Board.

Dr. Holland volunteered to take the lead on this objective.

- Registration of supervisors.

A proposal to have supervisors register with the Board was added as an objective to be developed over the next year. Research will be conducted into how other states register supervisors, as well as the process used by other mental health boards in Nevada.

Research will include the types of training required by the supervisor, and if a cost to register will be levied.

President Owens volunteered to take the lead on the item.

Goal E: External Audit / Financial Oversight

- Update new executive director on 2018 and 2019 audit deficiencies and identify plan to remediate Board office operations

This objective will be removed from the Strategic Plan as the past deficiencies have been addressed.

Ms. Scurry explained that there may be one finding on the upcoming external audit having to do with the recording of deferred revenues. She and the bookkeeper have met and discussed the new process with the accountants and made adjustments.

- Improve budget reporting format, and improve coordination between Board office and Treasurer

The budget reporting format is an ongoing continuous systems improvement, including the way in which the finances are reported to ensure accuracy and transparency.

- Develop plan to rectify audit deficiencies.

There are currently no audit deficiencies to be addressed. It was suggested that the objective remain on the Strategic Plan to address any issues that come up annually during the audit.

Dr. Woodard stated that the accountants conducting the external auditor will present the final audit to the Board, along with an explanation of any findings.

- Executive Director Receive 1:1 training with Board Auditor

Ms. Scurry stated that she has met with the external auditor about the bookkeeping procedures and will make adjustments to processes as necessary. Additionally, the

bookkeeper hired by the Board has trained the executive director on the bookkeeping software and revised processes used by the Board office.

The office bookkeeping procedures will be included in the office procedures manual. Ms. Scurry added that training of the Board Secretary / Treasurer will be added to the manual. Such training will include how to access the bookkeeping software, how to read the financial reports, and budgeting processes.

- Executive Director explore bookkeeper training or cost of bookkeeper services

This item will be removed from the Plan, although training with the bookkeeper is available as necessary.

- Better understand the Accrual VS Cash Analysis

Ms. Scurry stated she would research the reason this objective is on the Plan and would address it at a later meeting.

- Training in Bookkeeping / Financial Policies and Procedures

Ms. Scurry explained that in January 2019, the Board adopted an Operating Reserve policy. Part of the policy was a commitment to develop additional policies related to investment and risk tolerance, operating budget, and fund development. Some of the provisions of those policies are established through statute, such as a reserve account. She will work with the Secretary/Treasurer on what policies are required by state law in order to create procedures for compliance.

The operating budget policy will be drafted first and include definitions of line items in the budget, spending levels and approval process, etc.

Dr. Woodard will be the lead Board member on this item.

Goal F: Examinations

- Exam Policy and Candidate Guide

Ms. Scurry explained that she and Dr. Holland have revised the test policy and procedures and the Candidate Guide. Those documents will come to the Board when discussion of the state exam occurs. A change that will be made to the existing document is the addition of language requiring annual review of the exam.

Following review of the current exam questions and administration process, the policy will return to the Board for review.

- EPPP Part-2

The EPPP Part-2 has been fully implemented by ASPPB. At the next meeting, discussion will be held as to whether exceptions for provisional licensure will continue to be provided to applicants needing to take the exam as the final step in the process.

- Streamlining Examination requirements

Ms. Scurry asked if there will be a point in the future when individuals who are licensed in other jurisdictions will be required to take the EPPP Part-2. Currently individuals who are licensed in another state are not required to take the EPPP Part-2 to obtain licensure in Nevada. This topic will be discussed at a regular meeting of the Board.

Dr Woodard returned to the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Goal G: Other Items

Dr. Lenkeit asked if the Board should consider any actions related to Directive 011 and temporary registration of licensees from other jurisdictions. Dr. Woodard stated that conversations are occurring at the State level including providing some lead time to Boards to ensure continuity of care. This item will continue to appear on regular Board meeting agendas for discussion and potential action.

Efforts to fill vacancies on the Board were discussed. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the Governor asking about the status of the two vacancies.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this time.

5. (For Possible Action) Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, President Owens adjourned the Work Session at 3:20 p.m.