MINUTES L.S.B.O.E. MARCH 26, 2021

MARRIOTT HOTEL- BATON ROUGE, LA.

1-) The roll was called at 3:12pm with the following people present: Drs. Avallone, Anastasio, Gerdes, Wroten, & Sandefur, Mr. Dale Benoit, and Ms. Hope Carrier. Declaring a quorum was present, Dr. Wroten called the meeting to order.

2-) The agenda was adopted upon motion Anastasio/Wroten. Unanimous.

3-) The minutes of the 01/29/21 meeting were adopted with no changes upon motion by Sandefur/Anastasio. Unanimous.

4-) Dr. Sandefur gave the finance report, reviewing the Profit and Loss report and reporting a checking account balance of $159,844.23. The Board asked that the C.P.A. provide a breakdown of verification income and license renewal income for future reports.

5-) Dr. Wroten discussed the proposed telehealth rule approved at the 01/29/21 meeting. Mr. Graves Theus, LSBOE attorney, requested the ability to make non-substantive, minor legal wording changes for purposes of promulgating the rule. Upon motion by Avallone/Anastasio the Board Mr. Theus was granted the authority to make necessary non-substantive changes to the previous motion for purposes of rule promulgation. Passed unanimously.

6-) Miscellaneous items:

Stanton Optical was discussed – update still pending from Mr. Theus; no

action taken.

Barthelemy’s Optical – Ms. Barthelemy-Brown recently contacted Mr. Theus’s office; the Board will instruct Mr. Theus to re-issue the fine

for failure to disclose the requested records in a timely manner.

7-) 2021 License renewals. Ms. Carrier provided an update that we currently have 612 Doctors of Optometry licensed in Louisiana. To-date, there have been only 30 non-renewals, with all other renewals completed by March 8, 2021. The U.S. Postal Service in Oakdale has been having lengthy delays with mail delivery which has affected the renewal process. Ways to streamline license renewals was discussed, including using the website to automatically and immediately verify CE and allow printing of a license once payment is received.

Dr. Avallone presented an update from ARBO/COPE/OE Tracker regarding utilizing their CE renewal service, which would come with a fee. The Board would need to add $30.00 to license renewals to cover the actual cost of C.E. access by licensees on OE Tracker to break even. Mr. Theus will be asked if that can be done.

8-) Insurance Verifications: Ms. Carrier reported that all insurance verifications are up to date and the process is working well using the new website-based process.

9-) COVID Updates. There was nothing new regarding LDH allowing O.D.s to administer COVID-19 vaccines, and LDH has not responded to-date regarding communication channels to insure timely orders they produce. Dr. Wroten will continue to work on this.

The emergency rule for the blanket hardship exemption of C.E. requirements for calendar year 2020 has been published per an update provided by Mr. Theus.

10-) The upcoming licensing exam was discussed for July 9-10. There were no changes.

11-) Dr. Sandefur reported that an attorney for LDH contacted him regarding Ambulatory Surgery Centers and the inquiry is moving forward, but there was nothing new to report at this time.

12-) Medication dispensing and delivery were discussed. The Board will ask Mr. Theus for an opinion on dispensing/sale of medication and implantation of medication.

13-) Dr. Avallone reported the LSBOE Policy Manual encountered some digital conversion challenges but the update is still in progress.

14-) A complaint regarding Dr. Arthur Franz was discussed. After discussion the Board decided to call Dr. Franz for a formal investigational hearing regarding prescribing of certain medications. The hearing date was set for May 7, 2021 at 10 A.M. in Mr. Theus’ office in Alexandria, La.

15-) Dr. Gerdes presented findings from his review of other healthcare board procedures regarding Dr. Craig Quintal. The Board will ask Mr. Theus if it has the authority to place additional restrictions on the practice of optometry.

16) A list of statutory/regulatory issues to potentially address in the future was begun, including: changing wording of the per diem allowance in statute to match the per diem allowance of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners or the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry; allowing ability to restrict the practice of optometry if not already allowed; removing the U.S. citizenship requirement for licensure from law since the U.S. Supreme Court has declared it unconstitutional in other states; and passing along actual fees for using OE Tracker to verify CE if not already allowed.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 4:48 P.M.

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Chris Wroten, O.D. James Sandefur, O.D.

President Secretary