



Tennessee Board of Communication Disorders and Sciences Meeting

Friday, February 16, 2024

MINUTES

The Board meeting of the Tennessee Communication Disorders and Sciences was called to order at 10:00a.m. in the Iris Room, Ground Floor, Metro Center Complex, 665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37243 by Carrie Mills, Board Chair on Friday, February 16, 2024.

Board members present: Carrie Mills, Board Chairperson
Skye Jones, Audiologist, Board Secretary
Matthew Ward, Speech Pathologist
Alicia Barker, Audiologist
Kenneth Fletcher, MD

Board member(s) absent: Emily Hosokawa Speech Pathologist
Richard Morton, Citizen Member

Staff present: Candyce Wilson, Unit 1 Board Director
Michael Varnell, JD, General Counsel

APPLICANT INTERVIEWS

- 1) Britney Buttrey – appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Buttrey has applied to reinstate her Speech Language Pathology (hereinafter “SLP”) license. She was unable to provide the required Continuing Education (hereinafter “CE”) hours per year since her license was retired on May 19, 2021. Ms. Buttrey has provided a total of 47 CE hours completed between 2022 – 2019. The Board reviewed the application materials provided and are willing to accept the hours submitted as sufficient even though they are outside of the years requested by rule. Ms. Skye Jones motioned to approve the applicant for licensure. Mr. Matthew Ward seconded the motion and it passed.
- 2) Mauika Hicks – appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Hicks is an application for SLP licensure by reciprocity. Ms. Hicks appeared before the Board to address the indication reported on her criminal background check. After discussion with the Board, Ms. Jones motioned to approve the applicant for licensure. Ms. Ward seconded the motion and it passed.
- 3) Louise Williams-Owen – appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Williams-Owen reports she holds a TN teachers license and has not practiced in the SLP field since 2019. She has applied to reinstate her SLP license which expired on March 31, 2023. At this time, she has only provided the following CE hours: 22.5 from 2023, 5.5 from 2022, 5.5 from 2021, and 4

from 2020. The Board considers the applicant to be deficient 2.5 CE hours based on the total number of hours required since her license lapsed. Mr. Ward motioned to grant licensure contingent on the Boards office receiving proof of 2.5 more CEs within thirty (30) days from the date of the Board meeting. Ms. Alicia Barker seconded the motion and it passed.

- 4) Laura Thomas - appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Thomas has applied for reinstatement of SLPA licensure since her license expired on January 31, 2021. At this time, she has only provided the following CE hours: 6 from 2024, 0 from 2023, 0 from 2022, 0 from 2021, 4 from 2019 and 6 from 2018. The Board considers the applicant to be deficient 2.5 CE hours based on the total number of hours required since her license lapsed. She reports she has proof of one more hour completed in 2024. The Board considers the applicant to be deficient nineteen (19) CE hours based on the total number of hours required since her license lapsed. Ms. Jones motioned to grant licensure contingent on the Boards office receiving proof of nineteen (19) more CEs within six (6) months from the date of the Board meeting. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and it passed.
- 5) Terrah Black - appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Black is an initial applicant for SLP licensure. Ms. Black appeared before the Board to address the allegation of fraudulent hours begin reported. Prior to appearing before the Board, Ms. Black obtained a new supervisor and has since submitted proof of completing the required one hundred hours with another supervisor. After review of the application and materials, Ms. Jones motioned to approve the applicant for licensure. Ms. Barker seconded the motion and it passed. The Board discussed the allegation of fraudulent hours would be better handled through the complaint and investigative process.
- 6) Rachel Young - appeared before the Board without legal representation. Ms. Young is an initial applicant for SLP licensure. Ms. Young appeared before the Board to address the allegation of fraudulent hours begin reported. Prior to appearing before the Board, Ms. Young obtained a new supervisor and has since submitted proof of completing the required one hundred hours with another supervisor. After review of the application and materials, Ms. Jones motioned to approve the applicant for licensure. Ms. Barker seconded the motion and it passed. The Board discussed the allegation of fraudulent hours would be better handled through the complaint and investigative process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the August 18, 2023 and November 3, 2023, Board meeting minutes. Mr. Ward motioned to approve the minutes. Ms. Jones seconded the motion and the motion passed.

REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

Ms. Barbara Granum presented the current complaints report for the Board. The Board had no questions.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REPORT

Ms. Candyce Wilson reviewed the statistical licensing report for the Board. The Board had no questions.

Ms. Wilson questioned the Board on their preference regarding applicants who appear before the Board based on the indications on their background check. The consensus of the Board is they wish to only see applicants who have repeat offenses, any felony charge, misdemeanor charges within the most recent five (5) years, and any applicant who appears to have failed to report charges on their application.

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

Mr. Michael Varnell, Board Attorney, reviewed the Boards conflict of interest policy. Mr. Varnell gave the report from the Office of General Counsel. At this time, the Hearing Instrument Committee has one rule project which had a rulemaking hearing on December 15, 2023. Additionally, this Board has one pending rule change in the internal review process, which will allow SLP's and Clinical Fellows more time to complete their clinical fellowship.

CONDUCT NEW BUSINESS

Ratification of New Licensees

The Board reviewed the newly licensed and reinstated licensees since the last Board meeting. Ms. Jones motioned to ratify all names on the list. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and it passed.

The Board reviewed the newly licensed and reinstated licensees for the HIS Committee. Ms. Jones motioned to ratify all names on the list. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and it passed.

Over the Counter Hearing Aids

The Board discussed the need to amend their audiology scope of practice rules to ensure patient access to prescription hearing aids based on the FDA's prescription device regulations. Mr. Ward motioned to approve Ms. Alicia Barker to work with the Boards legal counsel to draft proposed rule language for the Board to consider at their next meeting. Ms. Jones seconded the motion and it passed.

Reinstatement/Reactivation of Licensure and Continuing Education Requirements

Ms. Wilson acknowledged the Board has reviewed several applicant interviews at their most recent meetings who are falling short on submitting CE hours completed for prior years, which is currently a requirement in their rules. The Board discussed that typically when these applicants appear before them, they ensure the applicant completes the total number of hours required even if they must go complete the hours now. The Board is interested in considering a policy to address the avenue to ensure applicants are not delayed in obtaining licensure waiting for the Board to meet again. Mr. Varnell, with Ms. Wilson's assistance, will present proposed language for the Board to consider at their next meeting.

Consider process for thirty (30) day practice pursuant to Board Rule 1370-01-.03

After review of the rule and discussion with Ms. Wilson and Mr. Varnell, the Board does believe a process should be created so the Board may track who is choosing to practice in Tennessee for thirty (30) days a year. Mr. Varnell suggested proposed language will be made available for the Board to consider at their next meeting.

Disciplinary Order(s)

Consent Order(s)

David Hutchings, SLP (license #2992) – Ms. Brittani Kendrick, with the Office of General Counsel, presented the signed consent order for David Hutchings. Ms. Mills recused. Mr. Ward motioned to accept the order. Ms. Jones seconded the motion and it passed. The Board requested that a further complaint and/or investigation be conducted in relation to Mr. Hutchings falsely reporting himself to be a medical doctor to any other appropriate entity in case this misrepresentation should be considered by another entity or Board.

Public Comment

Megan Farris – appeared before the Board for public comment. Ms. Farris presented herself as the current supervisor of an applicant that appeared before the Board today. She attested to the positive character and work performance of that applicant despite the applicant being falsely accused of providing fraudulent documentation in her application. The Board had no questions and thanked Ms. Farris for appearing.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30am CT.