



ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

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MINUTES Board Meeting April 23, 2021

The Alabama Board of Examiners in Marriage and Family Therapy met on Friday, April 23, 2021 at the Board's office in Montgomery to conduct Board business. The meeting was held virtually during the COVID 19 State of Emergency. Members present on the video-conference call were Mr. Douglas Cooke (Board Chair), Dr. Mark Westfall (member), Dr. Karly Downs (Board Vice Chair), Ms. Raven Pyle (member) and Dr. Samuel Jones. Also present on the call was Ms. Bettie Carmack (Board Legal Counsel) and Dr. Luciana Silva. Participating in the meeting onsite were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Ms. Hope Childers (Board Administrator) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary).

The regularly scheduled meeting was advertised on the Board's website, www.mft.alabama.gov, and the Secretary of State's website, www.sos.alabama.gov, in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

The meeting was called to order by Keith Warren at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone participating in the meeting, along with Dr. Silva and a representative from Alabama Marriage and Family Therapy Network.

Mr. Warren administered the oath of office to new Board member, Dr. Samuel Jones.

Dr. Silva called Board roll and Mr. Warren announced that a quorum of the members was present to conduct business.

Mr. Warren reported that the election of Board officers was due. Dr. Downs nominated Mr. Cooke as Board Chair. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Cooke nominated Dr. Downs as Board Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Dr. Westfall and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Warren presented the January 22, 2021 Board meeting minutes for the Board's approval. A copy of the minutes was provided to the Board prior to the meeting for their review. Dr. Westfall made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pyle and unanimously approved by the Board.

The Board discussed a request regarding the status of application received in 2020. The Board discussed modifying the LMFT application by eliminating forms #MFT 4 concerning Professional Employment Experience and further defining the requirements for #MFT 3 Educational Requirements and #MFT 10 Record of Supervision since this information was not needed for applicants from CACREP MFT programs. The Board asked the Executive Director to make the necessary adjustments to the application, as discussed.

Mr. Warren presented the Executive Director's Report and reviewed the financial activities of the Board for the period ending March 31, 2021. He reported that the Board had made substantial improvements in their financial situation and presented a line-item summary of expenses for the same period. He reported on the total number of licensees (#430), along with the total number of complaints received during FY 2021 (copy of the report available for review in Official Book of Minutes). He reviewed the complaint process, Investigative Committee review of cases, and situations that would result in an Administrative Hearing held by the Board. Dr. Downs made the motion to approve the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pyle and was unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Warren presented the Administrator's Report listing activities performed by the staff since the last Board meeting held in January, along with a list of 10 new licenses issued during this reporting period (reports available for review in Official Book of Minutes).

Ms. Carmack indicated that she had no new business to report for the Legal Counsel's report.

Dr. Silva commented on the correspondence to Medicaid from the Board requesting continuation of telehealth services by LMFTs and she encouraged the Board to continue communications with Medicaid in support of these efforts.

The Board discussed graduation schedules for LMFT candidates and agree to have a special meeting on June 4, 2021 to review applications only and to keep the July 23, 2021 meeting date for regular board business.

The Board discussed the slight decrease in the number of licensees reported at the January meeting that did not renew their LMFT license. Ms. Childers reported on the notification process to renew licenses. The Board discussed whether to seek an explanation from the expired license-holders to determine the rational. Mr. Warren reported that he would draft a survey to inquire about why a license was not renewed and solicit voluntary response from expired licensees, and, in the future, a section would be added to the renewal form to request this information or similar solicitation.

Ms. Childers presented a list of applicants for the Board's approval, consisting of four (4) Associate and three (3) LMFT. Dr. Jones made the motion to approve the three (3) Associate applications and two (2) LMFT applications, with exception to one LMFT application who did not submit their Associate licensing fee when approved in October 2020 and had not been in practice since that time. The motion was seconded by Ms. Pyle and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Warren commented on the audit findings concerning Board designations. He reported that he would report at the July meeting on the progress in issuing Associate licenses and referred to Rules 536-X-3-.01 Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Designations.

Mr. Warren announced that June 4, 2020 to review applications only. The next business meeting of the Board was scheduled for Friday, June 23, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Warren stated that he would keep the members advised about whether future meetings would be in-person onsite or continue to have virtual meetings by the full Board.

With no further business to discuss and Mr. Cooke adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Cooke
Board Chair

Keith E. Warren
Executive Director

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