



**Washington State
Board of Hearing and Speech
Meeting Minutes**

January 31, 2014

Board Members Present

Lynn Bishop-Chair; James Deal, Public Member-Vice-Chair; Rudy Gahler, MD; Rick Giles; Courtenay Hendricks, Public Member; Trice Konschuh, Public Member; Cary Larson; Ann Plotnick; Tom Putaansuu; David Oplinger; Gail Rothwell

Staff Present

Janette Benham, Program Manager
Sandie Pearson, Program Representative
Trina Castle, Executive Director
Jack Bucknell, Assistant Attorney General (AAG)

Others Present

Sheryl Arends	Carole Brewer
Carl Arends	Marci Leong
Nancy Bowen-Hicks	Nichole Skinner
Al Hicks, Ph.D	Tyler Sterling
Paul Sass	Melissa Johnson
Mark Pierce	A Nichele Kenyham
Tammy Clark	Nancy Hansen
Sandy Hubbard	Dr. Thomas Rulon

On January 31, 2014, the Board of Hearing and Speech met in Tumwater, WA at the Department of Health, Town Center One, 101 Israel Rd SE, Rm 163, Tumwater, WA 98501. In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the meeting agenda was emailed to the Hearing and Speech listserv and posted on the Hearing and Speech website.

OPEN SESSION – 10:00 a.m.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER – Lynn Bishop, Chair** **10:08 a.m.**
Ms. Bishop called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.
 - 1.1 Introductions**
Board members, staff, and audience members introduced themselves. Ms. Bishop welcomed the new board members and thanked them for serving on the Board of Hearing and Speech.
 - 1.2 Approval of the agenda**
The agenda was approved as presented.

1.3 Approval of the November 15, 2013 Meeting Minutes

The November 15, 2013 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

2. PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT – Janette Benham, Program Manager

2.1 Licensing Statistics

Ms. Benham provided updated licensing statistics. The handout included licensing statistics for February 2012, November 2013, and January 2014. Statistics for January 2014 are as follows:

	Fitter/Dispenser	Audiologist	SLP	SLPA (Certification)
Active Licenses	297	403	2206	211
Inactive License	43	34	34	0
Expired License	903	192	903	55
Revoked License	22	0	1	0
Suspended License	15	2	0	0

Ms. Benham explained the report continues to show an increase in the number of licensed SLPs. She believes this is a direct result of the school district Educational Staff Associates (ESAs) requirement to be licensed to receive reimbursement for services.

Paul Sass (Costco) commented that there 23,000 Washington residents per fitter/dispenser.

2.2 Update on board member recruitment and board member appointments

Ms. Benham provided updated information regarding board member terms and recruitment efforts. Board members may serve two three-year terms. Ms. Bishop is currently serving her second term which will expire June 6, 2014. Tom Putaansuu is also serving a second term that expires June 7, 2014. Ms. Benham will begin recruitment efforts to fill both board member positions. Ms. Bishop and Mr. Putaansuu both agreed to serve until replacements can be appointed.

Cary Larson and Jim Deal are both serving their first term and are eligible for re-appointment. Ms. Benham explained that board members who wish to serve a second term need to re-apply.

Ms. Benham thanked Dr. Gahler for his continued willingness to serve on the board. She is continuing recruitment efforts to fill the MD position held by Dr. Gahler, but has not received any applications at this time.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – Trina Castle, Executive Director

3.1 Current Budget Report – Ms. Castle provided an updated report on the Hearing and Speech Program budget through December of 2013. She reported that the program’s overall budget was in good shape. The report showed that revenue is exceeding expenditures. Program staff will continue to monitor the budget and will provide an updated report at the next meeting.

3.2 Legislative Update/Meet-Me-Call Update – Ms. Castle provided an update on legislation that was discussed during the weekly meet-me-call conference calls.

- House Bill (HB) 2139 would require the Medical Commission to create a quality improvement program to address deficits or concerns in the practice of its licensees and to improve the care of practitioners in a non-punitive, confidential environment.
- HB 2338 would require any change or interpretation of a profession’s scope of practice be done by rulemaking by the disciplining authority.
- HB 2351 would allow out-of-state health care professionals to obtain a temporary permit (30 day maximum) to practice on a voluntary basis in Washington.
- Senate Bill (SB) 6170 would require health professionals to obtain cultural competency as part of their profession’s required continuing education.

4. PRESENTATION – John Johnson, Program Director, Spokane Falls Community College
Mr. Johnson presented information to the board regarding the Spokane Falls Hearing Instrument Specialist (HIS) program and curriculum. Mr. Johnson shared that formal education is very important in any health care profession and that the HIS instructors are required to go through a specific certification process prior to teaching. The improved platform/software being used has received positive results in education as well as positive feedback from students.

Mr. Johnson stated that since the board last reviewed the Spokane Falls program (2010), nothing has changed. He provided board members with copies of unsolicited letters the program has received from Beltone and House Clinic regarding the high caliber of the Spokane Falls HIS program. Rick Giles asked Mr. Johnson several questions regarding the number of students enrolled and the number of graduates over the last 10 years. Mr. Johnson said that 20 students are currently enrolled in the program and approximately 160 have graduated from the program over the past 10 years. Jim Deal asked how the program could handle 50 students per year if there was a demonstrated need. Mr. Johnson assured the board they would hire additional adjunct staff to meet the need. The program is ideal for that type of expansion, and would be able to accommodate the increase of students. He also stated that currently only one student is not from Washington, and estimated that only 10% of HIS graduates over that last 10 years have been from out of state.

Dr. Thomas Rulon, ENT, and Nancy Hansen, AuD, reported that for years they have worked with Spokane Falls HIS students and have successfully employed several of the students enrolled in the program. Ms. Hansen shared she has hired seven graduates from the HIS program as Fitter/Dispensers. She found that they came in prepared and that their focus on instrument specialty was a demonstrated asset.

Paul Sass asked how students obtain clinical hours. Mr. Johnson answered that students obtain over 500 clinical lab hours and the goal is competency, not hours. Students must have a 90% competency before dealing with the public when working with their mentors in the community. He explained that the first year of the program deals with knowledge and academics. The second year of the program deals with off-site mentored training as part of the formal education. Mr. Johnson shared that statistics show that the industry’s need is currently being met by the number of graduates from both Spokane Falls and Bates. He stated that neither he, the program, nor anyone else has control over where the students choose to work after graduating.

5. PRESENTATION – Marci Leong, Instructor Bates Technical College

Ms. Leong presented information to the board regarding the Bates Hearing Instrument Technology program and curriculum. The program currently has no waiting list and accepts new students in fall and spring quarters. The program works hard to have all hearing instrument manufacturers come and work with the students. Ms. Leong explained that internships can be difficult to locate and can vary with the tasks the student is allowed to perform. Ms. Leong states that Bates, too, would be able to gear up its program and enroll 50 additional students if needed. Ms. Leong stated that the program would be able to accommodate that type of increase. She stated the program currently has plans to increase enrollment and expand.

Tammy Clark (Costco) asked Ms. Leong if students had access to program competencies. Ms. Leong explained that students have access to course syllabi and are provided program competencies at specific intervals during their enrollment in the program. This is to eliminate students wanting to move forward in the program before they are ready.

Tyler Sterling is currently a student in the Bates program and asked to address the board. Mr. Sterling was introduced to the Fitter/Dispenser profession through his employment at Costco in their Hearing Center. Currently, he is working in the Costco deli. He shared that he feels good about being trained to work in various settings as a fitter/dispenser, such as a doctor’s office, retail, and private practice. He reported that as a student he sees patients “all the time” and works with several manufacturers. He enjoys being part of the hearing profession and looks forward to his career in the hearing field. Nichole Skinner is also a student at Bates and addressed the board. She stated the Bates program doesn’t push the student past the point of knowledge they’re comfortable with. The program builds on learned knowledge and proceeds step by step.

Lynn Bishop thanked both students for addressing the board and thanked the colleges for the presentations.

Sandy Hubbard (Miracle Ear) addressed the board and stated she thought EHB 2108 did the job of bringing people to the table and that students need access to supervisors. She also stated she would advocate for a practical examination to be put in place.

Nancy Hansen offered a comment regarding the statistics Paul Sass brought up at the beginning of the meeting. She stated that there are approximately 400 audiologists licensed in Washington who can also fit and dispense hearing aids to meet a projected need of fitter/dispensers.

6. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS – Board members discussed committee composition and assigned new board members to the committees for the rotation ending July 31, 2014. Committee assignments are as follows:

Rules Committee	Education/Exam Committee	Disciplinary Committee	Public Relations Committee
Cary Larson, SLPA	Cary Larson, SLPA	Tom Putaansuu, AuD	Jim Deal, Public Member

Trice Kenschuh, Public Member	Rick Giles, Fitter/Dispenser	Jim Deal, Public Member	Dr. Rudy Gahler
Ann Plotnick, Fitter/Dispenser	David Oplinger, AuD	Gail Rothwell, SLP	Courtenay Hendricks, Public Member
Rick Giles, Fitter/Dispenser	Courtenay Hendricks, Public Member	Ann Plotnick, Fitter/Dispenser	
Gail Rothwell, SLP			

7. COMMITTEE WORK

7.1 Rules Committee

Members: Gail Rothwell, SLP, Chair; Cary Larson, SLPA; Ann Plotnick, Fitter/Dispenser, Rick Giles, Fitter/Dispenser, and Trice Kenschuh, Public Member

- Committee members will discuss any agenda items referred for committee review.

7.2 Education/Exam Committee

Members: Cary Larson, SLPA, Chair; Rick Giles, Fitter/Dispenser, David Oplinger, Audiologist, Courtenay Hendricks, Public Member

- Committee members will discuss any agenda items referred for committee review.

7.3 Disciplinary Committee

Members: Tom Putaansuu, Audiologist, Chair; Jim Deal, Public Member; Gail Rothwell, SLP, Ann Plotnick, Fitter/Dispenser

- The committee will meet in closed session to review any new cases.

7.4 Public Relations Committee

Members: Jim Deal, Chair; Tom Putaansuu, Audiologist, Rudy Gahler, MD, Courtenay Hendricks, Public Member

- The committee will review any lists and labels requests that have been received by staff.
- Committee members will discuss any agenda items referred for committee review.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS – Committee members reported their discussions and presented any recommendations for board action.

- Rules Committee – The committee reported that they discussed HB 2338 that would require any change or interpretation of a profession's scope of practice to be done by rule-making by the disciplining authority. This would affect any interpretive statement the board has completed or may want to do in the future.

They also talked about SB 6170 regarding continuing education in cultural competency. They reported that CE rules regarding multicultural education may meet the requirements of that bill.

- Education/Exam Committee – The committee did not meet at this time.

- Disciplinary Committee – The committee did not have any new cases to review and did not meet at this time.
- Public Relations Committee – The committee did not have any lists and labels requests to review and did not meet at this time.

9. ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL REPORT – Jack Bucknell, AAG

- 9.1** Update on hearing aid internet sales and federal pre-emption – Mr. Bucknell reported on the federal pre-emption exemption. In 1979 the board requested an exemption to the federal preemption. The exemption would have allowed the board to enforce certain provisions in Washington law that were different from those in federal law. Of the three exemptions the board requested, exemptions were granted for two of the requests and one was denied. Mr. Bucknell also reported he found a typographical error regarding a WAC reference during his review of the information.

Mr. Bucknell updated members regarding the question of whether Internet sales of hearing instruments are allowed in Washington. He reported that his research was not complete. However, a Federal Court decision in a Missouri case appears to question the statute's enforceability. Mr. Bucknell will complete his research and present more information at the next meeting.

- 9.2** Mr. Bucknell updated the board regarding current legislation that may affect members if passed. HB 2121 – Concerning training public officials and employees regarding public records, records management, and open public meeting requirements would affect all members of boards/commissions/committees. If passed, members serving on a board, commission, or committee would be required to have training related to the Open Public Meeting Act. Training could be obtained through an online course or distance learning.

Mr. Bucknell also asked members to consider getting state issued email addresses to be used for board business and correspondence. He explained that in some instances, when a public records request is received, board members' personal computers are searchable. Mr. Bucknell and Ms. Benham will provide more information on state email addresses for board members at the next meeting.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

- 10.1** The board discussed a response to comments from a practitioner regarding surety bond requirements for military/federal employees. Ms. Benham provided a brief summary of the surety bond requirements of RCW 18.35.240 and 18.35.250. The board also reviewed a 2008 memo from the board's advising AAG addressing surety bond requirements. Ms. Bishop made a motion to have Ms. Benham draft a letter on the board's behalf thanking the licensee for inquiring on behalf of military and federal employees. The letter should include that the board is not able to provide an exemption to the statutory requirement of RCW 18.35.240. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hendricks and unanimously approved by the board. Ms. Benham will work with Mr. Bucknell on drafting a response.

10.2 There was no additional correspondence received for the board to review at this time.

11. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The board discussed adding the following items to future meeting agendas:

- State issued email addresses for board members
- Rules update – cultural competency
- Legislation meet-me-call update
- Board recruitment update

12. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Paul Sass addressed the board with information regarding surveys that had been conducted among hearing instrument fitter/dispensers. He reported that 46 surveys had been returned.

Melissa Johnson shared with the board that discussions with stakeholders were continuing about creating an alternate path for fitter/dispenser licensure.

Tammy Clark, Costco asked whether Ms. Benham and the board had the supporting documents that were presented at the legislative hearing. Ms. Benham explained that the members had been sent a link to view the legislative hearing prior to the board meeting. Ms. Clark will email the supporting documents to Ms. Benham to send to the board members.

13. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

There were no additional items to present to the board at this time.

14. CONSENT AGENDA

14.1 A copy of the current issue of “The Sentinel News for DOH Employees” was provided in board member packets for their review.

CLOSED SESSION – 1:44 p.m.

15. APPLICATION REVIEWS

- Applicant 1 – approved for SLP Licensure
- Applicant 2 – denied for SLP licensure until applicant has Master’s Degree issued.
- Applicant 3 – application review on hold until Loma Linda SLPA program review

OPEN SESSION – 2:08 p.m.

16. ADJOURNMENT – 2:08 p.m.

Prepared By: Janette Benham, Program Manager

Date

Approved By: Lynn Bishop, Chair

Date