

SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTICIANRY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 15, 2023, 2023 at 9:00 AM

Meeting called to Order

Public Notice of this meeting was properly posted at the Opticianry Board Office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Section 30-4-80. Members of the public who wish to attend may do so by video. The video link is posted on the agenda.

1. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Grant Brown made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Daniel Gosnell seconded the motion and it was carried.

2. Board Mission and Member Statistics

Mr. Keith Hayes, Chairperson gave the Board's mission.

At this time there is one vacant seat; the Public Member. There are three expired seats; the public member seat and two optician seats.

Interested individuals wishing to serve as a public member may submit a cover letter and resume to the SC Office of Boards and Commissions. Per SC Code of Laws 40-38-10(B), terms of the members are for four years and until their successors are appointed and qualified.

3. Introduction of Board Members

Mr. Keith Hayes, Chairperson called the meeting of the SC Board of Examiners in Opticianry to order at 8:58 a.m. Other board members participating in the meeting were:

- ❖ James Rhodes
- ❖ Daniel Gosnell
- ❖ Grant Brown
- ❖ Hollis Inabinet
- ❖ Emily Mikell

LLR staff present included: Mary League, Esq., Advice Counsel, Tracy Adams, Board Executive, Renee Dash, OIE, Theresa Brown, Program Director, Jacquelyn White, Program Coordinator, and Josh Shannon, DOT.

Others in attendance: Robin Reibold, Court Reporter, Amy Suffolk, Denise Wheeler, Wesley Scott and Brian Diener.

4. Approval of Excused Absences

There weren't any absences

5. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

The minutes from August 3, 2023 and August 25, 2023 will be approved at the February 22, 2024 Board meeting.

6. Staff Report

- a. **OIE Report** – For Information – Ervin Bond – This report was for information purposes only and was given by Ms. Renee Dash. Year to date through October 31, 2023. They have received a total of 2 complaints; 0 active investigations and 3 closed.
- b. **IRC Report** – For Information – Ervin Bond – Ms. Renee Dash didn't have any cases to report.
- c. **ODC Report** – For Information – Shelby Sutusky, Esq. – This report was for information purposes only and was given by Ms. Tracy Adams. There are 0 cases open, 0 pending hearings and agreements, there were 0 cases closed since July 24, 2023, and 0 cases closed since January 1, 2023.

7. Hearings

a. Denise Wheeler

Ms. Denise Wheeler appeared before the board for a reinstatement application hearing. She was not represented by counsel and was sworn in by the court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

Ms. Emily Mikell made a motion to go into executive session for legal advice. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

Mr. Grant Brown made a motion to return from executive session. Mr. James Rhodes seconded the motion and it carried. No motions were made or votes taken during the executive session.

Mr. Hollis Inabinet made a motion to reinstate the license with past fees and reinstatement fees. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

b. Amy Suffolk

Ms. Amy Suffolk appeared before the board requesting a CE Extension hearing. She was not represented by counsel and was sworn in by the court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

Mr. Grant Brown made a motion to go into executive session for legal advice. Mr. Daniel Gosnell seconded the motion and it carried.

Mr. James Rhodes made a motion to return from executive session. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried. No motions were made or votes taken during the executive session.

Mr. Hollis Inabinet made a motion to grant the request. Mr. Grant seconded the motion and it carried.

8. Board Executive Report – Tracy Adams

a. Board Report

Ms. Tracy Adams reported to date, the Board has 481 active optician licensees, 38 inactive optician licensees, 248 active contact lens dispensing licensees, 28 inactive contact lens dispensing licensees and 116 registered apprentices.

The Board's current cash balance as of September 30, 2023 is \$226,202.60.

There are 463 licensees that have registered with CE Broker. All licensees will need to register for the next renewal cycle. CE Broker will be sending a video to assist with setting up accounts. The video will be added to the website.

b. Apprenticeship Program – Tracy Adams

Apprentices will renew on their issuance date. There is a 60 day grace period after completing the program to take the exam. Apprentices aren't complying after completing the program.

9. New Business

a. CEDO – Keith Hayes, Chairman

CEDO is an organization that is offering continuing education hours to license opticians. These hours aren't approved for South Carolina. CEDO has not requested approval. They haven't been in the state since 2007. They will be in Greenville, Columbia, and Charleston to offer hours in these cities.

Mr. Hollis Inabinet made a motion to go into executive session for legal advice and Tracy Adams was included. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

Mr. James Rhodes made a motion to return from executive session. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried. No motions were made or votes taken during the executive session.

Ms. Tracy Adams will contact CEDO for them to request approval from the Board. Ms. Adams will also reach out to CE Broker to make them aware of what's going on.

10. Old Business

a. Elections

The election will be rerun for seat one. When that is complete and letters are sent to the Governor's office, we will rerun seat two. An E-blast will be sent out. The Governor's office is asking the Board to run separate elections for each seat. If there are 3 or more candidates, there will be paper ballots. The petitions that have been received will be accepted.

11. Public Comments

Brian Diener, Optical Training Institute representative reported as of today, Optical Training Institute has been approved in 6 states. There are 16 South Carolina apprentices enrolled in the program.

12. Announcements

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 22, 2024.

13. Adjournment

Mr. Daniel Gosnell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 a.m. Mr. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.