

**SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTICIANRY  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

February 20, 2025 at 9:00 AM  
110 Centerview Drive,  
Kingstree Building, Pee Dee Room  
Columbia, South Carolina 29210

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.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Keith Hayes called the meeting of the SC Board of Examiner's in Opticianry to order at 9:08 am.

**1. Approval of Agenda with changes**

Ronald Harbert made a motion to approve the agenda with changes to Item 8Aii. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

**2. Board Mission and Member Statistics – Keith Hayes**

Mr. Keith Hayes read the Board mission statement.

**3. Introduction of Board Members**

Board members participating in the meeting were:

- **Keith Hayes**
- **Grant Brown**
- **Emily Mikell**
- **Ronald Harbert**
- **Daniel Gosnell**

LLR Staff in attendance: April Howe, Lead Investigator; Mary League Esq., Advice Counsel; Shelby Sutusky, Esq., ODC; Patrice Deas, Board Executive; Tajuana Hall, Program Coordinator I; Joshua Shannon, DOTS.

**4. Approval of Excused Absences**

Grant Brown made a motion to excuse the absence of J. Hollis Inabinet. Ronald Harbert seconded the motion and it carried.

**5. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes**

- a. November 7, 2024

Emily Mikell made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 7, 2024 meeting. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

## **6. Administrative Report**

- a. OIE Report – For Information Only- April Howe, Lead Investigator

From Feb 6, 2024 - Feb 6, 2025 they have received 3 complaints. There is 1 active investigation, and 3 closed cases.

- b. IRC Report – For Approval – April Howe, Lead Investigator

There was no IRC report.

- c. ODC Report – For Information Only - Shelby Sutusky, Esq.

There are 0 open cases as of February 20, 2025, 0 closed cases since November 5 2024, and 0 closed since Jan 1, 2024.

## **7. Board Executive Report – Patrice Deas**

- a. Financial Report

Patrice Deas reported as of January 31, 2025, the cash balance is \$233,796.37.

- b. Total Number of Licensees

Patrice Deas reported there are currently 583 Active opticians; 276 Active contact lens dispensing licensees; 55 Inactive optician licensees; 24 Inactive contact lens dispensing licensees; and 142 registered apprentices.

- c. Statement of Economic Interest

Patrice Deas informed the Board they must electronically file a statement of Economic Interest with the SC State Ethics Commission annually no later than by March 30 at noon.

## **8. New Business**

### **A. Application Hearing**

- i. **Reinstatement Application** – Karen Mouzon

Karen Mouzon appeared before the Board for a reinstatement of licensure. She was not represented by counsel, and was sworn in by the court reporter.

Karen Mouzon presented her case to the Board and asked that she be considered for reinstatement.

Emily Mikell made a motion to go into executive session for legal advice. Ronald Harbert seconded the motion and it carried.

Ronald Harbert made a motion to come out of executive session. Daniel Gosnell seconded the motion and it carried.

Grant Brown made a motion to accept 10 of the CE hours presented to the Board. Mrs. Mouzon will need to gain an additional six (6) hours of ABO technical hours. Ronald Harbert made a motion to amend the motion that the additional hours be submitted to the board office to present the CEs to the board chair for approval. Daniel Gosnell seconded the motion and it carried.

ii. **Apprenticeship Program Completion – Melissa Steele**

This item was resolved at staff level, and was acknowledged in the approval of the agenda.

**B. Ruby Garcia- National Opticianry Apprentice Program**

Ruby Garcia presented information for CSSO- National Optician Apprenticeship Program. Ms. Garcia explained the parameters of the program; funding, cost to apprentices, training tracking and structure, and why she feels this program would be successful. The organization is presenting this program to various states as a way to ensure apprentices are getting the training needed to succeed in the field of opticianry.

Grant Brown made a motion to accept for additional review. Keith Hayes seconded the motion and it carried.

**C. Formal Education Review Request- Institute of Opticianry and Technology**

Laura Frezza and Don Clemons presented information to the Board for the VOLT program. VOLT stands for Virtual Opticians Learning Track. Ms. Frezza and Mr. Clemons explained the parameters of the program, cost to apprentices, training tracking and structure, and why they feel this program would be successful. Ms. Frezza suggested having a Board member review the program software, but would require an NDA to protect the privacy and content of the program software.

Grant Brown made a motion to have himself and Emily Mikell review the program and report back to the Board at a later time. Emily Mikell seconded the motion and it carried.

**D. Approval of Expert Reviewers**

Ronald Harbert made a motion to go into executive session for legal advice. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.

Daniel Gosnell made a motion to come out of executive session. Emily Mikell seconded the motion and it carried.

Emily Mikell made a motion to accept Keri Spivey and Wesley Scott as expert reviewers. Ronald Harbert seconded the motion and it carried.

#### **9. Election of Officers**

Grant Brown made a motion to maintain Keith Hayes as Chairperson. Emily Mikell seconded the motion and it carried.

Keith Hayes made a motion to maintain Grant Brown as Vice chair. Ronald Harbert seconded the motion and it carried.

#### **10. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Ronald Harbert made a motion to adjourn at 1:01 pm. Grant Brown seconded the motion and it carried.