THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK
MINUTES
FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2011

The Virginia Board of Social Work ("Board") meeting convened at 10:10 a.m. on Friday, July 15, 2010 at the Department of Health Professions, 9960 Mayland Drive, Richmond, Virginia. Wayne Martin, Chair called the meeting to order.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Wayne A. Martin, Chair
Jennifer Blosser
Willie T. Greene, Sr.
Yvonne Haynes
Susan Horne-Quatannens
Arthur Mayer
Catherine L. Moore
Nettie Simon-Owens
Patricia Smith-Solan

STAFF PRESENT: Evelyn B. Brown, Executive Director
Howard Casway, Sr. Assistant Attorney General
Catherine Chappell, Deputy Executive Director - Licensing
Sarah Georgen, Administrative Assistant
Patricia L. Larimer, Deputy Executive Director - Discipline
Dianne Reynolds-Cane, DHP Director
Elaine Yeatts, Senior Policy Analyst

OTHERS PRESENT: Donna DeAngelis, Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)
Dwight Hymans, Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)
Cathleen Lewandowski, George Mason University Department Chair
Stacey Hardy, George Mason University Field Director
Rana Duncan-Daston, Radford University Associate Professor
Dorothy C. Browne, Norfolk State University Social Work Dean
James Hinterlong, Virginia Commonwealth University Social Work Dean

Welcome and Introductions – Wayne Martin, Chair

Mr. Martin suggested that the agenda be rearranged to allow Dr. Reynolds-Cane to make the first remarks in regards to the overview of the Department of Health Professions as she needed to attend another meeting. The agenda was accepted as reordered.

Mr. Martin welcomed the new board members, Jennifer Blosser, LCSW and Nettie Simon-Owens and requested that the Board members, staff, and educators introduce themselves.

Mr. Martin recognized former board member, Charles R. Chambers, Jr., who was in attendance as a member of the public and thanked him for his contributions to the Board.

EDUCATIONAL SUMMIT

Overview of the Department of Health Professions, Mission of the Board of Social Work and Board Members – Appointment, Authority, and Responsibilities – Dr. Reynolds-Cane, Director of Department of Health Professions

Dr. Reynolds-Cane provided an overview of the Board of Social Work's mission as well as that of the Department of Health Professions. She noted that the Board was specifically charged with promulgating and enforcing Regulations Governing the Practice of Social Work in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This included, but was not limited to: setting fees; creating requirements for licensure; issuing licenses; setting standards of practice; and implementing a system of disciplinary action.

Legislation and Regulatory Process – Elaine Yeatts, Senior Policy Analyst

Ms. Yeatts explained the regulatory process in Virginia, which included the Administrative Process Act and executive orders. She stated that the regulatory process can take approximately 18 months to two (2) years to complete. She suggested that the public familiarize themselves with the regulatory Townhall website which provides information regarding the regulatory process, allows for comment on petitions for rule making, and provides information on upcoming meetings.

Role of Board Staff – Application Processing, Licensing, Discipline Case Support, Board and Committee Support – Evelyn Brown, Executive Director of Board of Social Work

Ms. Brown stated that staff's primary responsibilities are to provide support to the Board and Board's committees by application processing, and facilitating regulatory, policy, and disciplinary processes. Ms. Brown stated that the Board of Social Work, Board of Counseling and Board of Psychology have had consistently high volumes of applications in the past year.

She said that staff responds to a variety of questions including licensure requirements from students, applicants, licensees, and general public. Ms. Brown added that all applications for social work licensure or supervision are reviewed by one of three expert credentials reviewers who determine if the education obtained meets the requirements of the regulations and the services to be provided under supervision are clinical social work services. She stated that a customer service survey is completed by newly licensed applicants and has resulted in the 90th percentile for satisfaction for several years.

Role of Board Counsel - Howard Casway, Senior Assistant Attorney General

Mr. Casway described his role as Senior Assistant Attorney General and counsel to the Board of Social Work. He stated that the Attorney General by law is a separate officer from the Governor and is authorized to represent or provide legal advice to state agencies. As counsel to the Board, he provides advice on all legal matters based on issues which apply to regulations, the Code of Virginia and legal processes relating to disciplinary and credentials hearings.

Social Work Trends and Issues – Donna DeAngelis, Executive Director ASWB and Dwight Hymans, Director of Board Services, ASWB

Ms. DeAngelis stated that the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) is a non-profit professional organization which provides professional advocacy for minimum competency in social work practice. The ASWB develops and maintains the social work licensing examinations, and is a central resource for information on the legal regulation of social work. Ms. DeAngelis stated that their practice analysis research has determined that recent graduates tend to obtain their first jobs in direct practice, regardless of

whether they pursued clinical or macro tracks in school. She said that she believes there has been a "disconnect" in the way that some graduates prepare for jobs, which is often demonstrated in their examination results.

Mr. Hymans provided the Board with a comparison of the educational requirements for clinical licensure across the United States and said that setting of specific coursework education requirements in regulations was an increasing trend among boards.

General Discussion – Wayne Martin, Chair

Mr. Martin emphasized that the primary responsibility of the Board was to protect the public. He then allocated 90 minutes for discussion of coursework and supervision requirements, and other matters of concern to the educators.

Concerns Brought by Educators

Coursework Requirements: Dr. James Hinterlong, Dean of the School of Social Work, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) spoke on behalf of the four (4) Virginia masters in social work programs, and commented that social work stakeholders had participated in a meeting on June 13, 2011 to discuss concerns and opportunities to strengthen professional social work in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

He noted that social work education was moving towards competencies rather than structure. He added that the Board's recent "clinical course of study" regulations were causing difficulties for students who were uncertain as to whether they would be eligible to obtain licensure. He further commented that an undue burden had been placed on his administrative staff to research practicum supervisors' credentials in order to document the clinical practicum required in the Regulations. He asked that the Board consider grandfathering students into these new regulations.

Mr. Martin commented that the Board had discussed "grandfathering" at the June 2011 Board meeting based on *Petitions for Rulemaking* submitted by several Norfolk State University students who acknowledged that their clinical practica did not meet the requirements of Regulation 18VAC140-20-49. The petitions had been denied because the regulations contain provisions for an applicant who had otherwise met the requirements for a clinical course of study, but who did not have a minimum of 600 hours in a supervised field placement/practicum in clinical social work services, to meet the requirement by obtaining an equivalent number of hours of post-degree supervised clinical practice, in addition to the experience required in 18VAC140-20-50 in order to make up the deficiencies.

The educators requested that the Board approve their specific MSW coursework program so that they could assure their students that their courses would meet the LCSW course requirements. Ms. Yeatts remarked that the Board did not have authority to approve individual degree programs. However, the Board suggested that each graduate program provide the board office with course descriptions and syllabi to assist the credentials reviewers in coursework review. The faculty representatives agreed to provide this information to the Board.

Ms. Brown noted that the request to clarify the definition of "clinical course of study" had been made by educators from George Mason University (GMU) in 2006. Both GMU and VCU educators provided input to the current "clinical course of study" requirements.

Communication and Other Concerns: Dr. Hinterlong reported that the stakeholders participating in the June 13, 2011 meeting suggested that the Board provide a newsletter as a means for the Board to

communicate with the social work community. Ms. Brown commented that Townhall and the Board's website were valuable resources containing information about Board activities. She noted that the web pages were continually updated to include the latest minutes from board and committee meetings, announcements and pertinent information. Dr. Hinterlong suggested that a discussion time with MSW programs be routinely included on the agendas of all Board meetings. Mr. Martin stated that a time for public comment was included at the beginning of all open meetings for individuals to address the Board.

Ms. Horne-Quatannens inquired as to why board members had not been invited to attend the June 13, 2011 meeting when the meeting plans had been discussed with Dr. Hinterlong at the January 2011 board meeting. Dr. Hinterlong stated that Board members could have attended the June meetings as "interested citizens."

Supervision Issues

Ms. Moore, chair of the Credentials Committee, provided an overview of trends that the Committee continues to see in applications and registrations of supervision requests. She commented that the Board has experienced a substantial increase in volume and complexity of requests to register supervision, attributed to several factors, including, but not limited to:

1. Medicaid and DBHDS changes in requirements as to who can provide mental health services to children;
2. Economic uncertainty causing many individuals in exempt settings to seek licensure;
3. Fewer opportunities for supervisees to find positions which meet clinical experience requirements.

She added that the job descriptions often do not specify the supervisees 'clinical work to be provided. Also incomplete applications are frequently submitted by applicants and their supervisors, requiring staff to follow up with applicants to obtain missing information or to get clarification about the work experience proposed on the supervision contracts.

Ms. Moore noted that applications and registration forms that are complete and properly documented are promptly processed within 2 weeks of receipt. Only those files that are problematic require additional processing time.

Summit Conclusion – Wayne Martin, Chair.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Martin thanked the educators for their attendance and interest in the Board's responsibilities. He added that the forum had served as a valuable opportunity for open dialogue between the educators and board members.

<u>BOARD BUSINESS FOLLOWING SUMMIT</u>

Public Comment

Ms. Mary Sasser, Vice President of NASW-VA stated that NASW supports the stakeholders' concerns as discussed at the June 13, 2011 meeting. She voiced concerns from NASW members who want to meet supervision requirements to become LCSW's, but have experienced difficulties obtaining Board approval of their supervision. Ms. Moore stated that the Credentials Committee continues to see information on the supervisory contracts which does not provide information about proposed "clinical social work service" experience required for clinical licensure. If the supervisees are providing clinical social work services in addition to case management duties, the supervisees must provide details of their clinical duties.

Ms. Chappell commented that the Board looks to LCSW's who serve as supervisors to ensure that the clinical supervised experience is appropriate. She commented that oftentimes the supervisors do not provide sufficient information on the supervised experience, which results in further delays in processing the supervision request.

Mr. Martin added that he saw NASW's role as that of a mentor to supervisees seeking clinical licensure.

Ms. Moore further commented that 18VAC140-20-50.2.b. requires that a supervisee average no less than 15 hours per week in face-to-face client contact for a minimum of 1,380 hours. The purpose of face-to-face contact with clients is to provide "clinical social work services", not the referral or transfer of clients to other mental health professionals. She suggested that the Regulatory Committee consider drafting a related guidance document.

Approval of Minutes – June 24, 2011 Board Meeting

Ms. Smith-Solan moved that the minutes of the June 24, 2011 Board meeting be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mayer and passed with six (6) members in agreement and three (3) members (Horne-Quatannens, Blosser, and Simon-Owens) abstaining because they were not present at the meeting.

Meeting Dates - 2012

Ms. Brown presented possible dates for quarterly board meetings for 2012. The Board agreed to meet on January 20, 2012, April 20, 2012, July 20, 2012 and October 26, 2012. With respect to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, Mr. Casway requested a change in date due to a conflicting meeting and the Board agreed to meet on October 28, 2011.

Committee Assignments

Mr. Martin advised that Ms. Haynes had agreed to chair the Regulatory Committee for the upcoming year. He also asked Ms. Blosser to be on the Credentials Committee and the Regulatory Committee. Ms. Simon-Owens agreed to participate on the Credentials Committee.

Mr. Martin commented that the Regulatory Committee had been tasked with several responsibilities including researching the efficacy of an intermediate level license. Ms. Brown referenced Dr. Hinterlong's concern about his administrative staff's difficulties in documenting clinical practicum information and requested that the Board consider an alternative means to obtain this information relating to the practicum supervisors. The issue was deferred to the October board meeting.

Credentials Informal Conference Recommended Decision on Applicant (EXECUTIVE SESSION)

Closed Session:
Ms. Smith-Solan moved that the Board of Social Work convene in closed meeting pursuant to §2.2 3711(A)(7) of the Code of Virginia in order to consult with legal counsel on the recommendation from the Credentials IFC Committee. She further moved that Howard Casway, Evelyn Brown, Patricia Larimer, Catherine Chappell, and Sarah Georgen attend the closed meeting because their presence in the closed meeting was deemed necessary and they would aid the Board in its consideration of the matter. The motion was seconded and carried.

Reconvene:
Ms. Haynes moved that pursuant to §2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, that the Board heard, discussed, or considered only those public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under

the Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as identified in the original motion. The Committee agreed unanimously.

Elizabeth Stamper: The IFC Credentials Committee concluded that Elizabeth Stamper, LCSW applicant, failed to satisfy the requirements of 18VAC 140-20-50(B) and recommended that her application by examination be denied. Ms. Smith-Solan made a motion to accept the recommendation as presented. Mr. Mayer seconded the motion. The motion passed, with two members abstaining (Moore, Simon-Owens).

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Wayne Martin, LCSW

Evelyn B. Brown, Executive Director