

**BOARD of EXAMINERS FOR NURSING**  
**DATE: January 18, 2023**  
**TIME: 8:30 a.m.**  
**LOCATION: Via Microsoft TEAMS**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Name	Member	Present (Y/N)	DPH STAFF	Present (Y/N)
Patricia C. Bouffard, RN, DNSc, Chairperson	RN Member	y	Stacy Schulman Legal Counsel to the Board	Y
Cynthia L. Arpin, EdD, MSN, RN	RN Member	y	Helen Smith, RN Nurse Consultant	Y
Jason Blando	Public	y	Dianne Bertuccio	Y
Mary E. Dietmann, EdD, APRN, ACNS-BC, CNE	RN Member	y	Attorney Joelle Newton	Y
Lisa S. Freeman, BA	Public	y	Attorney Aden Baume	Y
Jennifer C. Long, APRN, MSN, NNP-BC	APRN Member	y	Attorney Linda Fazzina	Y
Geraldine Marrocco, EdD, APRN, ANP-BC, FAANP	RN Member	y	Attorney Craig Sullivan	Y
Rebecca Martinez, LPN	LPN Member	y	AAG Dan Shapiro	Y
Gina Reiners, PhD, APRN, PMHNP, PMHCNS	RN Member	y	Dana Dalton, RN, Supervising Nurse Consultant	Y

**CHAIR UPDATES:**

None (Per Chair, will move matter regarding Porter & Chester to February 15, 2023, meeting)

**ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS AND REORDERING OF AGENDA (*Agenda attached*)**

Cindy Arpin moved and Geri Marrocco seconded to add Arizona College of Nursing to the agenda; Mary Dietmann, Cindy Arpin, Jason Blando and Jen Long recused themselves in this matter. After losing its quorum, the Board applied the Rule of Necessity as instructed by AAG Shapiro in order to consider and vote regarding the matter of the Arizona College of Nursing.

Cindy Arpin moved and Geri Marrocco seconded to remove Nicole Solski's name from the hearing list since she had received a continuance. The motion passed unanimously.

**OPEN FORUM**

Syreeta Smith-Williams, a student at Porter & Chester, Enfield location, discussed the conditions of the school from her perspective. She observed that it has been understaffed since COVID has no Director of Nursing, and there is a hold on clinicals.

Chiquona (sp??) Ralph discussed Stone Academy. She was scheduled to graduate in April 2023, but has not been able to complete the last 2 weeks of her clinical experience. She also informed the Board about the lack of communication with the new staff.

Nicole Elliston, LPN, also a Stone Academy student since 2019, informed the Board that she has been on a waiting list for one year to complete her clinical experiences.

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE BOARDS OF NURSING—UPDATE**

Dana Dalton, RN, Supervising Nurse Consultant, informed the Board that the Seattle mid-year conference was scheduled to convene from March 27, 2023, through March 30, 2023.

Geri Marrocco was not able to attend the APRN meeting, so there was nothing to report.

### **The CT CENTER FOR NURSING WORKFORCE, INC. Monthly Update**

Marcia Proto, Executive Director, provided an update for the CT Center for Nursing Workforce. She advised the Board that nurses under the age of 35 are leaving the profession and the critical need to address this statewide phenomenon. She also mentioned an exciting lunch and learn series that ASTHO is offering along with its DEI initiatives.

### **SCHOOL ISSUES**

AAG Shapiro asked the Board to move the School Regulations Update on the agenda before the Arizona College of Nursing. Rebecca Martinez moved and Lisa Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed with Jason Blando's recusal.

School Regulations Update—Attorney Dante Costa, DPH program manager from the Commissioner's office, provided a power point presentation of the regulations process. The Board members expressed concerns that the current regulations are decades old and the approval of the revised regulations must be expedited ASAP.

Quinebaug Valley Community College --Paula Dowd, Dean was present. For the Board's information only, the school has plans to offer a LPN day program for August 2024, one class per year.

#### Stone Academy

Helen Smith, DPH, reported the results of her campus visits and surveys in collaboration with Sean Seepersd from the Office of Higher Education ("OHE"). Together, they inspected the East Campus on December 13 and December 14, 2022. The campus was cited for the following violations of CGA § 20-90-50a: safety concerns and lack of office space for faculty and as well as not having reports on the medications they used at the lab. There was also a violation for failure to provide clinical experiences. See, CGS § 20-90-55c.

Helen Smith also reported that Stone Academy staff inaccurately credited campus experience as clinical experience; referred to them as "campus clinical." Another violation of CGA § 20-90-51(3)(b) was cited. Qualified faculty was not present and practical nursing experiences were not documented in a review of 117 out of 122 files. There was 1 LPN and not a RN as required; there were 14 employees with no BAs in nursing; there were 4 employees that had not obtained MSN within the required 5 years; there were 6 nurses who did not have the minimum of 3 years of clinical experience.

At the East Hartford campus, there were 3 nurses with no BSN credentials; one lab teacher did not have a BSN as required; West Haven campus, there was one nurse who did not have the minimum BSN to be a clinical instructor.

The student ratio was violated per CGA § 20-90-48(a)(2)(a). Dr. Brian Pervis, interim director of the LPN program, was teaching one class twice a week at the West Haven campus. It was noted that LPNs are not permitted to do patient assessments, although this was stated erroneously.

At the West Haven campus, Helen Smith reported its failure to provide the required number of hours of clinical experience was a violation of CGA § 20-90-55c. On December 19, 2022, a clinical experience was scheduled. From 7:00am until 2:00 pm, no students came.

Mr. Ed Roberts, CEO/President as of November 23, 2022, responded to Helen Smith's report. He reported that he was hired with "unlimited authority to straighten things out." He stated that one staff member inadvertently forgot to show Helen Smith and Sean Seepers, OHE, the two offices for staff members. He also reported that Dr. Pervis has instituted a standard for ordering medications for the lab, and a new staff person will be hired to administer this protocol properly. He reported that he recently hired an education recruiter who has hired 18 instructors since January 1, 2023, a compliance officer; and, as of January 17, 2023, there will be a clinical director, Sue Yun, who will report directly to Mr. Roberts.

After Mr. Roberts addressed Helen Smith's report, some of the Board members had questions and expressed concerns about the report. Mary Dietmann noted that the LPN pass rates was in the 40% to 60% range. Also, Lisa Freeman expressed concerns that the program had a disregard for the regulations pertaining to instructor qualifications and that the program was looking forward but not at the past issues that have adversely affected the program and its students.

Mr. Roberts stated that a minimum of 750 hours of clinical experiences will be provided to the LPN students and that he was doing everything in his power to correct the problems at the school. He also stated that as of December 28, 2022, he had prepared a plan to respond to the Board's concerns and that it would be submitted to the Board ASAP.

Geri Marrocco, Rebecca Martinez and the chair, Pat Bouffard, all expressed concerns and frustrations about the students adversely impacted by the program's deficiencies and what the students who spoke during the Open Forum were experiencing.

Break from 11:15am -11:30 am.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE** the Chair stated there was nothing to report.

### **MOTION TO WITHDRAW STATEMENT OF CHARGES**

Karen Crosby, RN, Petition No. 2022-1149 Staff Attorney Joelle Newton

Attorney Mary Alice Moore Leonhardt was present to represent Respondent who was not present. Attorney Newton represented the Department. The Department moved to withdraw the SOC. Jen Long moved to review the modified Consent Order and Geri Marrocco seconded the motion. The Board members voted to restart the four-year probation. The chair, Patricia Bouffard commented that the probationary terms were too harsh considering the work Respondent had done to rehabilitate herself. The Board voted unanimously to oppose the Consent Order as presented.

Secondarily, the Board decided that a three-year probation would be appropriate, giving Respondent credit for the first year. During the second year, the terms included monthly urine screens which would increase to weekly during the third year. The employer and therapy reports would be quarterly for the second year and monthly for the third year. Jen Long moved and Rebecca Martinez seconded the motion to vacate the initial Consent Order. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board voted to vacate the initial Consent Order as presented. Subsequently, Jen long moved and Geri Marrocco seconded the motion to adopt the Consent Order as modified. The Board passed the motion unanimously. Finally, Jen Long moved and Geri Marrocco seconded the motion to withdraw the SOC. The motion passed unanimously.

Patricia Taylor, LPN Petition No. 2022-561 Staff Attorney Joelle Newton

Neither Respondent nor counsel was present. Attorney Newton represented the Department. Geri Marrocco moved and Rebecca Martinez seconded the motion to withdraw the SOC. The motion passed unanimously.

### **MEMORANDUM OF DECISION**

Amanda Espinosa, LPN Petition No. 2021-1222

Geri Marrocco moved and Lisa Freeman seconded the motion to affirm the MOD as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Kimberly Lemire, RN Petition No. 2022-561

Jen Long moved and Mary Dietmann seconded a motion to affirm the MOD as presented. The motion passed unanimously to revoke Respondent's license.

### **MOTION FOR SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

Proctor Norman Hayes, RN Petition No. 2022-409 Staff Attorney Joelle Newton

Neither Respondent nor counsel was present. Mary Dietmann moved for Summary Suspension and Jen Long seconded the motion to summarily suspend Respondent's license. The motion passed unanimously.

Sarah Zoni, RN Petition No. 2022-1282 Staff Attorney Linda Fazzina

Neither Respondent nor counsel was present. Jen Long moved and Lisa Freeman seconded the motion to summarily suspend Respondent's license. The motion passed unanimously.

### **CONSENT ORDERS**

Sue-Elynn Heller, RN Petition No. 2022-539 Staff Attorney Aden Baume

Staff Attorney Baume presented a Consent Order in this matter. Respondent was not present, and was not represented by counsel. Mary Dietmann moved and Cindy Arpin seconded a motion to approve the Consent Order as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Jacquelyn O'Connor, LPN Petition No. 2020-845 Staff Attorney Aden Baume

Staff Attorney Baume presented a Consent Order in this matter. Respondent was not present and was not represented by counsel. Jennifer Long moved and Mary Dietmann seconded a motion to approve the Consent Order as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Jared Spears, RN Petition No. 2021-559 Staff Attorney Aden Baume

Staff Attorney Baume presented a Consent Order in this matter. Neither Respondent nor counsel was present. Mary Dietmann moved and Jen Long seconded a motion to approve the Consent Order as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## HEARINGS

Deborah J. Cochran, RN Petition No. 2019-809 Staff Attorney Linda Fazzina

Neither Respondent nor counsel for Respondent was present. Attorney Fazzina represented the Department. The Board determined that Respondent had received sufficient notice of the hearing via phone, email and regular mail. The Department called Paula DelGrego as a witness regarding any previous contact with Respondent. She testified that Respondent left her a voice mail that Respondent had declined to be present at the hearing because Respondent had planned to retire. The witness send email regarding the same to Attorney Fazzina on November 21, 2022. The email was entered into the record as a full exhibit, Board Ex. 5. There was no answer to statement of charges ("SOC") in the record. Therefore, Attorney Fazzina moved to Deem the Allegations Admitted. Mary Dietmann moved and Lisa Freeman seconded the motion to approve the Motion to Deem Allegations Admitted. The motion passed unanimously. Jennifer Long moved and Mary Dietmann seconded the motion to revoke Respondent's license. The motion passed unanimously.

John Rodriguez, RN Petition No. 2022-851 Staff Attorney Craig Sullivan

Neither Respondent nor counsel for Respondent was present. Attorney Sullivan represented the Department. The record evidences that the Respondent had received sufficient notice of the hearing. There was no answer to the SOC in the record. Attorney Sullivan moved to Deem the Allegations Admitted. Geri Marrocco moved and Lisa Freeman seconded the Motion to Deem Allegations Admitted. The motion passed unanimously. Geri Marrocco moved and Rebecca Martinez seconded to find on all charges that the Department met its burden of proof. Gina Reiners abstained. Subsequently, Jennifer Long moved and Cindy Arpin seconded the motion to revoke Respondent's license. The motion passed unanimously.

Mary-Elizabeth Taylor, RN Petition No. 2022-1273 Staff Attorney Aden Baume

Respondent was present along with her counsel Mary Alice Moore Leonhardt. Attorney Baume represented the Department. Attorney Baume stated that the Board ordered a Consent Order for Respondent in September 2022. However, Respondent relapsed shortly thereafter and tested positive for an alcoholic substance. Attorney Moore Leonhardt stated that Respondent admitted her relapse and immediately communicated the same to the Department monitor. Respondent's counsel argued that no disciplinary action was warranted.

The Department called LaVita Sookram, RN, the Department monitor, as its witness. She testified that in November 2022 Respondent had a positive urine screen, but had three negative screens in December 2022. Gina Reiners moved and Lisa Freeman seconded a motion to find that the Department met its burden of proof on all charges. The motion passed unanimously. Subsequently, Gina Reiners moved and Rebecca Martinez seconded a motion to reset the probation from February 1, 2023, for one year. The motion passed unanimously. Finally, Gina Reiners moved and Rebecca Martinez seconded a motion to vacate the Summary Suspension, effective January 18, 2023. The motion passed unanimously.

Respondent was not present, but was represented by Attorney Matthew Olkin (sp??). Attorney Baume represented the Department. Attorney Olkin appeared at the hearing to confirm that he had initially represented Respondent before he no longer received any communication from Respondent for three months. The Notice of Hearing (“NOH”) was sent to Attorney Olkin. Attorney Olkin testified that he sent an email to PHHO dated October 10, 2022, regarding the October 16, 2022, NOH. He requested a continuance of the October 19, 2022, hearing to January 2023. Attorney Olkin spoke with Respondent on or about October 16, 2022, about the continuance. Attorney Olkin learned during the hearing that Respondent has been incarcerated since January 12, 2023. Gina Reiners moved and Lisa Freeman seconded a motion to Amend the SOC. The motion passed unanimously. Finally, Lisa Freeman and Rebecca Martinez seconded a motion to grant Respondent another continuance until March 2023 due to her incarceration. The motion passed unanimously.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned around 3:30p.m., on a motion made by Gina Reiners and seconded by Lisa Freeman. The motion passed unanimously.

Patricia C Bouffard, RN, D.NSc  
Chairperson, Board of Examiners for Nursing