

(Approved November 18, 2004)

**BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
LICENSING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

August 19, 2004

**EMBASSY SUITES
1440 IMPERIAL AVENUE
EL SEGUNDO, CA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Catherine Kay, Public Member, Committee Chair
Robert Gerst, Public Member
Susan Ulevitch, LCSW Member

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jane Nathanson, MFT Member

STAFF PRESENT

Denise Johnson, Interim Executive Officer
Kristy Schieldge, Legal Counsel
Julie McAuliffe, Administrative Analyst

GUEST LIST ON FILE

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:30 a.m.

Ms. McAuliffe called the roll and a Committee was established.

1. APPROVAL OF MAY 20, 2004 MINUTES

ROBERT GERST MOVED, CATHERINE KAY SECONDED AND THE COMMITTEE CONCURRED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2004.

2. REVIEW OF REQUIRED CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS AND LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS

Ms. Kay stated that Ms. Ulevitch had requested this issue be brought to the Committee for discussion to determine if any changes were needed. The meeting materials included the current laws and regulations regarding continuing education broken down by license type, a comparison chart of continuing education requirements by boards within the Department of Consumer Affairs, and prior minutes reflecting the discussions and ultimate determination to add the requirement of six hours of law and ethics every renewal.

Ms. Ulevitch indicated that her interest in this issue initially was from her feelings that additional requirements were being added and wanted to review the overall requirements to obtain a better understanding of the complete requirements. As well, she indicated that it is very important to allow licensees to choose continuing education courses that they feel will be beneficial to their professional selves. After review, Ms. Ulevitch indicated that there was not an enormous amount of required continuing education courses and licensees could select courses that were specifically beneficial to them.

Ms. Ulevitch encouraged those who address the Board on an issue in the future to provide that information in writing and include the rationale for their request.

She then proposed that the law and ethics six-hour requirement be amended to require a six-hour course for a first time renewal and then a two or three-hour course thereafter for subsequent renewals that focuses on current laws and ethical guidelines.

Ms. McAuliffe clarified that the majority of mandated continuing education is added to the law by the Legislature and the only required course implemented by the Board is the law and ethics training.

Mr. Gerst stated that these are fairly dynamic professions and the Committee may want to focus more on who is providing the training. Ms. Johnson explained that the Board approves a provider and, within the Board's approval process is a review of the courses to be offered, but the Board does not have the authority to mandate the specific course content.

Mary Riemersma, Executive Director of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, indicated that generally the Association is opposed to piecemeal continuing education mandates that indicate specific coursework. However, law and ethics is one that should be kept as a mandate and the course content should not be specified to allow the providers latitude and allow licensees to decide the areas in which they may be lacking. Although licensees are trained in addressing certain populations and certain issues, these may not be practices that are addressed daily by a licensee and they do need to receive a refresher in certain areas.

Ms. Kay stated that she would not be comfortable with reducing the requirements to fewer than four hours.

Geraldine Esposito, Executive Director of the California Society for Clinical Social Work, stated that the content offered in law and ethics training varies widely and indicated that she would ask her members to report to the Society and the Board those providers who have inadequately provided this training. Based on the comparison chart and comments from the Committee, she indicated that she thought that four hours might adequately encompass the necessary legal changes that have taken place since the licensee's last renewal as well as the ethical obligations and guidelines that are part of practice.

Ms. Ulevitch made a motion to reduce the law and ethics continuing education to four hours every renewal however the motion did not pass in the Committee.

Ms. Schieldge indicated that if the Board voted to make this change the Board would need to articulate the necessity and rationale for the change. In addition, regulation changes are being highly scrutinized as they travel through the regulatory process and if the necessity and rationale for changes are not clearly identified, the regulation could be denied.

Mr. Gerst indicated that there is no concrete evidence that has been proven which would warrant a change at this time.

3. DISCUSSION AND CREATION OF SURVEY TO APPLICANTS FOR LICENSURE REGARDING THEIR CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Ms. Johnson explained that at the May Board meeting Board member Peter Manoleas had suggested that the Board survey persons who have completed their supervised experience to gain a better understanding of this experience. Ms. Mehl had suggested that this Committee create the survey. The meeting materials included a draft survey that was sent to applicants for licensure in 1987. Ms. Kay asked that the Committee discuss changes to the survey and refer it back to staff to finalize and bring back to the Committee in November. This would allow other Board members to provide input on the questions to be asked. Ms. Johnson also indicated that in order for the Board to survey applicants, there must be a need for the information. Ms. Kay stated that the need is justified since the Board has been successful in legislative and regulatory amendments regarding supervisory settings and required experience. This survey would benefit the Board as well as the applicants in determining if the changes made in the past are appropriate and useful.

Mr. Gerst stated that the survey does not include comment on negative experiences and asked that the opportunity to provide these comments be included.

Kathy Wexler from Phillips Graduate Institute suggested that the survey be sent to persons once they are registered as an Intern with the Board in order to obtain a snapshot of trainee experience. Although the Board receives this experience with a person's application for licensure, it may be beneficial to grasp this part of one's experience fresh out of school. Ms. Kay suggested that staff review and determine if the survey should be separated into two parts.

Ms. Riemersma provided suggested changes to the survey. The suggestions included taking out information on the limiting of experience and supervision, adding comment areas to each question, and asking whether the supervisor was employed by the intern's or associate's employer. She indicated that there is a value to be gained from surveying applicants.

Ms. Kay asked that staff review the input received at the meeting, make changes as necessary, and bring the survey back to the Committee in November.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:20 a.m.