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Meeting Minutes
Communications Committee
June 28, 2006

Sheraton Gateway LAX
6101 West Century Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90045

I. Introductions

Karen Pines called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Mona Maggio called roll. All members were present and a quorum was established.

Committee Members Present:

Karen Pines, Chair
Peter Manoleas
Joan Walmsley

Staff Present:

Paul Riches, Executive Officer
Mona Maggio, Assistant Executive Officer
Kari Frank, Lead Analyst Licensing Program
George Ritter, Legal Counsel

Ms. Pines welcomed the audience members and encouraged their participation.

II. Review and Approve March 29, 2006 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

Peter Manoleas moved and Joan Walmsley seconded, approval of the March 29, 2006 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes without amendment. The Committee approved the motion.

III. Strategic Plan Goal #1 – Communicate Effectively With the Public and Mental Health Professionals – Report on Progress

Ms. Pines provided the following summary of the strategic objectives and progress made for each objective.

A. Objective 1.1 -- Provide Six Educational Opportunities for Stakeholders and Staff on BBS Budget by July 30, 2006

At the November 2005 Board Meeting, Budget Analyst Paula Gershon presented a budget overview to the Board. Ms. Gershon also prepared an article entitled *Understanding the Board's Budget* for publication in the Spring 2006 newsletter. Additionally, a presentation tailored to the public is included during outreach presentations such as student and educator forums.

Staff has identified this objective as being met.

B. Objective 1.2 -- Distribute a Handbook Outlining Licensing Requirements by December 31, 2006 to 100% of California Schools Offering Qualifying Degrees

Ms. Maggio reported that staff is currently developing the handbook which will outline the licensing requirements for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT); Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) and Licensed Educational Psychologists (LEP). However, to meet the immediate needs of examination candidates, staff drafted an informational pamphlet that answers the most commonly asked questions from candidates. The Committee reviewed the pamphlet and provided suggested edits at its March 29, 2006 meeting. The pamphlet has been reviewed by legal counsel and is now available for distribution.

Charlene Gonzalez questioned whether the pamphlet applies for both LCSW and MFT examination candidates. Ms. Maggio affirmed that the information in the pamphlet was prepared for both LCSW and MFT examination candidates. Because of differing standards, Ms. Gonzalez suggests the Board develop separate handbooks for each license type. The process for meeting the eligibility requirements can be very confusing and the lines between MFTs and LCSWs are blurring the value of the distinct professions. Ms. Gonzalez added that she is not in favor of pre-degree hours for MSWs. Ms. Walmsley concurred in keeping with distinctions between the professions and their licensing requirements. Ms. Maggio clarified that the pamphlet is an enclosure that is included with the candidate's notice of eligibility (letter); however, the actual candidate handbook is distinct for each profession.

Ms. Maggio noted that based on a recommendation from Mr. Manoleas, as part of today's agenda, item VI, the Committee would review two charts – one for MFT candidates and the other for LCSW candidates. The charts provide a break down the hours and supervised hours required, work settings, and timeframe for obtaining the hours. The purpose is to make the issue of gaining experience hours easier to understand for the students. Once finalized, the charts will be included in the student handbooks, posted to the Board's website and provided to the schools for distribution to students.

C. Objective 1.3 -- Distribute Consumer Publication Regarding Professions Licensed by the Board by June 30, 2007

Mr. Riches reported that as part of the continuing development of the Outreach Program, the Board is contracting with a public relations (PR) firm to assist in the development of pamphlets, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations as well as identify the Board's primary constituency groups and their needs. Staff finalized the Public Relations Statement of Work and Project Deliverables for the Public Relations contract bidding process. Bids were received and staff has completed the interview process. The contract is pending approval.

This objective will be discussed more thoroughly once the Board has secured a PR firm and the representative has an opportunity to evaluate the Board's current materials and the needs of the constituents. Mr. Riches reported the goal is to have a contract secured for the 2006/07 fiscal year. Mr. Riches confirmed that publications would be available in multiple languages and that representatives will make a presentation before the Committee at its September meeting.

D. Objective 1.4 -- Achieve 60% on Customer Service Satisfaction Surveys by June 30, 2008

Ms. Maggio reported on the early results from the general web site survey. The survey was posted to the Board's web site at the beginning of June and as of the 26th 112 responses had been received, most with positive responses. The implementation of the surveys to be mailed out will begin in July 2006. The rollout was delayed by due to the postage paid envelopes not being received. Mary Riemersma, Executive Director California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (CAMFT) said the Board's staff does a good job in responding to the high volume of questions and tough individuals. She acknowledged that the pre-degree candidates can be difficult and believe they have a sense of entitlement when contacting the Board.

Ms. Gonzalez concurred stating she communicates with board staff regularly and receives excellent service. Responses are timely and she understands the important part of getting the right answer is to learn how to ask the right question.

Ms. Walmsley questioned how staff gets feedback on service problems and wanted to be assured that staff has an environment where they are free to vent about problem individuals. Ms. Maggio stated that management holds regular monthly staff meetings to share information with staff. Each program within the Board also holds monthly or weekly meetings. Management responds to the most complex complaints, inquires or difficult callers. Additionally, management has an open door policy for staff to discuss issues or talk when needed.

E. Objective 1.5 – Participate Four Times Each Year in Mental Health Public Outreach Events Through June 30, 2010

Mr. Riches provided an overview of the PR firms' responsibilities including assisting the Board in identifying the appropriate mental health outreach events. Mr. Riches provided an update on staff participation at outreach events. These events provide an opportunity to communicate the Board's mission and vision with its various stakeholders: On April 21-22, 2006, Sean O'Connor, Outreach Coordinator and Mr. Riches represented the Board at the NASW Conference in Los Angeles. The Board had a booth with handouts of information on license renewal, continuing education requirements, supervision, and advertising guidelines among other topics. Traffic at the booth was steady as the Board representatives answered questions from conference attendees on a variety of Board related topics. On May 4-7, 2006, Mr. O'Connor, Program Manager Kim Madsen and board member Joan Walmsley represented the Board at the CAMFT Annual conference in Palm Springs. Again the Board had a booth with handouts similar to those distributed at the NASW conference. Many of those in attendance at both conferences expressed gratitude for the Board having representation at these events. Ms. Walmsley stated she attended the CAMFT Business Meeting held during the conference and found it to be helpful and very informative. She commented that Mr. O'Connor did an outstanding job answering questions and assisting those who visited the Board's booth.

Mr. Manoleas gave an overview of the Board's conference "California's Diverse Consumers: Implications for Licensure – A Working Conference" held on April 28, 2006. This day long event consisted of presentations by Joe Hayes, Public Policy Institute of California; Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, UC Davis School of Medicine; Rachel G. Guerrero, LCSW, Chief, Office of Multicultural Services, California Department of Mental Health; Peter Manoleas,

Chairman of the Board and Paul Riches, Executive Officer. Staff has categorized the participants' suggestions into the following groups: 1) general ideas for the Board to consider; 2) topics for schools and students; 3) requirements to become licensed; 4) licensure examinations; 5) requirements for current board licensees; 6) research; 7) board professions; 8) workforce; and 9) other/resources. Staff will discuss which topics/issues are appropriate for the Board to address and which might best be addressed by other entities. Mr. Manoleas identified and discussed the consumers of mental health services and how the Board needs to address their issues.

Mr. Riches gave an update regarding staff's participation in the quarterly MFT Consortia with educators and students; as well as their participation on the various workforce groups as part of the Mental Health Services Act.

Mr. Manoleas discussed the social work competencies for Proposition 63 developed by California Social Work Education Center (CALSWEC).

Mr. Janlee Wong, Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) voiced his concern about "board certification" being discussed as part of Proposition 63 and by the Board as a charge of the Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT) Curriculum Committee.

Mr. Riches clarified that the MFT Curriculum Committee is a global review and not an endorsement of a certificate program.

Ms. Riemersma explained the Mental Health Planning Council organized the DACUM project. It pooled MFTs to identify knowledge, skills, experience and education necessary for MFTs to work in public mental health. This information will be provided to educators to incorporate into MFT programs. She clarified that the certificate program is separate from the Board. The Board will not be issuing the certificate; it might be CAMFT or the schools. The certification would demonstrate that certificate holders have taken additional courses to work in public mental health.

Ms. Gonzalez voiced her concern about the scopes of practice blurring between the professions.

Mr. Wong suggested the Committee recommend to the Board that it comprise a task force to review the original concept of licensure, which was for independent practice, and the protection of the public. Specifically, to research the movement towards licensure for public practice as well as private practice – multi-levels of licensure for social work. Mr. Riches stated the Consumer Protection Committee is already looking at this issue.

F. Objective 1.6 – Review and Revise Website Content Four Times Per Year

Ms. Maggio reported that since the quarterly schedule for this objective was implemented and the first quarter's review completed in December, staff found that the unit leads and various staff responsible for various content areas of the website have been forwarding necessary updates to the webmaster on a regular basis rather than waiting until the quarterly time frame to have revisions made to the website.

Staff has identified this as an ongoing objective and recommends the "review and revise website content" be completed every six months rather than four times per year. This will be completed so that it coincides with effective dates on legislation that may impact board operations, procedures, contents, processes, forms, etc.

Since the last update was completed in December, the next "bi-annual" review of the overall website is in progress during the month of June.

One task the PR firm will perform is to review the Board's current Website and make suggestions as to a more "user friendly" layout, site map, and appropriate placement of information to assist our audiences in locating the pertinent information they need.

Ms. Gonzalez stated she is pleased with the website. She requested putting notification of changes/revisions to forms/paperwork under the "What's New" link.

G. Objective 1.7 – Student Outreach

At its May 18, 2006 meeting, the Board adopted a new strategic plan objective to measure the number of student outreach visits completed in a 12-month period. The objective is to conduct 25 student outreach events per fiscal year at qualifying degree-granting colleges and universities by June 30, 2010. The Board has approximately 82 qualifying degree-granting institutions, so in a three-year period nearly all could be reached. As of June 2006, twelve events have been scheduled, eight visits completed. Most visits will occur in the Fall or Spring academic semesters.

Sean O'Connor, Outreach Coordinator recently presented to a group of MFT interns and trainees at the Whitehouse Counseling Center in Sacramento. On June 9, 2006, Kari Frank, Lead Analyst in the Licensing Unit gave a student presentation in conjunction with the MFT Consortium Meeting held at Phillips Graduate Institute. Mr. Riches, Ms. Maggio and Board Members, Dr. Ian Russ and Karen Pines also attended. Scheduled outreach events: July 8, 2006 – University of San Francisco, Sacramento Campus (MFT program) and August 17, 2006 – California State University, Chico (MFT program).

IV. **Review and Discuss Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) From Students**

Ms. Pines shared that the intent of the newly drafted FAQ publications is to offer information to individuals gaining their hours in a logical format with understandable language. Sections of law are cited for the reader's reference. The previous FAQs, though informative, were written in language taken directly from the statutes and regulations and readers found the information confusing and intimidating. Once finalized, the publications will be available on the Board's website, by request from the office, at outreach events, and in registration packets for Associate Clinical Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapist Interns.

The Committee and audience members provided suggested edits and comments. Staff will incorporate the edits and the documents will be brought back at a future date for the Committee's approval.

V. **Review and Discuss Handbook for Examination Candidates (Draft)**

Ms. Pines provided a brief overview of the initial review and revisions that staff have begun as part of the undertaking to revise the MFT and LCSW Candidate Handbooks. She asked the Committee and interested parties to email or fax suggested changes to Ms. Maggio.

VI. **Review and Discuss Chart that Defines Hours Needed for Examination Eligibility**

At the March 2006 meeting the Committee discussed the confusion surrounding the experience hours required for examination eligibility. Many questions received by Board staff via telephone, email, and at the student presentations are about gaining the experience hours for examination eligibility. After discussion, the Committee directed staff to create a

chart that would define hours of experience required for both MFT and LCSW licensure candidates.

Staff developed two separate charts, one for MFT and one for LCSW candidates for the Committee's review. The feedback received from the Committee and audience was very positive. Suggested edits were received for staff's review and consideration. Ms. Pines recommended the charts be "field tested." The Committee recommended staff take the charts to student presentations, distribute to schools and agencies and solicit feedback as to how helpful the charts are and how they could be improved. Ms. Pines requested the findings be brought back for review at the September 2006 meeting.

VII. Discuss Future Committee Meeting Agenda Items

The Committee received the following suggested topics for future discussion:

- Develop a simplified pamphlet explaining the complaint process: one for licensees and one for consumers.
- Open communication for licensees providing supervision.

Mr. Riches noted that a request for the Committee to discuss reinstating the oral examinations for both MFT and LCSW examination candidates would be referred to the Consumer Protection Committee.

Ms. Pines announced the next Committee meeting would be held on September 27, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.