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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Adam Bentley, SLD, Chair
William Kysella, Jr, Vice Chair
Glenn Kawaguchi, OD
Anna Watts, SLD
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**DISPENSING OPTICIAN COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 17, 2020
1:00 p.m.**

This public meeting was held via WebEx Events.

| Members Present | Staff Present |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Adam Bentley, SLD, Chair | Shara Murphy, Executive Officer |
| William Kysella, Jr, Vice Chair | Cheree Kimball, Assistant Executive Officer |
| Anna Watts, SLD | Marc Johnson, Policy Analyst |
| Glenn Kawaguchi, OD | Natalia Leeper, Interim Lead Licensing Analyst |
| | |

Link to webcast of meeting:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAJ3floJrBs&feature=youtu.be>

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Audio of Discussion: [0:16 / 2:10:41](#)

Mr. Bentley called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and took roll. The meeting was conducted online via the services of WebEx Events. All Committee Members were present.

2. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Audio of Discussion: [1:00 / 2:10:41](#)

[Mr. Joe Neville](#), Executive Director of the National Association of Optometrists and Opticians (NAOO) commented regarding the updates to the optician statutes discussed during a previous meeting. He noted that Dr. Kawaguchi’s concerns during the discussed have not yet been addressed in a public forum.

3. Welcome and Introduction of New Committee Member – Glenn Kawaguchi

Audio of Discussion: [4:34 / 2:10:41](#)

Mr. Bentley welcomed new Committee Member, Dr. Kawaguchi.

4. Discussion and Possible Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. June 18, 2020 Dispensing Optician Committee Meeting

B. July 23, 2020 Dispensing Optician Committee Meeting

Audio of Discussion: [5:37 / 2:10:41](#)

There was no request for public comment.

William Kysella moved to approve the minutes for June 18, 2020 and July 23, 2020. Anna Watts seconded. The Committee voted (3-Aye; 0-No; 1-Abstention) and the motion carried.

| Member | Aye | No | Abstain | Absent | Recusal |
|------------------|------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Bentley | X | | | | |
| Kysella | X | | | | |
| Watts | X | | | | |
| Kawaguchi | | | X | | |

5. Executive Officer's Report

A. Optician Licensing Program

B. Optician Enforcement Program

C. Opticianry Program Fund Condition

Audio of Discussion: [9:48 / 2:10:41](#)

Ms. Leeper reported on the Optician Licensing Program. She announced that the Board has a new staff member addition to the Licensing Unit; explained that the applications are still at a 4-6 week processing time; there have been issues with flows (applications coming in more spread out versus in big chunks over a three month period, Staff have been making adjustments to the time differences, which so far are working out well. Ms. Leeper announced that additional application types will be added to BreEZe which will allow licensees to do more for themselves. Additionally, she reported that the last group of testing for the ABO and NCLE exams recently ended. The next group will occur in November as usual with a smaller capacity than normal. Mr. Bentley requested documentation showing when the applicants tested and when they registered with the state; staff will provide this information.

Mx. Kimball reported on the Enforcement Program. During the last fiscal year (FY 19-20) 130 cases were opened and 133 cases were closed. She directed members' attention to the enforcement report which shows the disciplinary actions that were taken over the last fiscal year and provides additional information about those actions. Mr. Kysella asked if the 5 new cases follow a similar pattern to most of the cases, which are based on prior criminal convictions? Mx. Kimball explained that this is not something she can address until an accusation or treatment of issues has been filed; until that time staff cannot discuss the cases.

Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) [Budget Analyst, Marie Reyes](#) reported on the most recent opticianry fund condition from the Budget Act of 2021. The report shows that the opticianry program is structurally balanced. This means that the program is bringing in more revenue than is being spent. The budget for FY 19-20 has not been

closed yet; however, the most recent report reveals a reserve of 25.6 months which will be carried over to this fiscal year.

There was no request for public comment.

6. Presentation by Optician Training Programs and Professional Associations; Discussion and Possible Action

A. Ruby Garcia, California State Society of Optician

B. Stephanie Kriebel, San Mateo Adult School

C. Karina Casteneda, American Career College

D. Gary Bazlen, California Association of Dispensing Opticians

E. Other Training Programs or Professional Association

Audio of Discussion: [22:40 / 2:10:41](#)

Ms. Murphy acknowledged that Martha (Ruby) Garcia, SLD, CLD was heavily involved in new programs, and she was a fantastic champion of education within the field. This presented the Board with an opportunity to understand current opportunities for education as well as assist with discussion around additional requirements for licensure or continuing education currently and in the future.

[Ms. Garcia](#) provided a slide presentation for the Members on the California State Society of Opticians (CSSO). The American Board of Opticianry (ABO) and the National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLE) basic is beginning to help candidates prepare and pass the ABO exam. The CSSO will introduce modules for mastering the ABO and NCLE exams by December 2020 for those who wish to promote in professional opticianry. The CSSO presenters will be launching the Canada College ABO Certificate program next month. CSSO is now working with three other colleges to launch their programs in Northern California. Various awards are being offered to colleges for innovations in teaching methods and collaboration with Registered Dispensing Opticians (RDOs) and private practices. CSSO wishes to invite a Board Member or staff to present the award at CSSO's annual conference. Additionally, Ms. Garcia announced that CSSO is in the process of designing a virtual museum for students and professionals to have access to history and current events surrounding the optical industry. The goal is to launch the virtual museum by November 30th.

Mr. Bentley asked if CSSO has a current pass rate for the exams; Ms. Garcia replied that all of the students are passing and there is a much higher percentage that are working in the industry versus those who are new to the profession.

Mr. Kysella inquired about Ms. Garcia's vision regarding potential collaboration with the Board regarding the instruction modules; Ms. Garcia explained that it would involve module animations and links for the online BreZE system, the live scan form and process, and step-by-step information on the approval process, the timelines and the payment process. There would also be a video. She stressed that help is needed by Board staff providing feedback. Ms. Murphy assured that staff would be open to assisting CSSO in creating content.

Dr. Kawaguchi noted that the links on the Board's website for optometry laws and regulations have recently been updated; he asked if the Board has something similar for opticians already established? Ms. Leeper confirmed that links to the Board's optician statutes are on the website. Dr. Kawaguchi then asked Ms. Garcia if they have similar links directing students to the optician statutes links on the Board's website; Ms. Garcia assured that CSSO will certainly provide those links for their students

[Ms. Kriebel](#) reported on the San Mateo Adult School. The Adult School was working on their own program and then decided to collaborate with Kenyatta University. Members also heard from Lynette Garcia and Phil Weber (co-instructors for the collaborative program).

[Mr. Weber](#) announced that Kenyatta College is launching an optician training program and he and Ms. Garcia are both instructors for the program. Mr. Weber took the ABO exam himself when it first came out in 1980. He has worked in the optical industry his entire adult life. He and Ms. Garcia will be bringing a wealth of knowledge the ABO opticians. The mission of the CSSO module program is to get "would-be" opticians up to speed with full understanding of the profession. They will assist with job placement upon completing and passing the course. Mr, Weber later added that they are recruiting by way of word of mouth and expect to be operating at full capacity in the Spring of 2021.

[Ms. Lynette Garcia](#) reported that customer service and professional communication knowledge that is needed and which is inherent in the opticianry industry will be taught and emphasized. She announced that other topics such vertical imbalance, UV (its effect on the eyes), and expectations of finished eyewear will be taught. Students will be encouraged to take the NCLE. She expressed gratitude to all of their industry partners who contributed; She noted that because of the industry partners' faith, trust and support, a truly awesome quality product has been produced. She explained that the training is a rigorous 15 weeks which will thoroughly prepare the students to pass the ABO. Upon taking and passing the ABO, the students will begin their internship.

Mr. Bentley inquired whether an opticianry laws and regulations curriculum might be incorporated into the module program; Ms. Garcia responded "absolutely". She explained that a piece within the San Mateo Adult program was on laws and regulations. Laws and regulations will be incorporated when they go over HIPPA and ANSI standards.

[Ms. Casteneda](#) reported that the American Career College's (ACC) main objective is to prepare students to take the ABO and NCLE exams and become employable in entry level positions. American Career College has campuses in Ontario, Los Angeles, and Orange County. Students can start the 36-week training module during any time of the year. Students are on campus two days a week and study at home for two days. Ms. Casteneda believes that in-person training has led to more students taking the test. The program includes 7 modules and an externship.

Mr. Bentley asked about the number of people in the program who end up taking the ABO/NCLE exam. Ms. Casteneda explained that the number of students that take the exam is low because it isn't required or necessary to find employment.

Mr. Kawaguchi asked what ACC does to recruit students and asked if they offer practice ABO tests. Ms. Casteneda explained that ACC has a marketing team but feels that most of their students come by way of word of mouth referrals. Ms. Casteneda also explained that they have multiple tools for test prep and offer a reimbursement for the price of the ABO test if students pass it in a set period of time.

Mr. Bazlen reported on the California Association of Dispensing Opticians (CADO). Mr. Bazlen said the non-profit organization was formed in 1939 because the legislator was moving to get rid of the occupation. They consider themselves as a business profession support group that focus on employee benefits, occupational opportunities, networking, and continuing educational seminars. Mr. Bazlen believes that adding new laws will add to the confusion of the occupation and feels that there is poor compliance to the existing laws. Mr. Bazlen strongly believes that the fitting and adjusting of eyewear should be done prior to the manufacturing of the lens. Mr. Bazlen explained that third party vision insurance companies have created an inequity in pricing between insurance and non-insurance payers because labs offer discounts to insurance companies. Bazlen questioned if the Board needs to be notified if telemedicine is ophthalmology owned.

Mr. Kysella asked Mr. Bazlen to elaborate on his sentiments about lack of compliance with current laws. Mr. Bazlen explained that consumers don't typically understand the laws or what is available to them. He also explained that the general public may be getting used to new models of business such as amazon, where if a product doesn't fit it may be returned. Mr. Bazlen fears that some consumers will force themselves to wear products that don't fit which may lead to future health problems.

There was no request for public comment.

7. Review, Discussion and Possible Action on Draft 2021 Optometry Board Strategic Plan

Ms. Murphy explained that Board President Morodomi invited all committees to make comment on the areas of the Strategic Plan that pertain to their committee.

Mr. Kysella felt that the issues were addressed and Ms. Watts said that Strategic Plan looked good and had no further comment. Dr. Kawaguchi added when designing the strategic plan, they tried to be broad but direct. They intended to clearly define a direction while giving the committees latitude to make the decisions regarding the details of each action item.

There was no request for public comment.

8. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Bentley requested we allow the presenters from agenda item 6 return to give updates on their programs.

Dr. Kawaguchi requested data from the ABO about California pass rates compared to other states. Mr. Bentley suggested this information be presented quarterly.

There was no request for public comment.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.