Minutes
Arkansas State Board of Optometry
Victory Building
Little Rock, AR
June 9, 2016 1:30 pm

Dr. Bill Coffee, Board Vice President, opened the meeting with all Board members present.

Dr. Howard Flippin, Board Executive Director, Bonita Wineman, Board assistant, Mr. Christopher Arnold, interim Board attorney, Drs. Allison Hall, Tricia Bell, Wanda Vaughn, Micah Thomason, Chev Ergle, Bryan Armstrong, Susan DeBlack, and Ms. Vickie Farmer, Executive Director of Arkansas Optometric Association were also present. Dr. George and Susan Haas were also present.

Dr. Smalling presented the minutes of the April 24, 2016 Board meeting. Dr. Smalling pointed out that he had referred to Dr. Tricia Bell by a former name and asked to amend the minutes to correct his error.

Mr. Spears made a motion to approve the corrected minutes. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

Mr. Herman Shirley reported on the accounting update. He stated that the finances seemed to be in order at this time. While the Board went in the hole $7000 last month, year-to-date there is a net increase of $18,000.

Dr. Coffee reported that Randy Webb had paid his last payment of $450 to complete his fine of $1000.

Dr. Coffee welcomed Dr. Shane Ford to the Board replacing Dr. Dale Morris. Dr. Ford’s appointment expires on April 26, 2021.

Drs. Tricia Bell and Wanda Vaughn were recognized to report to the Board on the new revised Vision Therapy Program under Medicaid. This is an update of the report given to the board on March 21, 2016. This document was developed by the Arkansas Optometric Association Third Party Committee with assistance from the American Optometric Association. This Arkansas model is to become the national standard. This document does state that vision therapy can be done in primary or satellite offices only. After reviewing, there was a motion by Dr. Robert Smalling to provide services at the primary location and fixed branch offices. The motion was seconded by Mr. Herman Shirley.

Dr. Coffee opened the floor for election of officers of the Board.

Dr. Smalling made a motion that Dr. Bill Coffee, President, Dr. Bryant Ashley, Vice President, and Dr. Robert Smalling, Secretary-Treasurer be nominated as officers of the Board for 2016-17. Mr. Spears made a second. There being no further nominations, the Board voted to elect this slate. The motion passed.

Dr. Coffee opened the floor for nomination for a Board member to fill a position on the Arkansas Board of Opticianry.

Dr. Ashley made a motion that Dr. Dan Hennessey be elected to the Optician Board. Mr. Spears made a second. The motion passed.

By common consent, Dr. Shane Ford was appointed the task of preparing the jurisprudence test for license candidates and the online version for license renewal.

Dr. Flippin reported that twenty one (21) candidates had taken the Board exams this morning in the Victory Building. They were Drs. Rebecca Bills, Lindsey Burdick, Ryan Bunch, Christian Coats, Frances Davis, Samantha Devlin, Jacob Dufour, William Dunnam, William Fielder, Lauren Hernandez, Alexandra Meredith, Winn Meredith, Nicholas McColley, Darah McDaniel-Chandler, Kristin McKnight, Mandi Ott, Kay Powell, Kyle Reuter, Megan Shirey, Ashley Toland, and Amanda Younger.

Dr. Coffee introduced Dr. Micah Thomason to answer questions on the complaint from a former employee about his vision therapy practice in Northwest Arkansas. This was an informal hearing. Dr. Thomason stated that he was
providing services to preschools in the area and that he employed fourteen therapists to provide the services. He reported the former employee was only on the job less than three weeks and was never allowed to do independent training with students. He reported that he been audited by Medicaid and received good marks. He also reported that his staff was well trained and had attended numerous COVD and OEP seminars. He reported that he worked with VT patients three days a week and general clinic two days a week. He reported that he had 70% Medicaid patients and 30% private insurance patients. After all questions had been asked and answered Dr. Thomason was excused.

Under open items, the Board discussed licensure by endorsement in response to comments reported by our Board attorney at the past two Board meetings. It was decided by common consent that this item needs to be addressed at the next legislative session. The Board and our attorney and staff will continue to gather verbiage and ideas to assist in necessary legislation to allow licensure by endorsement in the future.

Dr. Flippin reported that a graduate OD cannot practice without passing all parts of the NBEO exams. Also it was stated that new graduates cannot provide any type of patient care in Arkansas until they are licensed.

Dr. Hennessey asked about license application on line and renewal of license online. Dr. Flippin replied that this not currently possible and was skeptical that it would be available in the near future.

Future Board meetings in 2016 were listed as August 11, October 20, and December 8 and will be held at the Victory Building Room 445.

Drs. Penny Freshour, Derrick Pierce, and Martha Gore are not required to attend this meeting, but all three will be expected at August Board meeting.

Mr. Shirley made a motion that travel expenses and per diem for this Board meeting be paid. Dr. Ashley made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Ford made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Hennessey made a second. The motion passed.

Dr. Coffee adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

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Dr. William Coffee, Vice President

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Dr. Robert W. Smalling, Secretary/Treasurer