

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

9600 Gateway Drive
Reno, NV 89521

Nick M. Spirtos, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
Board President



Edward O. Cousineau, J.D.
Executive Director

*** * * MINUTES * * ***

OPEN SESSION BOARD MEETING

Held in the Conference Room at the Offices of the
Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners
9600 Gateway Drive, Reno, Nevada 89521

and Videoconferenced to

The Conference Room at the Offices of the
Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners
325 E. Warm Springs Road, Suite 225, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2025 – 12:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Nick M. Spirtos, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., President
Bret W. Frey, M.D., Vice President
Chowdhury H. Ahsan, M.D., Ph.D., FACC
Ms. Pamela J. Beal
Irwin B. Simon, M.D., FACS
Jason B. Farnsworth, RRT, MBA
Hugh L. Bassewitz, M.D., FAAOS
Apeksha Desai, M.D., MBA

Board Members Absent

Ms. Maggie Arias-Petrel, Secretary-Treasurer
Joseph Olivarez, P.A.-C
Ms. Kathleen A. Conaboy

Staff/Others Present

Edward O. Cousineau, J.D., Executive Director
Sarah A. Bradley, J.D., MBA, Deputy Executive Director
Donya Jenkins, Chief of Finance and Human Resources
Laurie L. Munson, Chief of Administration and Information Systems
Kory Linn, Chief of Licensing
Henna Rasul, J.D., Senior Deputy Attorney General

Agenda Item 1

CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Roll Call/Quorum

The meeting was called to order by President Nick M. Spirtos, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., at 12:06 p.m.

Ms. Bradley took roll call. Board members present were Nick M. Spirtos, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., Bret W. Frey, M.D., Chowdhury H. Ahsan, M.D., Ph.D., FACC, Irwin B. Simon, M.D., FACS, Jason B. Farnsworth, RRT, MBA, Hugh L. Bassewitz, M.D., FAAOS, and Apeksha Desai, M.D., MBA. Board members absent were Ms. Maggie Arias-Petrel, Ms. Pamela J. Beal, Joseph Olivarez, P.A.-C, and Ms. Kathleen A. Conaboy. Ms. Bradley announced there was a quorum.

Agenda Item 2

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Beal joined the meeting at 12:09 p.m.

Dr. Spirtos asked whether there was anyone in attendance who would like to present public comment. No public comment was received.

Agenda Item 3

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- December 12, 2025 Board Meeting – Open/Closed Sessions

Mr. Farnsworth moved that the Board approve the Minutes of the December 12, 2025 Board Meeting – Open/Closed Sessions. Dr. Desai seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 4

REVIEW, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO NAC CHAPTER 630 AS CONTAINED IN LCB FILE NO. R055-25

Ms. Bradley said the intent of this agenda item was that the Board review the draft regulations, the comments received, and the minutes of the workshops and the public hearing and hopefully adopt the regulations so we can send them to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) for inclusion on a Legislative Commission agenda. The next meeting of the Legislative Commission is February 26, and we hope to add these regulations to that agenda so they will be effective by March 1.

Ms. Bradley explained there were some changes she thought should be made to the draft. The first is that Section 2, subsection 1(b) should be amended to say “or” rather than “and.” She said this was just an error in how the regulation was drafted by LCB. The competency examination is only required if you have not practiced in more than 24 months or passed the examination for licensure within 24 months.

Ms. Bradley said the second proposed change was to Section 4, subsection (5). She said she the change requested there is that “the initial issuance of a license” should be changed to “the application fee.”

Ms. Bradley said the third proposed change is that Section 5, subsection (1)(b) should be removed. She explained that when someone gets a temporary license, they may not have already registered to take the examination. Her understanding is the examination is available twice a year, every six months, in February and August, and if someone graduates in May or June, they may not be able to take the examination that August; they may prefer to take it the following February. This change would allow them some flexibility.

Ms. Bradley stated there were comments received from those who attended the workshops and public hearing indicating that the reinstatement fee in the regulation draft was too high. She explained that currently, the reinstatement fee is twice the renewal fee, which is consistent with what the Board charges its other license types. She said the reasoning provided in the comments received is that genetic counselors are not as highly paid as some health care providers. Included in those comments was a list of other states that charge lower fees. Ms. Bradley indicated that she told the members of the public that she would bring this request to the Board for review and consideration.

Ms. Bradley stated that Dr. Nunes provided public comment at both a workshop and the public hearing indicating that he believed that the Chair of the Genetic Counseling Advisory Council (Council) should be a genetic counselor, and he indicated that the regulations should be amended to include that stipulation. The regulation draft currently states that the Chair will be chosen from the membership of the Council and there is no stipulation on who may be Chair.

Ms. Bradley stated that other comments were received asking about the scope of practice, continuing education requirements, and several other areas that she does not believe require a change to the regulation draft. She recommends that the Board ask the Council to review these items and opine on them once the Council has been formed and begins meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding whether the position of Chair of the Council should be limited to genetic counselor members and whether the reinstatement fee should be reduced. Dr. Simon said he did not think physician members should be precluded from acting as Chair of the Council. He said some physicians are highly trained in this field and he thinks it is important not to exclude physicians if this is the field they practice in. Board members asked questions about the reinstatement fee and what fees the Board will be charging for reinstatement of a genetic counselor license. Ms. Bradley said that the reinstatement fee for genetic counselors would be the same as that for physician assistants. Mr. Cousineau said it would be unfair to the Board’s other licensees to treat genetic counselors differently with regard to reinstatement fees than for its other license types. He added that licensees have two years in which they may reinstate their license if they fail to renew it. Ms. Bradley said she is hopeful this will not be a huge issue because we are not expecting a large volume of licensees. As of her last review, the American Board of Genetic Counseling website showed approximately 30 individuals with addresses in Nevada. The Board expects to see at least this number of license applicants to start.

Dr. Ahsan said he agreed with Dr. Simon that physicians should not be precluded from being the Chair of the Council.

Dr. Bassewitz said he agreed with Dr. Simon and Dr. Ahsan that the Board should not add language to preclude physician involvement in the Council, to include acting as Chair, and agreed with Mr. Cousineau’s comments regarding fees.

Dr. Spirtos said he had concerns with the language regarding licensure by endorsement. The draft says that unless the Board denies an application for good cause, the Board will approve the application and issue a license by endorsement within the time required by subsection 4 of NRS 622.530, and when he reads NRS 622.530, it seems the Board does not have a lot of discretion regarding the issuance of a license by endorsement and appears this would be a way for applicants to bypass the regular licensure requirements.

Ms. Bradley explained that the Board is mandated by NRS 622 to have endorsement provisions for its licenses. She said she borrowed the language that is in the regulation draft from existing regulations for the Board's other license types and the requirements are the same. To apply for a license by endorsement, applicants must meet all the same requirements other applicants do, they must show they hold a license in another state, they do not have disciplinary history, their license has not been revoked, and they have not been denied a license. They cannot have pending investigations, and they must submit to a criminal background check. Therefore, she thinks these provisions add an extra requirement for those applicants because they must show they have a license in another state in good standing and be free of disciplinary history. These provisions allow the Board to approve these applications outside of meetings of the Board, if appropriate. However, there is not a requirement that the Board issue the license. Issuing a license remains discretionary.

Dr. Spirtos asked for clarification regarding the provisions regarding the supervision of temporary licensed genetic counselors and the provisions prohibiting genetic counselors from providing services to family and romantic partners.

Ms. Bradley explained that, for temporary licensed genetic counselors, the supervisor is responsible for the temporary licensed genetic counselor's conduct and care, the supervisor must be available by phone, the supervisor must ensure all work completed is performed in a competent and ethical manner that complies with state laws and the standard of care, the supervisor must ensure the temporary licensed genetic counselor is knowledgeable, and the supervisor must have one meeting a week with the temporary licensed genetic counselor to review his or her work. This is similar in some ways to supervision of physician assistants. Ms. Bradley further explained that the provision regarding providing services to family and romantic partners was vetted by genetic counselors that currently practice, and they all agreed that this is the ethical standard with regard to not providing services to family members and romantic partners.

Discussion ensued regarding whether other individuals who cohabitate with a genetic counselor who are not romantically involved with the genetic counselor, such as a roommate, should be included in the provisions prohibiting a genetic counselor from providing services to family members or romantic partners as well as whether family members should be removed from that provision. Ms. Bradley stated if the Board wanted to change the regulation to add individuals such as roommates to this provision, it should also amend the regulations governing the Board's other licensees in this regard.

Dr. Spirtos stated that the issue of competency assessments was raised a number of times in the public comments and there was discussion regarding substituting continuing medical education for an examination, which he is very much against. Dr. Desai concurred. Ms. Bradley said that was not part of the proposed regulations. Those comments concerned the use of competency assessments, to include potential examinations, to evaluate competency if a genetic counselor has not practiced for more than 24 months before applying for licensure in Nevada. SB189 requires that all genetic counselors take and pass the licensing examination offered by the American Board of Genetic Counseling and the proposed regulations do not alter this requirement.

Dr. Spirtos said in terms of supervision of students, there was a comment regarding allowing medical doctors who are trained in genetics to supervise students in clinical rotations. Ms. Bradley said that she asked LCB to amend the regulation to allow medical doctors to supervise students during their clinical rotations and the LCB indicated that SB189 limits student supervision to licensed genetic counselors and the regulation could not be amended in this way. Ms. Bradley indicated that this was a statutory change that she anticipated the Board making in a future legislative session.

Dr. Spirtos asked about the use of the word “temporary” in Sections 5 and 15 of the proposed regulations. Ms. Bradley explained that a temporary license to practice as a genetic counselor may be issued to applicants who have graduated from their genetic counseling program and are waiting to sit for the licensing examination. Issuing temporary licenses in this situation is something that SB189 specifically includes. The Board may issue these applicants a temporary license that is valid for one year and the applicant may renew it for another year. The Board also issues temporary or intern licenses to other license types in similar situations. With regard to the use of the word “temporary” in Section 15, SB189 specifies that people who are certified by the American Board of Genetic Counseling but not licensed in any state may come to Nevada and provide temporary consulting services related to genetic counseling. The Board is charged by SB189 to define “temporary basis” for this consulting. She said she and Mr. Cousineau discussed this provision in the bill and chose to define temporary basis as 30 days to be consistent with how physicians licensed in other states are allowed to consult with Nevada physicians. She said nobody has voiced concerns with this provision, but she does not think Section 15 will be used very often because approximately 35 states are licensing genetic counselors. She said it is a strange provision because only individuals who are certified and not licensed anywhere will be able to utilize it. Ms. Bradley indicated that amending the provision in SB189 that addresses this would be one of her recommended statutory changes for the Board to pursue in a future legislative session.

Discussion ensued among the Board members regarding defining temporary basis as 30 days. Dr. Spirtos asked if it was 30 days per year. Ms. Bradley indicated that the regulation did not specify that and provided simply for 30 days.

Dr. Spirtos asked about the provision in the regulations that addresses English language competency. Ms. Bradley stated that language was copied directly from language in the Board’s existing regulations regarding English language competency. She did not believe it would be an issue because it has not been an issue when licensing physician assistants. However, Ms. Bradley stated that Dr. Nunes pointed out in the public hearing that if a genetic counselor applicant is able to pass the examination offered by the American Board of Genetic Counseling (which is required for licensure), the applicant’s English language competency should be sufficient. That examination is not easy, and it is only offered in English.

Ms. Beal left the meeting at 12:44 p.m.

Mr. Farnsworth moved that the Board adopt the proposed regulations with the changes recommended by Ms. Bradley. Dr. Frey seconded the motion.

Dr. Bassewitz said he wanted to clarify that the changes referred to in the motion were the changes that Ms. Bradley led with and not those proposed in the public comments received. Ms. Bradley stated the changes that she recommended were the changes contained in the memorandum that she provided to the Board and those were the changes that she would present to the LCB after the Board’s vote.

A vote was taken on the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 5

CONSIDERATION AND ACTION REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE GENETIC COUNSELING ADVISORY COUNCIL

- (a) Mark Eugene Nunes, M.D., FAAP, Physician Member Applicant
- (b) Tracey Gaebe-Schulz, MS, CGC, Genetic Counselor Member Applicant
- (c) Meg M. Hager, MS, MPH, CGC, Genetic Counselor Member Applicant
- (d) Ali Khalaf, MS, CGC, Genetic Counselor Member Applicant
- (e) Julia Prinzi, MS, CGC, Genetic Counselor Member Applicant
- (f) Amber E. Schreiber, MS, CGC, Genetic Counselor Member Applicant
- (g) Georgene Glass, Public Member Applicant
- (h) Dolores Hauck, Public Member Applicant

This matter was not considered by the Board at this meeting.

Agenda Item 6

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Spirtos asked whether there was anyone in attendance who would like to present public comment.

Meg M. Hager, MS, MPH, CGC, said she is a genetic counselor and a current resident of Las Vegas. She said there are probably going to be many more than 30 applicants for licensure in the state because provisions of telehealth require that genetic counselors be licensed in the state where the patient is receiving care. For instance, she currently works for a company wherein she provides genetic counseling services via telehealth, and she is licensed in 36 states now.

Dr. Frey left the meeting at 12:47 p.m.

Agenda Item 7

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

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