

BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE

Professional & Vocational Licensing Division
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
State of Hawaii

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: February 27, 2025

Time: 1:05 p.m.

In-Person Meeting Location: King Kalakaua Conference Room
HRH King Kalakaua Building
335 Merchant Street, First Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

Virtual: Virtual Videoconference Meeting – Zoom Meeting

Recording Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORCeFfmOzb8>

Agenda: The agenda for this meeting was posted on the State electronic calendar as required by HRS section 92-7(b).

Members Present: Deborah McMenemy, L.Ac., D.A.O.M., Chair
Brooke Foreman, L.Ac., D.A.C.M., Vice Chair
Sherry Mizumoto, L.Ac., D.A.O.M.
Marta Rebella, Public Member

Staff Present: Lei Ana Green, Executive Officer (“EO Green”)
Chelsea Fukunaga, Executive Officer (“EO Fukunaga”)
Andrew Kim (“DAG Kim”)
Jordan Ching (“DAG Ching”)
Johnny Li, Tech Support
Julie Halapio, Secretary

Guest(s): Jayne Tsuchiyama
Wai H. Low

Virtual Meeting Instructions: A short video regarding virtual meetings was played for attendees. The Chair provided information on internet and phone access for today’s virtual meeting and announced that today’s meeting was being recorded and that the recording will be posted on the Board’s web page.

Call to Order: The Chair took a roll call of the Board members.

In accordance with Act 220, SLH 2021, all Board members attending virtually confirmed that they were alone in their nonpublic location.

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After taking roll, quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at: 1:05 p.m.

Chair McMenemy asked if any members from the public would like to provide oral testimony on this agenda item. There were none.

Approval of
November 20,
2024 Minutes:

Chair McMenemy noted that the minutes from the November 20, 2024 meeting and public hearing were not yet completed and requested to defer their approval until the next morning.

Chair McMenemy asked if any members from the public would like to provide oral testimony on this agenda item. There were none.

Applications

Upon a motion by Ms. Rebella, seconded by Vice Chair Foreman, and unanimously carried to enter the executive session meeting at 1:09 pm.

Upon a motion by Chair McMenemy, seconded by Ms. Rebella, and unanimously carried to return to the open session meeting at 1:38 pm.

After due consideration of the information received, it was moved by Vice Chair Foreman, seconded by Dr. Mizumoto, and unanimously carried to defer Minori Sambe's application pending further information.

Ratifications

Upon a motion by Vice Chair Foreman, seconded by Dr. Mizumoto, it was voted and unanimously carried to ratify the listed licenses for acupuncturists and intern permits.

2025 Legislation

Chair McMenemy asked if any member of the public wished to provide oral testimony. There were none.

A. H.B.1054/S.B.1373, Relating to Administrative Licensure Actions Against Sex Offenders

EO Green reported on legislative measures concerning administrative licensure actions against registered sex offenders. The bills authorize the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) and licensing boards to automatically revoke, and to refuse renewal, restoration, or reinstatement of professional licenses held by registered sex offenders. HB 1054 was likely inactive; however, SB 1373 had passed both the CPN and JDC committees with amendments. The amendments clarified that revocation would be based on placement on the sex offender registry rather than solely on conviction.

Ms. Tsuchiyama (public) inquired about the process and the Board's role in decision-making.

DAG Kim explained that the bill seeks to expedite the process by mandating automatic revocation, thereby reducing steps in the current investigative process, while preserving the right of appeal through DCCA. The bill's intent is to enhance public safety by addressing registered sex offenders promptly.

The Board unanimously expressed support for the measure, consistent with its past position on protecting the public interest and welfare.

B. H.B. 1333/S.B. 1565, Relating to Acupuncture

EO Green noted that the bill "never got a hearing so that one is dead." Discussion then turned to its companion measure, SB 1565, which had a "double referral." SB 1565 had passed the HHS Committee, but the CPN Committee had not yet scheduled a hearing, with a filing deadline approaching.

The Board reiterated its longstanding position of supporting measures that modernize statutory language to align with the current professional standards and scope of practice of licensed acupuncturists. Individual members expressed strong support for the intent of such legislation, emphasizing that the core objective is parity, not elevation of the profession. The Board underscored that parity is necessary for acupuncturists to be recognized as essential health care providers alongside professions such as chiropractors and physical therapists, which is critical for inclusion in insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid.

It was further noted that achieving this status would allow acupuncturists to be eligible for grant funding. As an example, when Governor Green offered grants to certain health care professions, acupuncturists were excluded due to statutory wording. Another benefit of such measures is creating incentives for future acupuncture students by enabling eligibility for loan relief programs similar to those available to physicians and other health care providers, helping to address workforce shortages.

Ms. Tsuchiyama (public) confirmed that the intent is indeed to achieve parity so that acupuncturists are "on the same playing field" should there be a call for essential health care workers.

The Board concluded that, should SB 1565 advance, it would provide testimony reflecting these points of support.

Dr. Low asked about the administrative bill and its effective date, noting student concerns regarding labor hubs and completion of board examinations. He inquired whether the rules package was finalized or still under review, and whether the Board needed additional support to advance the process. It was explained that the process involves multiple steps, including review by regulatory boards and the

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Governor's office, and therefore takes time. Dr. Low also asked whether the Small Business Regulatory Review process had already been completed following a prior hearing. He suggested keeping the topic as a standing agenda item to ensure it remains a priority even when no new updates are available.

New Business

- A. Delegation to Executive Officer
- B. Delegation to Board Member

EO Green reported that DAG advised against the change, noting that such applications are rare for acupuncture practitioners. The Board agreed and determined to continue referring all such matters to the full Board for review.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2025

In-Person Meeting Location:	Queen Liliuokalani Conference Room HRH King Kalakaua Building 335 Merchant Street, First Floor Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
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Virtual Videoconference Meeting – Zoom Webinar

Adjournment: With no further business to discuss, Chair McMenemy adjourned the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Taken and Recorded by:

/s/ Young-Im Wilson
Young-Im Wilson
Executive Officer

[X] Minutes approved as is.

[] Minutes approved with changes; see minutes of _____

