

STATE OF NEVADA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

November 22, 2011
Teleconference

Members Present:	Elizabeth (Liz) Straughan, Eric Gerken, Ronald Tulak, Allison Stephens
Members Absent:	David Tanabe
Staff Present:	Loretta L. Ponton, Executive Director, Henna Rasul, Senior Deputy Attorney General
Public Present:	None

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by Liz Straughan, Chair. A roll call confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comment – No Public was in attendance.

Co-Location and Cost Sharing of Board Office Space – Liz stated this item is in regards to the Board of Examiners of Audiology and Speech Pathology and asked Loretta to provide an overview.

Loretta explained the Board of Audiology and Speech Pathology is losing their Administrator who is providing a home-based office situation. The Board has five (5) members, three (3) of which are new members.

Henna had contacted Loretta and asked Loretta to meet with the AS Board chair to discuss the challenges and needs the AS Board is facing in transitioning to a new staff and location. The current Administrator was also the OT Board prior Executive Director and the AS Board is facing similar transition issues that were addressed by the OT Board and herself when she was hired. Loretta stated she has been providing some assistance already with their December 2nd Board meeting so they can make some decisions on what they need to do.

Loretta provided an overview of the AS Board financial situation, stating their revenue and fee structure limits their options; but they do have some reserve funds. The situation may provide an opportunity for the Board to share costs of the Board office through a co-location of the AS Board within the OT Board office.

Loretta stated she has talked with Liz and the proposal before the Board is two parts – one to provide transitional space for the AS Board equipment and records until the AS Board can make some decisions on a long-term basis. The second part is a discussion on whether to offer a co-location with cost sharing to provide an option for the AS Board to a home-based office and also to offset costs for the OT Board office. Liz asked and Loretta confirmed the transitional space would be at no-cost.

Ron stated it would be prudent to cost-share if it would work for Loretta, if it would be a long-term situation. Loretta stated the costs would be approximately 25% of the fixed costs and summarized what would be included as a fixed cost. Direct costs would be the responsibility of the AS Board. Loretta stated it could be a workable situation depending on what the AS Board decides on the Administrator position.

Loretta stated it definitely would work for the transition period, and she would like to have a decision so she can let the AS Board know at their December 2nd meeting.

Eric asked what amount of Loretta's time would be necessary. Loretta responded that for the transition period it would not take a lot of time; making moving arrangements, preparing for two Board meetings, etc. during the next 2 months, estimating about 8 hours a week. Those hours would be in addition to the normal work schedule provided for the OT Board.

Liz asked if that would be at no cost also; Loretta responded that she has prepared a proposal for Transition Services that would be paid by the AS Board as it would be in addition to the OT Board work. Eric asked what the plan was to manage the time without compromising her work for the OT Board; Loretta responded that the OT Board is her primary responsibility and would take precedence over the transition assistance. Loretta reaffirmed her commitment to the OT Board, and stated if the Board feels it may be a conflict of interest, she would not pursue it.

Allison commented that she feels very comfortable with the transition proposal and the longer term cost-sharing model, she feels it is a great idea and will held with the Board's bottom line.

Ron stated he does not have a problem with the transitional temporary period.

Ron made the motion the OT Board offer the Board of Examiners for Audiology and Speech Pathology temporary transitional office space. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Discussion on Co-location and cost sharing was tabled until after Agenda Item 4

Executive Director Services and Staff – Liz asked Henna for guidance on whether the Board would be approving or just discussing the proposed contract by Loretta for services to the AS Board. Henna stated she is her own company and this would be a separate contract with the Audiology and Speech Board. The Board can discuss and approve but that is not binding in a contractual sense. Loretta added the proposals are presented for information and confirmation on whether or not it might be a conflict.

Transition Assistance - Liz asked for comments; clarification was heard that they would be discussing only the transition services.

Allison stated that as long as everything is done for the OT Board, she doesn't see a conflict, she is her own company, and it is up to her to determine if she can provide the additional services.

Eric commented that he agrees, as long as everything is being taken care of for the OT Board, it would be OK.

Ron stated it was fine with the temporary services aspect.

Liz stated that if Loretta feels she has the time and energy, she most likely would be the best person to help with the transition issues as she has had similar experience.

It was a consensus that the Board was supportive of the transition services proposal.

Administrator Services – Loretta stated if the AS Board was co-located, she did not feel it would be a problem providing the additional services; but only under the conditions that it is part time and that the OT Board services come first. Based upon the financial status of the AS Board, they cannot afford or expect more than a part-time service; Loretta stated she would not be interested if they were not co-located.

Ron asked how many licensees the AS Board has; Loretta responded approximately 700 but would have to be confirmed; the licensing process is very simple, application, transcripts and payment of a \$150 fee; \$50 for a renewal. Everything is done manually, including issuing licenses.

Loretta continued stating that with a co-location, there would be a benefit to the OT Board by offsetting approximately \$4,200 in office costs. The amount would be adjusted each year to reflect actual costs. If they decided to hire another Administrator and also want to co-locate, that might be an issue. The Board would need to decide if the liability of having a non-Board person having access to the office would be an issue; if Board staff were not present.

Ron expressed concern that the number of hours the licensing specialist worked might increase as a result of the time spent on the AS Board. Loretta clarified that the OT Board would not be paying Erica if she worked additional hours; those hours would be paid separately if needed. There would be no additional cost to the OT Board.

Eric expressed apprehension that the additional responsibilities might affect the work for the OT Board. Ron stated there are people who work several jobs and extra shifts and have the energy to do that. Ron stated it he thinks it is fine for Loretta to market herself and do other work as a contractor. He believes it will not affect the quality of service provided to the OT Board. His only concern would be that our costs would not go up as a result.

Liz asked Henna that if two Boards had the same Administrator and are housed under the same roof, would they be more likely to be looked at for consolidation. Henna responded that some may look at it that way; she doesn't know what the Sunset Committee would be looking at. Loretta added that it could also be looked at as combined administrative services, being frugal with public funds through operating as a cost saving measure. The Boards function as separate Boards in their own areas of expertise; they have different scopes of practice and issues. A consolidation would involve combining boards into a single board. Ron agreed that the Boards would continue to function separately. Loretta added that neither Board was selected by the Sunset Committee this year for review; it will be after the next legislative session in 2013 before more boards will be reviewed.

Allison stated she does not see any problems with the two boards working together to save costs, as far as providing services, she doesn't see how this would be any different than other contractors working for more than one board; such as Paula Berkley and Louis Ling, it would not necessarily be viewed adversely if both boards contract with the same professional. Allison stated she is perfectly fine with the proposals.

Eric stated he is still concerned about the potential decrease in the level of service to the OT Board if Loretta would be working for more than one Board. Discussion was heard regarding potential performance issues with a consensus that any performance issues would be addressed in the annual performance review which has a financial incentive for maintaining performance levels.

Liz asked for further comments; hearing none, Liz asked for a motion.

Ron made the motion, seconded by Allison, to offer Board office space for co-location on a cost sharing basis if the Board of Audiology and Speech Pathology selects Loretta as their contractor for part-time Executive Director Services. The motion passed.

Discussion continued on whether co-location would still be considered if they did not select Loretta for their Executive Director. It was a consensus that if that were the case, and they still wished to co-locate, it would need to come back to the Board for discussion and decision.

Report from Legal Counsel – Henna stated that on behalf of the Audiology and Speech Board she wanted to thank Loretta for going above and beyond, stating the President is so thankful that Loretta was so generous to meet with her and volunteer to take care of some emergency items that needed to be done.

Public Comment – There was no public in attendance.

Adjournment – Liz adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m.