

GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
Board Teleconference Minutes
Monday, October 7, 2019 – 12:00 p.m.

The Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy met via teleconference on Monday, October 7, 2019. The following members were present:

Board Members Present

Rachele Branson, OTR/L, Chairperson
Robert McClellan, OTR/L, Vice Chair
Melissa Thurlow, OTR/L, Board Member
Rafael Salazar, OTR/L, Board Member
Mary Louise Austin, Consumer Board Member

Administrative Staff Present

Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist

Attorney General's Office

Allison Spencer, Senior Assistant Attorney General

Board Members Absent

Pamela Reddick-Collins, Board Member

Visitors Present

Chuck Willmarth, CAE, Associate Chief Officer, Health Policy and State Affairs, American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

Call to Order Ms. Branson established that a quorum of the Board was present and called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Board Meeting Agenda

Mr. Salazar motioned, Mr. McClellan seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the agenda as presented.

Open Session Board Minutes

1. August 9, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes

Mr. McClellan motioned, Mr. Salazar seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the August 9, 2019 open session Board minutes as presented.

Discussion – Georgia Occupational Regulation Review Council (GORRC) – Review of Recreational Therapy License Type

The Board entered into a discussion regarding GORRC's review of the Recreational Therapy license type. The Board addressed potentially problematic areas which could result from the licensing of Recreational Therapists, to include adding recreational therapy as a license type under the umbrella of the Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy.

The Board determined that increased workload would not be feasible for staff, who are currently working under the confines of recent budget cuts and facing further mandated budget reductions in fiscal year 2020. The Board noted that the Georgian's First Commission is actively seeking ways to streamline state processes and budgets, thus the addition of a new license type is counter to their deregulation priorities.

Additionally, it was noted that staff and the Board presently lack the knowledge base necessary to adequately and efficiently process incoming recreational therapy applications. The inevitable slowdown of the management of a new license type would directly and negatively impact the approval of applications and renewals for existing occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

The Board reviewed the potential for a recreational therapist to be appointed to the current occupational therapy board and deemed RTs would not be qualified to regulate an occupation for which they have not been trained nor would OTs have the necessary expertise to regulate recreational therapists.

The Board expressed its disappointment in the fact that they were not approached by GORRC about the possible inclusion of recreational therapists under their existing licensing type, noting this prevented an open dialog during which the Board could have voiced their concerns directly to the organization responsible for requesting the new license type.

The Board further noted that the proposed recreational therapy statute does not clearly delineate the differences between occupational therapists and recreational therapists which can only lead to much confusion regarding the scope of practice for each license type.

It was also mentioned that the potential exists for Georgia to join the occupational therapy multi state compact within the next five years. The inclusion of recreational therapists under the occupational therapy board could potentially negatively affect Georgia's ability to improve upon the portability of licenses for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

Mr. McClellan motioned, Ms. Thurlow seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to draft a letter from the Board to GORRC stating their concerns regarding the licensing of recreational therapists.

Ms. Austin left the meeting at 12:17 p.m. with a quorum of the Board still present.

Executive Session Board Minutes

1. August 9, 2019 Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Ms. Thurlow motioned, Mr. McClellan seconded and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the August 9, 2019 executive session Board minutes as presented.

Adjournment No further business was discussed and the meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Minutes recorded by:	Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist
Minutes reviewed and edited by:	Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Minutes approved on:	November 15, 2019

RACHELE BRANSON
BOARD CHAIR

ADRIENNE PRICE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR