

GEORGIA BOARD OF MASSAGE THERAPY
Board WebEx Open Session Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 25, 2024 - 9:00 a.m.

The Georgia Board of Massage Therapy met via WebEx on Friday, October 25, 2024. The following members were present:

Board Members Present

Craig Knowles, BAS, LMT, BCTMB, CNMT, Chair
Pam Nichols, LMT, CNMT, HNC, Vice Chair
Dan Nichols, LMT, NMT, Board Member
Stephanie Bone', LMT, BWS, LDS, CR, Board Member

Administrative Staff Present

Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist
Donna Richardson, Licensing/Complaint Analyst
Sherry Strong, Complaint/Compliance Analyst

Board Members Absent

Jane Boyles Curry, Consumer Board Member

Attorney General's Office Present

Craig Pake, Assistant Attorney General

Visitors Present

Melissa Gasparetto Menezes
Christy Howard
Elizabeth Heasley
Patricia Hernandez
Call-In User 1
Call-In User 2
Q Redd-Hickson
Shenteria
Marquita Ronda Harris
Laurie Puryear
Tiffany Young
Mai Lin Petrino, Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSBPT)
Daniel Jones
Rachel Stancil, Alpha School of Massage
Lauren Hennesy

Call to Order Mr. Knowles established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:13 a.m.

OPEN SESSION

Agenda Ms. Nichols motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the meeting agenda as presented.

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to enter into Executive Session in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-2 (k); 43-1-19 (h) and 50-14-2 (1) to receive and review information pertaining to applications, pending cases investigative reports and enforcement matters and to receive the Assistant Attorney General's report. Voting in favor of the motion were those present who included Board members: Craig Knowles, Pam Nichols, Stephanie Bone', and Dan Nichols.

At the conclusion of Executive Session on Friday, October 25, 2024, Mr. Knowles declared the meeting to be "open" pursuant to the Open and Public Meeting Act O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 et seq. No votes were taken during executive session.

OPEN SESSION

Scheduled Board Appointment

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Bone’ seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendation made in Executive Session:

- 9:30 a.m. Applicant 4101669** Uphold previous motion to deny based on failure to meet educational standards [O.C.G.A. § 43-24A-8(b)(6), BR 345-08-.01 and BR 345-08-.03(6)(a)].

Executive Session Minutes

- 1. September 16, 2024 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minutes**
- 2. September 20, 2024 Executive Session Investigative Committee WebEx Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Bone’ motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the September 16, 2024 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minutes, and the September 20, 2024 Executive Session Investigative Committee WebEx Meeting Minutes, as presented.

Attorney General’s Report – C. Pake

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

- 1. AG MEMO – MT220105** Refer to Investigations as discussed in Executive Session.
- 2. AG MEMO – MT240053-00076282** Table and schedule for an Applicant Interview.
- 3. MT220102** Proceed with vote as previously referred to the Attorney General’s Office to include failure to disclose as an additional basis for action.
- 4. MT220087** Program has closed, and license is inactive by operation of law. Close the case.
- 5. MT230125** The Board will accept terms of the Public Consent Order as discussed in Executive Session.

Ms. Nichols motioned, Ms. Bone’ seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Attorney General’s Report and advice as presented.

Legal Services MEMO

Ms. Bone’ motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendation made in Executive Session:

- 1. Cases for Ratification** Accept orders as received.
 - a) MT240063**
 - b) MT250011**
 - c) MT240066**

Investigative Committee Summary Report – P. Nichols

- MT220099** Close the case.
- MT210049** Refer to Investigations to obtain additional information. Upon receipt refer to the Attorney General’s Office for a Cease-and-Desist Order.
- MT240030** Refer to the Attorney General’s Office for Revocation of Licensure and a Cease-and-Desist Order.

MT240040 Refer to Investigations to obtain additional information. Upon receipt refer to the Attorney General's Office for a Cease-and-Desist Order.

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Bone' seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Investigative Summary Report as presented.

Miscellaneous Executive Discussion

1. **MT190093** Ms. Nichols motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant request to terminate probation.
2. **MT190060** Ms. Nichols motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer to the Attorney General's Office for Revocation of Licensure based on failure to comply with the terms of the Private Consent Agreement for Licensure, docketed May 9, 2019.

Applications for Board Review

Arrests

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

Applicant 4062476 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to disclose arrest on application for licensure. Fine to be paid in full prior to issuance of license. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4010342 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to disclose arrest on application for licensure. Fine to be paid in full prior to issuance of license. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4056948 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to disclose arrest on application for licensure. Fine to be paid in full prior to issuance of license. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4139664 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to disclose arrest on application for licensure. Fine to be paid in full prior to issuance of license. Flag for CE Audit. If licensed in another jurisdiction is not clear, refer to Cognizant for review.

Massage Therapy Education Programs

Ms. Bone' motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

Applicant 2855303 Send notification via email and certified mail as discussed. If documentation is not provided as requested, withdraw recognition status of the massage therapy educational program, and refer to Attorney General's Office for Revocation of Licensure based on failure to meet the requirements outlined by the US Department of Education [O.C.G.A. 43-24A-3(4)(C)]. If provided, present to the Board for review during the next meeting.

Applicant 2855288 Program has closed, and license is inactive by operation of law.

Applicant 4150354 Refer to Attorney General's Office for a Memorandum of Advice as discussed in Executive Session.

Faculty Amendments

- Applicant 2855318** Approve massage therapy educational program faculty amendment.
- Applicant 2915014** Approve massage therapy educational program faculty amendment.
- Applicant 2855325** Approve massage therapy educational program faculty amendment.

Curriculum Changes

- Applicant 4179464** Table pending receipt of documentation to clarify the conversion to clock hours as the number of minutes referenced for each course does not equate to the number of hours awarded for the course. Upon receipt, refer to Cognizant for review. If adequate documentation is provided, approve. If not, request an applicant interview with the Program Director.
- Applicant 4135345** Approve massage therapy educational program curriculum change.

Renewals / Arrest

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

- Applicant 4158016** Renew the license with a Reservations of Rights letter. Must notify Board within 10 days of disposition of criminal case. Flag for CE audit.
- Applicant 4154116** Renew the license.
- Applicant 4171066** Deny renewal of licensure based on recent arrest for a crime of moral turpitude with a finding of relevance to the practice of massage therapy and refer to the Attorney General's Office for revocation of licensure [O.C.G.A. § 43-1-19(q)(1)-2)].
- Applicant 4152957** Renew with a Letter of Concern for failure to timely report final adjudication within 10 days of criminal case.
- Applicant 4151430** Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order with a fine of \$500 for false attestation. Fine must be paid within 90 days of order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Requests for Reconsideration

Ms. Nichols motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

- Applicant 4097752** Rescind the previous motion and issue the license.
- Applicant 4079918** Uphold previous motion to deny based on convictions for crimes of moral turpitude with a finding of relevance to the practice of massage therapy [O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-19(q)(1)-2) and 43-50-40(b)].
- Applicant 4040393** Uphold previous motion to deny based on failure to meet educational requirements [O.C.G.A. § 43-24A-8(b)(6), BR 345-08-.01 and BR 345-08-.03(6)(a)].

Transcript Review

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

- Applicant 4134116** Issue the license.
- Applicant 4109910** Refer to Legal Services for Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$500 for unlicensed practice from April 15, 2019 – December 31, 2024. Fine must be paid upon order docketing. Flag for CE Audit. Refer complaint against employer for aiding and abetting unlicensed practice.
- Applicant 4111741** Issue the license.
- Applicant 4145796** Deny based on failure to meet educational requirements [BR 345-08-.01 & BR 345-8-.03(6)(a)].
- Applicant 4112185** Deny based on failure to meet educational requirements [BR 345-08-.01 & 345-08-.03(6)(a)].
- Applicant 4058352** Deny based on failure to meet educational requirements [BR 345-08-.01 & 345-08-.03(6)(a)].
- Applicant 4056594** Deny based on failure to meet educational requirements [O.C.G.A. § 43-24A-8(b)(6) & BR 345-08-.03(6)(a)].
- Applicant 4148453** Table pending receipt of proof of program accreditation and no distance learning education. Must submit proof within thirty days. If proof of accreditation and no online coursework is received, issue the license. If not accredited and/or any coursework taught online, deny for failure to meet educational requirements [O.C.G.A. § 43-24A-8(b)(6) & BR 345-08-.03(6)(a)].
- Applicant 4137227** Issue the license.
- Applicant 4160174** Issue the license.
- Applicant 4179482** Issue the license.
- Applicant 4151218** Issue the license.

OPEN SESSION

Open Session Minutes

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- 2. September 20, 2024 Open Session Investigative Committee WebEx Meeting Minutes**

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Licenses to Ratify: August 3, 2024 – October 20, 2024

Ms. Nichols motioned, Ms. Bone’ seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to ratify the licenses by application and by reinstatement that were issued in accordance with Board Rules and Policies between Board meetings.

Correspondence – CE Concerns - Hollie Cope, MT004361

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to send notice to the writer clarifying the misconceptions stated within their correspondence to include her belief that the Board promotes CE courses or providers, and Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP) & American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA) does not offer insurance coverage for the use of tools in massage therapy. The Board does not promote specific CE courses or providers, and ABMP and AMTA do offer insurance coverage for the use of tools in massage therapy provided that the use of those tools are legally allowed within the state where the licensee is practicing and the licensee is properly trained in the use of those tools.

Correspondence – Letter from VA Dept Veterans Affairs to Georgia Board of Massage Therapy

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to the VA as information.

Correspondence – Asheville CE Cancelled, Robin Fann Costanzo, CE Provider

Ms. Bone' motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to notify the writer that although an email blast stating that the renewal date has been pushed out to November 30 this year, CE still must be completed by October 31. Board rule requires that CE must be done within the biennium. Licensees may submit petitions for rule variance/waiver if unable to meet renewal requirements. Waivers must be submitted prior to the end of the biennium cycle and the rule is no longer applicable after renewal period ends.

Discussion – National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (NCBTMB)

1. **09-01-24 Approved Provider Disciplinary Actions by State**
2. **09-01-24 Certificant Disciplinary Actions by State**
3. **09-01-24 Disciplinary Actions**
4. **10-01-24 Approved Provider Disciplinary Actions by State**
5. **10-01-24 Board Certification Disciplinary Report**

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to NCBTMB, as information.

Discussion – Federation of State Massage Therapy Boards (FSMTB)

1. **Call for Nominations**
2. **Press Release – FSMTB 2024 Election Results**
3. **2024 Annual Meeting – Dan Nichols & Adrienne Price**

Ms. Price and Mr. Nichols provided a brief summary of their attendance at the 2024 FSMTB Annual Conference held in Washington, DC. Ms. Price reported there were roundtable discussions on DEI (Diversity, equity, and inclusion) in the workplace, and different strategies to counter illicit businesses, to include the changes to human trafficking laws that were spearheaded in Georgia by the First Lady, Marty Kemp, and the work product of the FSMTB Establishment Task Force for which Ms. Price served as Chair.

Mr. Nichols gave accolades to Georgia Board Chair, and FSMTB President/Board of Directors, Craig Knowles, for his service to the Federation and the massage therapy profession. He noted that Mr. Knowles' time of service on the Board of Directors was extremely appreciated by many of the Executive Directors and Board Members from the other jurisdictions in attendance at the conference.

Mr. Knowles expressed his appreciation for the recognition and said his attendance was bittersweet as his three-year term has ended. He stated this was one of the better annual meetings he has been a part of and sees that attendees and members realize that the Federation is there to support them. He concluded that he looks forward to seeing what can be done in the next year with the Federation since he is the Immediate Past President and will continue to serve in that capacity to ensure a smooth transition for the new Federation Chair.

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to FSMTB, as information.

Discussion – CE BROKER – Exciting News Use of AI-Powered Solutions

The Board accepts the correspondence in reference to CE Broker, as information.

Petition for Rule Waiver – BR 345-4-.02 Michelle Harris MT014335

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition to waive BR 345-4-.02 based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

Petitions for Rule Variance

1. BR 345-4-.02_Maeria Taylor_MT001942

Ms. Nichols motioned, Mr. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for variance of BR 345-4-.02 based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

2. BR 345-4-.02_Rahsaanica Howell_MT011057

Ms. Bone’ motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for variance of BR 345-4-.02 based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

Miscellaneous Discussion – IMPact – Survey of the Profession

Mr. Nichols motioned, Ms. Nichols seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer to the Attorney General’s Office for a Memorandum of Advice regarding the Board's authority to:

- 1) Survey its licensees (persons and schools) to determine their position on Georgia becoming a member of IMPact; and,
- 2) Engage a 3rd party, such as FSMTB, to collect and publish the data.

If authority is granted, post link to survey on the website and forward it to licensees via an email blast.

Executive Director’s Report – A. Price

The Executive Director’s Report presented the Board with statistical data relevant to the processing of applications, the number of licensees, to include massage therapy programs, board meeting statistics, and complaints/compliance matters. In addition, the report addressed the following topic of interest with the Board:

- PLB Updates
- Rules Hearing
- MTLD

Ms. Nichols motioned, Ms. Bone’ seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Executive Director’s Report as presented.

Board’s Chair Report – C. Knowles

No official report presented.

Adjournment With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Minutes reviewed and edited by: Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor & Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Minutes approved on: December 6, 2024

CRAIG KNOWLES
BOARD CHAIR

ADRIENNE PRICE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF GEORGIA

COUNTY OF BIBB

**AFFIDAVIT SUPPORTING CLOSING OF
PUBLIC MEETING**

The Georgia Open Meetings Act, O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.*, requires that all meetings of an entity covered by the statute must be open to the public unless there is some specific statutory exception which permits the closing of the meeting. If such a meeting is to be closed, the law requires that the presiding person execute a sworn affidavit stating that the subject matter of the meeting or the closed portion thereof was devoted to matters within the statutory exceptions and identifying those specific exceptions relied upon. O.C.G.A. § 50-14-4(b). A copy of this affidavit must be filed with the minutes of the meeting in question.

Comes now Craig Knowles the presiding officer identified below and, before an official duly authorized to administer oaths, makes this affidavit in satisfaction of the statutory requirements outlined above.

1. I am the presiding officer of the Georgia Massage Therapy Board.
2. I am over the age of 18 and in all other aspects competent to make this sworn statement. I acknowledge that I am giving this statement under oath and penalty of perjury and that I have read the contents of this affidavit prior to signing it.
3. On, October 25, 2024 this entity, which is subject to the Open Meetings Act, met. A majority of the quorum of the members present voted to close the meeting or a portion thereof for the following indicated reason(s). I hereby certify that during the closed portion of the meeting, only those subjects indicated below were discussed. I also certify that I have reviewed the exceptions provided under the Open Meetings Act that may permit the closing of a meeting and that, to the best of my knowledge, the reasons I have described in detail below meet the requirements for closing this public meeting.
4. The legal authority for the closure of this meeting was:
O.C.G.A. § 43-1-2(k) and 43-1-19(h)
5. The subject(s) discussed and the underlying facts supporting the closing of this meeting are:
To deliberate applications and enforcement matters and to receive information on applications and investigative reports.

FURTHER THE AFFIANT SAYETH NOT

C.K.L.
Presiding Officer

Sworn and subscribed before me
This 28 day of October 2024

Leona Mims
Notary Public

