

GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
Board WebEx Meeting Minutes
Friday, May 8, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.

The Georgia State Board of Occupational Therapy met via WebEx on Friday, May 8, 2026. The following members were present:

Board Members Present

Robert McClellan, OTR/L, Chairperson
Rebecca Hammad, OTR/L, CLT, Vice Chair
Deborah Hinerfeld, PhD, OTR/L, Board Member
Rachele Branson, OTR/L, Board Member
Betsy McDaniel, OTA, Board Member

Administrative Staff Present

Adrienne Price, Executive Director
Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist
Sherry Strong, Complaint/Compliance Analyst
Ky Greene, Temporary Employee

Board Members Absent

No Members absent.

Attorney General's Office

Craig Pake, Assistant Attorney General

Visitors Present

Paul C Thomas
Demaris Vela
Nikki Kardouni, OTD, OTR/L, NBCOT Ambassador
Kaitie Christensen, SHRP, Director of Human Resources, Heart and Hands Therapy Services, Inc.
Sandy Eskew Capps, PT
Austin Hubbard
Corey Whigham
William C. Haggarty
Robin Walker
Nicole Nickerson
Call-In User 1

Call to Order Mr. McClellan established that a quorum of the Board was present, and called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

OPEN SESSION

Board Meeting Agenda

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the agenda as presented.

Open Session Minutes – March 20, 2026 Rules Committee WebEx Meeting Minutes

Ms. Branson motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the March 20, 2026 WebEx Meeting Minutes, as presented.

Ratification List: January 31, 2026 – April 28, 2026 Licenses, Reinstatements and PAMs

Ms. Hammad motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to approve the list of licenses issued from January 31, 2026 – April 28, 2026, licenses issued by reinstatement, the Physical Agent Modalities certifications, and limited permits issued between Board meetings.

Betsy McDaniel joined the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

Correspondence – Request for Clarification – Direct Patient Care CE Requirement, Dr. Nicolaas van den Heever

Ms. Hammad motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer the writer to Board Rule 671-3-.08 and note that all occupational therapists in academia must be held to the same standards and CE requirements as those who practice in a clinical setting within the state of Georgia.

Discussion – American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

1. OT Insights - Medicare Telehealth Extended Through 2027 + Key OT Updates
2. State Affairs Spring Newsletter 2026

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

Discussion – National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) – OT State Regulatory E-newsletter – March 2026

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

Discussion – OT Compact

1. Indiana launches OT Compact 03-09-26
2. Virginia launches OTC 03.20.26
3. Maryland launches OTC 04-15-26
4. Full Commission Meeting Report_Adrienne Price

Dr. Hinerfeld queried Ms. Price where the Georgia Board stands in the OT Compact process. Ms. Price responded that the legislation was passed years ago and staff are waiting on approval of the change order which assures that there will be funding available to make the changes within our data system to comply with the OT Compact laws and rules. Ms. Price continued that as the Compact Commissioner for Georgia she attends annual meetings relative to the OT Compact, and in that role she is responsible for representing the interests of the Board as well as providing any updates from the OT Compact Commission. Ms. Price further noted that she also serves as the OT Compact Compliance Committee Chair and is a member of the OT Compact Rules Committee.

She stated that there are currently 6 states actively issuing privileges. Ms. Price explained whereas there are 32 jurisdictions that are a part of the OT Compact there are several factors preventing them from issuing privileges. In example, some states are still using paper applications and now must build out a data system that will be capable of sharing data on licensees and applicants to CompactConnect, which is the data system for the OT Compact. She further stated there are many states pending approval from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) to conduct fingerprint background checks on applicants seeking a compact privilege. Other states are pending funding to implement IT Systems, completion of their rule promulgation process, and/or the completion of their renewal cycles before beginning to issue compact privileges.

Ms. Price reported that so far 50 total privileges have been purchased between the 6 states issuing privileges, which means 18% of OT Compact member states are issuing privileges. Ms. Price provided some additional highlights from the OT Compact Commission Annual Meeting to include but not limited to committee reports, elections, and the financial report.

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the correspondence in reference to the OT Compact Commission Report and the Full Commission Report, as presented.

Petitions for Rule Waiver

1. BR 671-3-.08_Kineta Veatrix Fisher, OTA003104

Table the Petition for Rule Waiver pending review of the application for licensure within Executive Session prior to rendering a decision on the petition.

2. BR 671-3-.08_Tammy Denise Dock-Byrd_OT005818

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to deny the petition to waive BR 671-3-.08 based on failure to substantiate a substantial hardship, failure to complete the waiver in its entirety, and by operation of law.

Petitions for Rule Variance

1. BR 671-3-.01(1)_Brandi Rogers

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to deny the petition for variance of BR 671-3-.01(1) based on insufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship. May submit a new and complete petition outlining alternative standards to satisfy the requirements.

2. BR 671-3-.01_Teresa Hnatowicz Mintz

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for variance of BR 671-3-.01(1) based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

3. BR 671-3-.01(1) Teresa Hnatowicz Mintz

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for variance of BR 671-3-.01(1) based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

4. BR 671-3-.01(1) Teresa Hnatowicz Mintz

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to grant the petition for variance of BR 671-3-.01(1) based on sufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

Board's Chair Report – R. McClellan

Mr. McClellan reported on the Dry Needling Bill, SB 411, which did not pass. He explained that the Athletic Trainers' lobbyists tried to piggyback on this bill at the 11th hour to add Dry Needling language for ATs, and this caused the bill not to pass. He shared that the bill was received favorably up to that point. He further explained that OTs are held to the same standard as PTs, but ATs did not have those same standards within their section of the bill. He commented that it will be presented again next year.

Mr. McClellan entered a discussion about the decrease in national exam pass rates and shared that he is seeing a trend representing an increase in the number of applicants for licensure who have failed the national examination in excess of three (3) times. He expressed his concern and asked the Board if they have noticed the trend and could offer any insight as to why this may be occurring.

Ms. McDaniel suggested that this trend may be attributed, in part, to the interpretation of Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standards between OT school programs. Ms. McDaniel indicated that there appears to be a discrepancy between the ACOTE Standards and what is on the NBCOT exam. She proffered that there may need to be more collaboration between ACOTE and National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) to make the minimum standards clearer to educators so that it translates to student performance on the exam. Ms. McDaniel remarked that the ACOTE standards are interpreted differently in each occupational therapy program, which has a direct impact on how the program's students perform. She shared that exam item writing is often based on survey responses relative to best practices, and what is considered best practice by those responding to the surveys may not be uniform throughout each educational program. Better communication between these two entities may help academics to understand what should be taught in the colleges and universities to prepare their students in the best way possible and ultimately improve upon national exam pass rates.

Ms. Hammad motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Board Chair's Report as presented.

Executive Director's Report – A. Price

Executive Director's Report presented the Board with statistical data relevant to the processing of applications, the number of licensees, renewal, and complaints/compliance matters. Additionally, the Executive Director's Report addressed the following:

- OT Compact
- Board Rules
- PLB Updates
- Georgia General Assembly

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the Executive Director's Report as presented.

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. McDaniel seconded, and the Board voted 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 deliberate on Applications. Voting in favor of the motion were those present who included Board Members: Robert McClellan, Rebecca Hammad, Betsy McDaniel, Rachele Branson, and Deborah Hinerfeld.

At the conclusion of Executive Session on Friday, May 8, 2026, Mr. McClellan 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 obtained during Executive Session.

OPEN SESSION

Scheduled Personal Appearance

10:30 a.m. OT250288 Mr. McClellan motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted in favor of the motion to uphold the previous motion to deny licensure based on action in another jurisdiction. As the application on file has expired, applicant may reapply for licensure upon proof of having satisfied the conditions of the action in the relevant. Ms. Branson opposed.

Executive Session Minutes – March 20, 2026 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minutes

Dr. Hinerfeld motioned, Ms. Hammad seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the March 20, 2026 Executive Session WebEx Meeting Minutes as presented.

Attorney General's Report – C. Pake

Mr. McClellan motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendation made in Executive Session:

OT250279 Renew the license for the 2024 cycle and based upon the Respondent's stated retirement status, lapse the license by operation of law for the 2026 cycle and close the case. If attempts to reinstate, the facts of the case will be reconsidered by the Board.

Mr. McClellan motioned, Ms. Hammad 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. Branson motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to accept the following recommendations made in Executive Session:

1. Cases for Ratification

- a. OT220038
- b. OT260020
- c. OT260018
- d. OT260029
- e. OT260024

Accept the orders as received.

2. Reconsideration Request – OT260032

Uphold the previous motion based on failure to disclose an arrest.

Betsy McDaniel left the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

Complaint Summary Report – D. Hinerfeld

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

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| OT260009 | Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Licensure with a fine of \$50 for unlicensed practice from 8/12/2025 – 9/11/2025. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the docket date of order. Flag for CE audit. |
| OT260014 | Refer to the Attorney General's Office for a Public Consent Order for Renewal of Licensure with terms and conditions as discussed in Executive Session. |
| OT240012 | Close case due to insufficient evidence. |
| OT240008 | Close case due to no jurisdiction. |
| OT250001 | Close case due to insufficient information to initiate an investigation. |
| OT250237 | Send Mitigating Circumstances letter for practicing beyond the scope of practice with terms and conditions as discussed. |

Cognizant Ratification List – OT260032

Mr. McClellan motioned, Ms. Branson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Reinstatement of Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to disclose arrest on application. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Miscellaneous Executive Discussion – OT180025

Mr. McClellan motioned, Dr. Hinerfeld seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to continue compliance monitoring based on current Public Consent Order with no further disciplinary action at this time.

Applications for Board Review

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

Initial Applications

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Applicant 4445059 | Must complete 320-hour supervised clinical experience. |
|--------------------------|--|

Applicant 4340780 Issue the license with a Letter of Concern regarding failure to disclose arrest on application for licensure based on a lack of disposition on the case.

PAMS

Applicant 4352514 Issue “All Modalities” subtype on license.

RENEWALS

Applicant 4691761 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order with a fine of \$500 for failure to meet CE requirements within the biennium. CE Hours taken on or before April 1, 2026 may not be used to meet CE requirements for the biennium ending March 31, 2028. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4721188 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order with a fine of \$500 and reprimand for failure to complete CE within the biennium. CE taken to satisfy the CE requirements for the biennium ending March 31, 2026 may not be applied toward the March 31, 2028 biennium. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4669657 Renew the license with a Letter of Concern regarding DUI.

Applicant 4589771 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Agreement for Renewal of Licensure with a fine of \$ 500.00 for failure to disclose arrest on application. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4736454 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order with a reprimand and a fine of \$500 for failure to complete CE within the biennium. CE completed on April 23, 28, & 29, 2026 to satisfy the 2026 biennium may not be used towards compliance with future biennium. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the order docket date. Flag for CE Audit.

Applicant 4677426 Renew the license.

Applicant 4653585 Refer to Legal Services for a Public Consent Order for Renewal of Licensure with a fine of \$500 for failure to complete the CE requirement within the biennium. Fine to be paid within 90 days of the docket date of the order. CE taken on April 7-8, 2026, to comply with the CE requirements for renewal may not be used toward the biennium ending in March 31, 2028. Must notify the Board of the final disposition within 10 days of adjudication. Flag for CE Audit.

Petitions for Rule Waiver – BR 671-3-.08 Kineta Veatrix Fisher, OTA003104

Ms. Hammad motioned, Mr. McClellan seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion to deny the petition to waive BR 671-3-.08 based on insufficient evidence to substantiate a substantial hardship.

Adjournment No further business was discussed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist
Minutes reviewed and edited by: Adrienne Price, Executive Director & Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor
Minutes approved on: June 24, 2026

ROBERT McCLELLAN
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 Robert McChellen 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 Occupational Therapy Licensure 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 May 8, 2026 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

Robert McChellen
Presiding Officer

Sworn and subscribed before me
This 20 day of June 2026

Alberto Gutierrez
Notary Public

