State of Maryland

Board of Certified Public Accountants

Business Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

*Via Google Meets Teleconference*

**MEMBERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. Jan Williams, Chair

 Jeffery Wilson II

 Joseph Petito

 Barrett E. Young

 Brian Dunne

 Pamela Gray

**ABSENT MEMBER:** Joan Pratt

**DLLR OFFICIALS/STAFF:** Christopher Dorsey, Executive Director

 Robert Pambianco, Legal Counsel

 Sharron McNeill, Office Supervisor

Shemirra Massie, Administrative Officer I

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Rebekah Olson, MACPA

Kauser Syed

 Michael Shaw

 Matthew McKinney

 MJ Beeson

 Devki Virk, Commissioner, Division of Labor & Industry

The January 7, 2025, Maryland Board of Public Accountancy meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM by Dr. Jan Williams, Chair.

Upon a motion **(I)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Ms. Gray, the December 3, 2024 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**Introduction of New Board Members:**

Dr. Williams shared that Governor Wes Moore appointed two new members to the Board, Mr. Jeff Wilson II and Ms. Joan Pratt. She asked Mr. Wilson II to introduce himself and asked the Board members to briefly introduce themselves.

**Chairman’s Report**

Dr. Williams stated that she updated and submitted the Board’s comments on the Competency Based Experience Pathway and Uniform Accountancy Act exposure drafts to the AICPA and NASBA in December. Also, she reported that since Ms. Bensky’s term on the Board has ended, the Board will need to elect a new secretary and treasurer or a secretary-treasurer. If anyone is interested, they should let Mr. Dorsey know by January 21, 2025. The Board will hold an election at the February Board meeting. Before the closing of the meeting, Dr. Williams asked that the minutes reflect appreciation to Mr. Macon Ware and Ms. Tamara Bensky for their committed service on the Maryland Board of Public Accountancy.

Upon a motion **(II)** by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Petito, the Chairman’s Report was unanimously approved.

**Executive Director’s Report**

Mr. Dorsey advised the Board that board staff will be moving on January 13, 2025 to, 100 S. Charles Street. He also reported that the Sunset Extension Bill would be considered at a Legislative committee hearing on January 8, 2025.

Upon a motion **(III)** by Mr. Young seconded by Mr. Petito, the Board unanimously approved the Executive Director’s report.

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**Exam Appeals**

There were zero (0) Exam Appeals

**Education Committee Report**

Mr. Dunne presented the Education Report. There were two (2) Transfers of Grades application approvals for December and zero (0)Transfer of Grades application denials for December.

Upon a motion **(IV)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Board unanimously approved the Education Report.

**Experience Committee Report**

Mr. Dunne presented the Experience Report. There were twenty-nine (29) Maryland candidate license application approvals and zero (0) Maryland candidate application denials for December.

Ten (10) Reciprocal application approvals originated from the following jurisdictions: two (2)-IL, one (1)-PA, five (5)-VA, one (1)-CA, one (1)-MI

There were zero (0)Reciprocal application denials for December

Upon a motion **(V)** by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Petito, the Board unanimously approved the Experience Report.

**Firm Permit Committee Report**

Mr. Dunne presented the Firm Permit Committee Report. There were three (3) firm approvals and zero (0) firms closed for December.

Upon a motion **(VI)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Mr. Young, the Board unanimously approved the Firm Permit Report.

**Peer Review Oversight Committee Report**

Ms. Gray reported the following: zero (0) newly enrolled firms in the Peer Review Program; ten (10) firms had reviews accepted; two (2) first-time passes with deficiencies; zero (0) first-time fails; and two (2) firms were dropped or terminated.

Upon a motion **(VII)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Mr. Dunne, the Board unanimously approved the Peer Review Report

**Unfinished Business**

None

**New Business**

**Private Equity Presentation**:

Mr. Matthew Bosher, attorney and a past Virginia Board of Accountancy Chair, gave a presentation to the Board on private equity investments in accounting firms. Dr. Williams heard his presentation at the NASBA Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL in October 2024, and wanted the other board members to hear about private equity investments since they are occurring more frequently. Mr. Bosher mentioned that private equity investments are not a fad. He discussed the structure of private equity accounting firms and the biggest risk in this structure. He also answered questions of board members. Later in the meeting, Mr. Petito suggested that the Board keep private equity on the agenda so that it can continue to discuss this topic. Board members will consider questions related to private equity firms and the peer review process to ask during the Annual Coastal Peer Review Update at the February meeting.

**Workplace Fraud Legislation Presentation:**

Commissioner of Labor and Industry, Devki Virk, shared proposed legislation that would help to eradicate workplace fraud. She explained this legislation is required to give the Maryland Department of Labor’s Division of Occupation and Professional Licensing the statutory authority to

impose penalties for workplace fraud.

**Proposed Senate bills – SB 51 (mobility) and SB 148 (retired CPA license emeritus status):** The board members discussed and supported both pre-filed bills, with suggested changes. Dr. Williams and Mr. Petito will incorporate the suggestions into written testimony, which Mr. Dorsey will submit prior to the scheduled Senate hearings.

**Correspondence**

None

**Public Questions and Comments**

None

**Hearing**

The respondent’s attorney requested the hearing be postponed since exhibits for the case were not made available to them on a timely basis. All parties agreed to the postponement of the hearing until the February meeting.

**Closed Session**

On a motion **(VIII)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Mr. Young, the Board voted to move to a closed session at 12:12 pm via a Google Meets teleconference, where log-in information was only provided to Board members and staff. The purpose of this session was to protect confidential attorney-client communications and licensing information shielded by the Maryland Public Information Act, in regards to a prospective application, as permitted by Sections 3-305(b)(7) and (b)(13) of the Open Meetings law, as well as to receive the Complaint Committee Report and the minutes of its December closed session, administrative functions not subject to the Open Meetings law pursuant to Section 3-103(a)(1)(i) of the General Provisions article.

**Return to Open Session**

Upon a Motion **(IX)** by Mr. Petito and seconded by Mr. Dunne, the Board unanimously approved the motions made during the Closed Session.

Upon a motion **(X)** by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Wilson, the Board adjourned at 12:31 pm.

**Summary of Closed Session**

Date and Time: January 7, 2025 / 12:14 pm

Place: Virtual

Persons present: Williams, Wilson II, Petito, Young, Dunne, and Gray (members), as well as Dorsey, McNeil, and Massie (staff), and Pambianco (counsel).

Subject matter: disclosure on a prospective application, minutes of December closed session, and complaint committee report.

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, **February 4, 2025**, via Google Meets teleconferencing at 9:00 AM

\_\_x\_\_ With corrections \_\_\_Without corrections

Signature on file February 11, 2025

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 Chairman Date