

Barbers' Board Meeting

Monday, August 12, 2024

A meeting of the State Board of Barbers was held on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. by teleconference.

Board Member Attendees

Mr. Larry Franklin - *Chairperson*
Mr. Andrew Campbell - *Industry Member*
Mr. Wade Menendez - *Industry Member*
Ms. Toni Wallace - *Industry Member*
Ms. Lisa Ennis, *Industry Member*
Mr. Channing Trent- *Industry Member*
Industry Member- Vacant

Other Staff Attendees

Ms. Nicole Fletcher- *Executive Director*
Ms. Breona Scott- *Assistant Executive Director*
Ms. Leslie Braxton- *Licensing Supervisor*
Mr. Jacob Guy- *Board Administrator*
Ms. Fatmata Rahman- *Administrative Specialist III*
Ms. Ashley Thompson- *Office Secretary*
Mr. Kenneth Sigman- *Advice Counsel*
Ms. Renee Robertson- *Continuing Education Coordinator*
Ms. Karina Papavasiliou- *Inspector*
Full Time Inspector- Vacant

Agenda

Quorum Announced, and Meeting Called to Order

A quorum was announced by Chairperson, Mr. Larry Franklin and the meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Before approval of the agenda, Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher announced an amendment to the August 12, 2024 agenda. Item B. School/Apprenticeship Training was added under New Business. Executive Director, Ms. Nicole Fletcher then requested a motion for approval of the amended agenda. Ms. Toni Wallace made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Larry Franklin, and the agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of June 10, 2024 Minutes

Chairperson, Mr. Larry Franklin then asked for a motion to approve the June 10, 2024 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Toni Wallace to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Andrew Campbell and the motion unanimously passed.

New Business

A. RECIPROCITY REQUIREMENTS

Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher introduced the topic by referencing discussions between her and Reciprocity Specialist Ms. Ashley Thompson. They had talked specifically about the requirement for barbers to provide two years of work experience in addition to certification of their training in order to become licensed in Maryland. There seem to be many barbers entering the state who are unable to meet this requirement and they believe that could be creating a barrier to licensure and ultimately discouraging some barbers from going through the proper channels to become licensed in Maryland. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher then proposed mimicking the reciprocity experience requirements imposed by the Cosmetology Board, which is 6 months. Industry Members Mr. Andrew Campbell and Mr. Wade Menendez posed similar questions asking what qualifies as work experience and what could serve as proof of such work experience? Could it simply be the duration of the license history? Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman was able to provide some clarification by stating the language for such requirements in Washington D.C. states that the licensee must hold a current license and be actively practicing the profession. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher also added that current requirements for proof of work experience call for either tax documentation or a notarized letter from management at a previous employer. Requirements for proof of work experience would not be changed should the duration of work experience be shortened to 6 months. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher gave the Board the opportunity to suggest alternative ways to document work experience and it was determined that those requirements should be left as is. Industry

member Ms. Toni Wallace chimed in asking for clarification regarding testing requirements after someone seeking reciprocity has provided the necessary documentation. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher replied by stating that it is determined on a state by state basis, and if testing requirements in a given state are equivalent to those in Maryland, then an applicant would not need to test. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher explained that the standard for 2 years work experience was established by the Board many years ago and was not written into statutes, and because of this a vote is not required. With there being a consensus among the Board to shorten the work experience requirement to 6 months it was agreed that the standard will be changed.

B. SCHOOL/APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher introduced the topic and turned it over to Industry Member Mr. Channing Trent who explained that he has been workshopping a solution to aid Apprentice Barbers and Barber Stylists in preparing for the theory portion of PSI exam, something that has become a frequent barrier to licensure. Mr. Channing Trent has been collaborating with the College of Southern Maryland with hopes of implementing a course that focuses on teaching aspiring barbers material they will need to understand in order to pass the theory exam. Industry Member Mr. Channing Trent then introduced Executive Director of Workforce Development at the College of Southern Maryland Ms. Kelly Winters. Ms. Winters has been in her current position for about 7 years and has overseen similar programs providing education specific to certain trades. Ms. Winters discussed the possibility of a non-credited 200 hour course at College of Southern Maryland which would cover material relevant to the barber theory exam. This would not only be beneficial for interested apprentices but also the sponsoring master barbers, who would not have to spend valuable time in the shop teaching this material.

Once Executive Director of Workforce Development Ms. Kelly Winters had laid out a rough outline of the plan, it was open to the Board for feedback. Barber Board Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher began by offering general support for the idea, expressing that finding ways to add structure to the apprenticeship program has been a goal for the Board for some time. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher also clarified that the 200 hour theory requirement was applicable to barbers taking the route of schooling to gain licensure, and that the 2,250 hour apprenticeship program was not broken down by theory or practical hours. There was a general consensus among Board members that a program like this has long been needed, and several spoke up with specific stories and experiences which support this notion. The logistics of the potential program still need to be ironed out, as multiple Board members also offered questions and considerations that would need to be addressed before the program could be implemented. These questions included: Who would be responsible for verifying training hours? Would such a program impact how the hours requirement for the apprenticeship program? How will the courses be funded? What kind of interest is there already amongst the apprentice barber community? How will the Board spread the word to the apprentice community?

While many details remain to be determined, Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman was able to

provide some answers and possible solutions to these questions. Mr. Sigman first suggested having the school provide documentation to the sponsoring master barber, who would then sign off on the training and forward it to the Board for approval. Regarding marketing the new program, Mr. Sigman also recommended that the Board inform new apprentices of the theory training in the correspondence sent to apprentices upon approval of their application. Executive Director of Workforce Development Ms. Kelly Winters spoke to provide clarification on the funding aspect of the program. She explained that she would set up a two part course, which would make the classes eligible for Maryland Workforce Sequence Scholarship through MHEC. The only requirement for individuals to become eligible for such a scholarship is to be a resident of the state of Maryland.

The conversation moved seeking to address the question of how many hours classroom time is sufficient to certify an apprentices theory training. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher initially stated that because the difference between school training hours and apprenticeship training hours is about doubled, the theory training requirement could also be doubled, raising the requirement for theory training hours from 200 to 400. Industry Member Mr. Channing Trent responded by asking why raise this threshold when the training is going to be in a formal classroom setting and should be equivalent to training received through barber schools. Industry Member Ms. Toni Wallace agreed with Mr. Trent and emphasized that the structure of the classroom is different from the freestyle nature of an apprenticeship working in the shop. Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman also spoke on this, stating that nothing in the laws establish a time requirement specific to theory training. The Board of Education has already determined that 200 classroom hours is enough time to teach content related to the barber theory exam, and the consensus amongst the Board was to match the 200 hour requirement administered by schools.

Licensing Supervisor Ms. Leslie Braxton followed this by asking if the mixing of apprenticeship and classroom training would be an issue. Advice Counsel Mr. Kenneth Sigman replied by stating that this should not be problematic because the training hours accrued in the school would be attributed to the apprenticeship training, and it would remain the responsibility of the apprentice's sponsor to certify and inform the Board of the training hours earned.

The final issue discussed was the potential timing of the program, with Licensing Supervisor Ms. Leslie Braxton beginning by proposing the idea of offering the program to exam takers who had recently failed the theory exam. Executive Director Ms. Nicole Fletcher replied by stating that the intention of the program is to be proactive in providing this training, in an effort to lower failing rates. Executive Director of Workforce Development Ms. Kelly Winters then chimed in stating that because the program would be academically not for credit there were no restrictions as far as molding the course within a traditional spring and fall semester schedule. Ms. Winters said that she would look to the subject matter experts for guidance regarding at what point during an apprenticeship should such a course be completed. Ms. Winters also responded to a question from Assistant Executive Director Ms. Breona Scott by stating that an official certification would be provided to students upon completion of the training and it could meet any requirements established by the Board. Executive Director of Workforce Development Ms. Kelly Winters

wrapped up the discussion by asking if it would be possible to put together a small group of master barbers to provide guidance for her regarding setting up a curriculum.

Old Business

A. CURRICULUM APPROVAL

There are no current curriculums to be approved at this time. Executive Director Nicole Fletcher stated that there is one curriculum currently under review and updates will be provided during October's meeting.

B. INSPECTION REPORT

Licensing Supervisor Ms. Leslie Braxton provided an Inspection Summary for today's meeting. The Data was collected from June 7, 2024 - August 9, 2024.

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| 15 | New shop applications received |
| 3 | New shops pending inspections - to be assigned |
| 2 | Complaints received |
| 1 | Complaints - open / to be assigned |
| 6 | Complaints - inspections completed |
| 70 | Inspections conducted |
| 28 | Inspections passed |
| 16 | Inspections failed |
| 0 | Failed - new shop inspections |
| 2 | Failed - late renewal inspections |
| 3 | Failed - complaint / per board inspections |
| 26 | Closed at time of inspection / Permanently closed |
| 15 | New shop applications received |

Public Comment

Eileen Corey - Ms. Corey asked for clarity regarding the hours requirement for the potential theory classroom training, to which Executive Director Nicole Fletcher replied that the requirement would remain at 200 hours equivalent to what is required in schools. Ms. Corey also asked if those who took the classroom theory training as a refresher course would be subjected to the same requirement of 200 hours for completion. Executive Director Nicole Fletcher stated that is not something that would be governed by the Board of Barbers.

Adjournment

Executive Director Nicole Fletcher requested a motion to call the meeting to adjournment at 11:23 A.M. Chairperson Mr. Larry Franklin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Andrew Campbell and the motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED BY: _____ on October 21, 2024.