



Veterinary Board of Governors Special Meeting Minutes

May 5, 2022

Board members present: Kim Morgan, LVT, Chair
Dordor Vang, DVM, MPH, Vice-chair
Kathryn Haigh, DVM
Aja Senestraro, DVM
Debra Sellon, DVM, PhD, DACVIM
Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM
Becky Knoke, Public Member

Staff members present: Lorelei Walker, Program Manager
Jennifer Santiago, Executive Director
Lisa Kelley, Assistant Attorney General
Madi Schatz, Administrative Assistant

On May 05, 2022, the Veterinary Board of Governors met via web conference. Notice of the meeting was published on the [Veterinary Board of Governor's website](#) and was sent out through the GovDelivery listserv.

OPEN SESSION:

1:00 p.m. Call to Order and Introductions – Kim Morgan, LVT, Chair

Dr. Haigh moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and adopted.

1. Veterinary Technician Apprenticeship Program Proposal

1:00 – Board Introduction to the Topic and Overview of the Meeting

Ms. Morgan reiterated the information and position shared at last year's September and October meeting.

1:20 – Open Floor for Stakeholders and Program Proponents

Susan Adams, Managing Director, NCWDB/SkillSource, introduced both the program and her team. Ms. Adams asked that the board vote in support of the proposal.

Dr. Zach Hambleton, Owner, Leavenworth Cascade Veterinary Clinic, gave an opening statement to the board.

Dr. Hambleton; Aria Ells, Cascade Veterinary Clinic; Stephen A. Hines, Emeritus Professor, Washington State University; and Dakota Martindale, Cascade Veterinary Clinic, shared a presentation in support of the program.

Ashley Byrne, LVT, Washington State Association of Veterinary Technicians, spoke in opposition of the proposal. She expressed concern regarding SkillSource's subject matter expertise. Ms. Byrne believes that licensed veterinary technicians are the veterinary equivalent of registered nurses.

Candace Joy, Chief Executive Officer, Washington State Veterinary Medical Association, spoke in opposition of the proposal. Ms. Joy believes that the apprenticeship program is not the solution to LVT shortage. She explained that accredited online programs train LVTs in rural areas.

Rachel Valentine, RVT, American Veterinary Medical Association, spoke in opposition of the proposal. Ms. Valentine believes that implementation of the proposed program will lead to confusion and fragmentation. Creating an alternative pathway would be a disservice to the veterinary community.

Ashli Selki, RVT, CVT, President, National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America, spoke in opposition of the proposal. Ms. Selki compared the LVT credential to that of an RN. She believes that allowing the apprenticeship program to result in licensing is not in the public's best interest. Ms. Selki expressed that approved pathways currently exist in schools and colleges. She asked that Cascade consider financially helping employees attend accredited programs. She warned that through this pathway, LVTs cannot transfer their credential to another state.

Jennifer Sterling spoke in opposition. Ms. Sterling explained that the program would lower the standard of practice and demean LVTs that have already received their credential. She believes that the program will not address the LVT shortage.

Shannon Brownrigg, RVT, Executive Director, Registered Veterinary Technologists & Technicians of Canada, spoke in opposition.

2:00 – Board Discussion, Remaining Questions, and Next Steps

Dr. Vang clarified that the Veterinary Board of Governors does not discuss this topic outside of open meetings.

Dr. Sanchez inquired about why formal education is needed. Ms. Byrne explained that formal education is imperative for emergency situations. Jim Hurrell, DVM, Association of Veterinary Technician Educators, explained that while diagnostic tests can be learned on the job, the knowledge base cannot. Dr. Hines agreed that LVTs must have the formal education to understand the knowledge base of the profession, which can be obtained through the program. Dr. Hambleton countered that 760 hours of didactic learning would include labs. This would occur both online and through Wenatchee College, over the course of three years.

Dr. Sanchez asked the opposition what gaps exist in the program's curriculum. Ms. Byrne explained that the gaps exist in the accreditation process. Dr. Vang refuted that the checklists, study modules, and mentors appear to be sufficient. She questioned if the opposition does not trust their peers enough to pass/fail LVTs through the program.

Dr. Sellon indicated her concerns about LVTs practicing at the top of their licenses, from the knowledge learned at an unaccredited program. She worries that oversight would be under the Washington State Apprenticeship & Training Council rather than the Council of Veterinary Technician and Accreditation of the AVMA. Joseph Hauth, NCWDB, SkillSource, added that large animal labs are included in the modules.

Dr. Paula Parker, Assistant Director, American Veterinary Medical Association, asked if the proposed program is lower cost than the existing programs. Ms. Adams explained that the program is under \$2,000, and the rest of the cost is subsidized by Cascade Veterinary Clinic.

Dr. Vang questioned if mentorship would overburden the veterinary profession. She also asked if the credentials could be transferred to another state. Mr. Hauth explained that time is set aside in the veterinarian's schedule. Ms. Adams explained that an LVT apprentice can sit for the Veterinary Technician National Exam.

Dr. Haigh stated that she believes the current accredited educational programs are sufficient.

Dr. Sellon moved that the Veterinary Board of Governors does not support the proposal. The motion was seconded but was not adopted 2:5.

Dr. Senestraro moved that the Veterinary Board of Governors support the program.
The motion was seconded and adopted 5:2.

Ms. Walker will draft a letter of support.

2. Adjourn

Dr. Vang moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:03 p.m. The motion was seconded and adopted.

Submitted by:
Loralei Walker, Program Manager
Veterinary Board of Governors

Approved by:
Kim Morgan, LVT, Chair
Veterinary Board of Governors

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