



**Veterinarian Board of Governors Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**September 9, 2024**

**Location:** Department of Health, TC2 Rm. 153 111 Israel Rd. SE, Tumwater, WA and via ZOOM

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**Board members present:**

Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair  
Debra Clabough Sellon, DVM  
Aja Senestraro, DVM  
Dai-E Dordor Vang, DVM, MPH,  
Kathryn Haigh, DVM  
Kim Morgan, LVT

**Board Members absent:**

Rebecca Knoke, General Member  
Katherine Bibi, DVM

**Staff members present:**

Amber Freeberg, Executive Director  
Poppy Budrow, Program Manager  
Shelbee Scrimo, Program Support  
Tara Mackemull, Program Support  
Megan Maxey, Policy Analyst  
Heather Carter, AAG  
Prina Patel, AAG  
Shelly Buchanan, Staff Attorney  
Kelsey Cato, Regulatory Analysts  
Jeff Orwig, Budget Analysts  
Zach Patnode, QA Director

**Others present:**

Ken Gordon, WSVMA  
Brittany Benesi  
Melisa Muriekes  
Robert Nicoloff  
Betty Moe  
Rachele Raj  
Elizabeth Kamaka  
Tammy Kelley

Rachel Cole  
Jennifer Martin  
Amie Farquhar- ASPCA  
Ashley Byrne, WSAVT  
Sarah Hock  
Frances Hoffman  
Wendy Murchie  
Nathan Sanchez

Notice of this meeting was published on the Veterinarian Board of Governors profession website and was sent out through the GovDelivery list server.

Open Session:

**Call to Order, Mission, and Board Roll Call – Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair**

Dr. Sanchez called the meeting to order at 9:00am

**1. Consent Agenda – Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair**

- **Approval of September 9, 2024, agenda**  
Motioned to add a section after item 11 to review emails from AAVSB, motioned seconded and passed unanimously.
- **Approval of June 3, 2023, business meeting minutes**  
Motioned, seconded, and passed unanimously.

**2. Open Forum (limited to 10 minutes)**

No comments at this time.

**3. Reports**

**3.1 Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair**

Dr. Sanchez updated the board on travel at the end of the month to the American Association of Veterinary State Boards annual meeting in San Diego with Ms. Budrow. She also stated that the subcommittee will meet after the meeting to continue planning the boards strategic meeting scheduled for February 2025.

**3.2 Amber Freeberg, Executive Director – Department of Health**

Ms. Freeberg updated the board on HELMS and the process it is in right now to become active next year. She also mentioned the Veterinary Application for Uniform Licensure Transfer (VAULT) and how the board has been interested in it but due to HELMS, this will have to be addressed at a later date. She acknowledged the credentialing staff and how having them a part of our team has improved the credentialing process. Ms. Freeberg gave an update of the current budget and how it dipped in June due to HELMS. An update was given on board recruitment and the retirement of Lisa Kelley Christensen, AAG.

**3.3 Heather Carter & Prina Patel, AAG – Department of Health**

Ms. Carter introduced herself as the chief at the AAG's office and introduced the new AAG, Prina Patel, for the Veterinary Board of Governors.

**3.4 Zach Patnode, Quality Assurance Administrator – Department of Health**

Mr. Patnode gave a presentation about credentialing changes that have happened this year, the total time to licensure and how these two things made a difference with increasing the speed of the application process.

**4. Rulemaking – Exam and Licensure Requirements and JP Exam Change**

The purpose of this rulemaking is to consider changes that ensure application and licensure requirement WACs agree and make a recommendation regarding JP exam/CEU changes to implement SSB 1724 Section 8. WAC 246-933; CR-101 WSR 24-10-093 filed April 30, 2024.

**Subcommittee Members:** Drs. Katherine Bibi, Kathryn Haigh, Aja Senestraro

4.1. The Board opened for public comment. There is no comment at this time.

4.2. The subcommittee gave an update to the board on rules progress.

Dr. Sellon moved to approve the proposed language as written. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

4.3. The Exam and Licensure Subcommittee proposed three options for their next meeting as October 8, 15 or 29, 2024 due to Dr. Bibi being absent in today's board meeting.

## 5. HB 1724 Section 8 Implementation

The board reviewed and discussed the proposed substantially equivalent states list.

Dr. Haigh moved for approval of the list for substantially equivalent states to allow licensees who have held a credential for two years in another state and have no discipline and are not under investigation to be granted their license. Motion seconded and passed unanimously.

## 6. Rulemaking Workshop-- Veterinary Telemedicine (VCPR)

The purpose of this rulemaking is to consider updates to VCPR/Telemedicine rules. WAC 246-933-200 and 246-933-010.

**Subcommittee Members:** Drs. Debra Sellon, Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Dordor Vang

6.1. The Board opened for public comment.

- **Sarah Hock:** She is representing the Washington Federation of Animal Care and Control agencies. There is concern about the current regulations that require pet owners to schedule initial appointments for veterinarians for a physical examine of their animals before receiving any treatment. According to the access of veterinary care project, The State of Washington has a veterinary care accessibility score of 44 out of 100, which is a failing grade in access to veterinary care. The proposed regulations would further enforce this requirement, that veterinarians conduct an in-person examination before offering treatment or medication for any pet they haven't previously examined. This applies even to minor and common issues, like skin problems or fleas, as well as routine on label prescriptions. These regulations prevent licensed veterinarians from exercising their professional judgment and hinder access to veterinary care for many pet owners who

don't regularly see a vet. These regulations limit access to veterinary telemedicine, a tool that proves safe and effective. This leaves vulnerable pets with few options, and increases the risk of them, not receiving the care that they need. For these reasons I urge the Board to reject the current proposal and consider changes that allow for a veterinary client patient relationship to be established using telehealth.

- **Rochelle Raj:** Represents the Seattle Veterinary Outreach which is a local nonprofit who offers low-cost veterinary care. A key aspect of our approach is remaining mobile and delivering veterinary services in multiple locations. Entrenching an annual in person examination requirement to establish a VCPR as written in the proposal sets the bar too high. Their fieldwork reveals a surge in critical and urgent pet care cases. Timely treatment could have prevented these cases from escalating, and it is our concern that, requiring a VCPR will cause pets to continue to go without care. She requests the board reject the current proposal and consider changes that will meaningfully improve access to care.
- **Brittany Benesi:** Represents ASPCA. The FDA released guidance last week, clarifying what veterinary prescribing requires an in-person VCPR and what can be left to the states to determine. We appreciate this guidance as it clarifies that state veterinary boards have the authority to allow virtual VCPR for on label prescribing. This means access to veterinary care, including for routine questions specific to an individual patient as well as standard veterinary medication, such as anti-inflammatories, allergy medications, flea and tick prevention and behavioral remedies that can be prescribed via telehealth. With this guidance in place, we respectfully urge the Board to reconsider the current proposal, and instead enable Washington veterinarians to use every tool in their toolkit.
- **Ken Gordon:** Represents the WSVMA. WSVMA urges the Board to approve this work as written and move it to the next stage of the process. Many of the issues they have brought up, the committee has already considered.

6.2. The Board reviewed correspondences.

6.3. Dr. Sanchez-Chambers gave an update from the VCPR subcommittee.

6.4. Dr. Haigh moved to approve the language in its current state. Motion seconded and passed 4 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention.

## 7. Rulemaking – Animal Healthcare Tasks

The purpose of this rulemaking is to consider updates to Animal Healthcare Tasks WAC 246-935-040, 050, 010, and WAC 246-937-010

**Subcommittee Members:** Drs Katherine Bibi, Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Ms. Kim Morgan, LVT

#### 7.1 The Board opened for public comment.

- **Melisa Muriekas:** Wanted to address the ever-growing issue of the Wisconsin loophole. Within the WAC 246-93-5060, the verbiage states 36 months of full-time experience under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. She believes a simple solution to correcting this issue would be to add that the 36 months of experience would need to be after the license has been obtained. This would still maintain license transferability into the workforce and ensure that technicians have met a standard of experience that is acceptable and falls within the lines of the current WAC regulations.
- **Brittany Benesi:** Thanked the Board for working to clarify and expand where appropriate the tasks that can be performed by licensed veterinary technicians, under both immediate as well as direct and indirect supervision of a veterinarian. We believe that empowering trained veterinary technicians to practice at the top of their skill set will not only improve access to care for pets but may work to help alleviate the veterinary workforce shortage by improving technicians' retention. We see this as one of 2 immediately available key opportunities to improving access to care in Washington. She appreciates the Board's focus and work on clarifying and expanding these animal healthcare tasks, and respectfully request your support.
- **Ken Gordon:** Agreed with Brittany Benesi. He did consult with both AVMA, and the Association of Veterinary Techs. WSVMA thinks it would be useful for some adjustment to the language, and the preamble to make it more inclusive. They think with that number of submissions regarding dental extractions needs to be more work to it. The Association of Veterinary technicians also made a comment about statistical blocks. They felt it was great that that was called out but there are other blocks that maybe the LVTs could be involved with. Also, the section on emergency care, they thought it was a little bit confusing with the language there, and they suggested breaking that language into 2 clear sentences. He noticed that controlled substances were taken out of this WAC and wants to make sure there are provisions in place to make sure that med clerks have the same background checks that other people be involved in.

#### 7.2 The board reviewed correspondences.

#### 7.3. Dr. Andrea Sanchez gave a progress update from the Animal Healthcare Tasks Subcommittee

#### 7.4 The Board reviewed and discussed draft rule language.

### 8. Animal Manipulation/Chiropractic Task Force Update

VBOG/Chiropractic Board task force to propose animal manipulation rule/law updates.

**Task Force Members:** Drs. Debra Sellon, Aja Senestraro, Katherine Bibi

8.1 Dr. Aja Senestraro gave an update from August 13, 2024, Chiropractic Task Force Meeting

8.2 The board discussed the task force progress.

## **9. Fluoroscopic X-ray Rules Advisory Committee**

The Office of Radiation Protection is considering updates related to fluoroscopic X-ray (WAC 246-225-050) to address advancements in technology. WAC 246-255-020, 030; WSR 24-03-137.

**Task Force Members:** Drs. Debra Sellon, Dr. Katherine Bibi

9.1 Dr. Debra Sellon gave an update from the July 16, 2024, RAC Meeting.

9.2 The board discussed progress with representation to the RAC.

9.3 The next RAC meeting will be September 24, 2024, from 2-4pm.

## **10. Review of ICVA Contract**

The Board reviewed and discussed the ICVA contract. Dr. Senestraro moved to sign the ICVA contract. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **11. Review of Board and Commission Delegation Form**

The board reviewed and discussed the Board and Commission Delegation form. Dr. Vang moved to sign the Board and Commission Delegation form. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **12. Colby Community College LVT Affiliation Agreement Application Packet**

The board reviewed and discussed the Colby Community College LVT Affiliation Agreement Application packet. Ms. Morgan moved to sign the Colby Community College LVT Affiliation Agreement Application packet. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## **13. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence at this time.

## **14. Reminders: Meeting Dates for 2024 & 2025**

14.1 The next board meeting will be on December 9, 2024

14.2. Board meeting dates for 2025 are as follows: February 24, June 2, September 15, December 8 with the strategic planning meeting on February 25.

## **15. Agenda Development**



The board reviewed and identified agenda items for the December 9, 2024, business meeting.

**Adjournment of Open Session**

Meeting was adjourned at 1:09pm, it was moved, seconded, and passed.

**Submitted by:**

Poppy Budrow, Program Manager  
Veterinarian Board of Governors

**Approved by:**

Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Chair  
Veterinarian Board of Governors

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