



Board of Optometry Regular Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2025

Location: Washington Department of Health – 111 Isreal Road SE • TC1 - Room 153,
Tumwater, WA 98501, and Microsoft Teams

Board Members Present: Melissa Dacumos, Optometrist, Chair
Keren Yang, Optometrist
Riya Paranthan, Optometrist, Vice-chair

Board Members Absent: Theodore Kadet, Optometrist
Palwinder Kaur, Optometrist

Staff Members Present: Amber Freeberg, Executive Director
Katie Graue, Administrative Assistant
Tara Mackemull, Program Assistant
Megan Maxey, Policy Analyst
Laura Riordan, Credentialing Supervisor
Marie Carp, Assistant Attorney General
Cynthia Jamrowski-Martinez, Quality Coordinator
Lunden Brent, Credentialing Staff
Brielle Matthes, Credentialing Staff
Margaret Pagel, Supervising Staff Attorney
Karen Stricklett, Credentialing Manager
Debra Mendoza, Quality Manager

Others Present: William Prothero, OD
Clarabelle
Dana Cocke' OD
Dr. Nate Lighthizer
Stephanie Cramer, OD
Joe Neville
Wayne Serin
Daniel Schrempp
Brent Bence
Susie Tracy
Paul Jensen

Notice of this meeting was published on the Board of Optometry profession [website](#) and was sent out through the GovDelivery listserv.

Open Session:

Call to Order and Introductions – Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

Dr. Dacumos called the meeting to order at 9:01 am. Ms. Whittaker, the new Program Manager for the Board of Optometry, introduced herself and the board held roll call.

1. Approval of agenda

The Draft March 21, 2025, meeting agenda as amended was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

2. Approval of minutes

Draft December 6, 2024, meeting minutes were moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

3. Open forum - The board opened it up for comments from the audience for ten minutes each on issues of significance to the profession.

Dr. Stephanie Cramer, OD on behalf of the WA Academy of Eyes expressed concerned about the University of Oklahoma course.

No additional comments were made.

4. Program Updates

4.1. Credentialing: Debra Mendoza, Quality Manager; Cynthia Jamrowski-Martinez, Quality Coordinator

Ms. Mendoza provided an overview of the credentialing statics report from February 11, 2025.

4.2. Budget: Juno Whittaker, Program Manager

Ms. Whittaker presented the current budget and reviewed the fund balance.

4.3. Committee Meetings Update: Amber Freeberg, Executive Director

Ms. Freeberg gave an update on the Open Public Meetings Act and what numbers constitutes a quorum, requiring a public meeting.

5. Advanced Procedures – Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

5.1. Advanced Procedures Training Program Approval Process Discussion, Dr. Lighthizer discussed and gave clarification on the Oklahoma program. The board asked Dr. Lighthizer questions concerning the quality of the program, the inclusion of human subjects in the training and skills competency.

5.1.1. Nathan Lighthizer, O.D., F.A.A.O, F.A.A.O.M.S.

Dean, NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry (NSUOCO).

5.2. Oklahoma Advanced Procedures Training Program: Motion to approve the advanced procedure was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

6. Telehealth – Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

6.1. Committee members – Dr. Yang, Dr. Kaur, Dr. Kadet, and Dr. Dacumos all expressed interest. Dr. Yang to take the lead and Dr. Kadet to be the second member.

There was a motion to establish telehealth subcommittee with Dr. Yang, and Dr. Kadet, the motion was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Dr. Yang to be chair of the telehealth committee, moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

6.2. Meeting to be scheduled at a later date. Ms. Whittaker will reach out to Dr. Yang, and Dr. Kadet to determine what dates work best.

7. Substantially Equivalent States - Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

7.1. The board reviewed, discussed, and voted on the remaining states on the proposed substantially equivalent states list. (South Dakota and Oklahoma).

There was a motion to exclude South Dakota as a substantially equivalent state, moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

There was a motion to exclude Oklahoma as a substantially equivalent state, moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

8. Executive Director Update, Amber Freeberg, Executive Director

8.1. State Budget Update

Hiring and Travel freeze issued by the governor's office. The board can still travel, but DOH Staff are not allowed to, meetings will continue to be held in Tumwater. PM is not able to go to ARBO. Ms. Freeberg also told the board about the possible furloughs for DOH Staff and possible impacts to meeting schedules and credentialing. The Senate and House budget is to be released on Monday (03/24/2025).

8.2. Medical Commission Communication Update

Ms. Freeberg reviewed the DOH letter to the Board.

9. Board Composition Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

9.1. The board held elections for the Chair and Vice-Chair.

9.2. Chair nominations were for Dr. Dacumos and Dr. Paranthan. Nominations were closed and roll call vote was called for. The board voted for Dr. Dacumos to be chair for 2025.

9.3. Dr. Paranthan volunteered to be vice-chair for another term. Nominations for Vice-Chair were closed, roll call vote was called for.

9.4. There was a motion made, seconded and passed unanimously for Dr. Dacumos to serve as chair and Dr. Paranthan to serve as Vice-Chair.

10. Board Travel Updates – Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

10.1. ARBO 2025 will be held in Minneapolis, MN from June 22 – 24, 2025.

10.2. The board reviewed, discussed and voted on conference attendance.

Dr. Paranthan expressed interest in going to ARBO, and Dr. Dacumos expressed interest as well as a back up and if her schedule permits.

Motion was made for Dr. Dacumos and Dr. Paranthan to attend ARBO 2025, moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

11. Building Agenda - Juno Whittaker, Program Manager

11.1. The board reviewed and identified agenda items for the June 13, 2025, regular business meeting.



Adjournment of Open Session - Melissa Dacumos, OD, Chair

Dr. Dacumos motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 am, moved, seconded, passed unanimously.

Submitted by:

Juno Whittaker, Program Manager
Board of Optometry

Approved by:

Melissa Dacumos, Chair
Board of Optometry

On File

SIGNATURE

DATE

On File

SIGNATURE

DATE

