



Veterinary Board of Governors Regular Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2025

**Location: Department of Health, TC2, Room 153
111 Isreal Road SE, Tumwater, WA 98501 and Microsoft Teams**

Board Members Present:

Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair
Katherine Bibi, DVM, Vice-Chair
Debra Clabough Sellon, DVM
Aja Senestraro, DVM
Kathryn Haigh, DVM
Maci Paden, DVM
Kim Morgan, LVT
Rebecca Knoke, General Member

Board Members Absent:

Dai-E Dordor Vang, DVM, MPH

Staff Members Present:

Amber Freeberg, Executive Director
Poppy Budrow, Program Manager
Katie Graue, Administrative Assistant
Tara Mackemull, Program Support
Megan Maxey, Policy Analyst
Cynthia Jamrowski-Martinez, Quality Coordinator
Lydia Koroma, Staff Attorney
Kris Holiday, Office of Health Professions Director
Lilia Lopez, AAG

Other Attendees Present:

Ken Gordon, WSVMA	Melisa Menday
Brittany Benesi, ASPCA	Jan Wolf
Amelia Reed	Dr. Able Gonzalez
Ashley Byrne, LVT	Loren Breen
David Pace	Angela Cadwell
Donna Signley	Scott Young
Lisa Sanzone	

Notice of this meeting was published on the [Veterinarian | Washington State Department of Health](#) profession website and was sent out through the GovDelivery listserv.

Opening of Public Meeting, Call to Order, Mission, and Board Roll Call – Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Chair

Call to Order at 9:01 am

1. Consent Agenda – Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Chair

- 1.1. Approval of June 2, 2025, draft meeting agenda, motion made to approve draft agenda, seconded and approved unanimously.
- 1.2. Approval of February 24, 2025, draft meeting minutes, motion made to approve draft agenda with amendments, seconded and approved unanimously.
Item 6.2 to be amended for the meeting minutes to include the following: “After much discussion the board expressed intent to re-open the rule if it was to pass.”

2. Rules Hearing – Veterinary Telemedicine (VCPR)

The purpose of this rules hearing 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

- 2.1. Dr. Sanchez-Chambers opened the hearing at 9:16am, then opened the floor to public comment.

Public Comment was given by:

Brittany Benesi, ASPCA –Ms. Benesi, opposed the proposed rule changes, citing concerns about definitions and exemptions regarding tele-advice and tele-triage. Ms. Benesi emphasized potential risk to client compliance and animal safety, particularly in determining when telehealth recommendations may cross into restricted territory. Ms. Benesi shared a personal experience involving delay of care due to limitations in rural areas. Ms. Benesi cited a 2022 study on telehealth involving veterinary care showing that there were low prescribing rates and no harm – supporting remote consultations as a safe option. Ms. Benesi also highlighted the benefits of telehealth including increased accessibility, reduced client (human and animal) stress, veterinarian safety and lower costs.

Ken Gordon, WSVMA - Mr. Gordon, expressed support for the proposed changes to the WAC, acknowledging the bill is not perfect but sees it as a step forward. Mr. Gordon notes that proposal clarifies the use of telemedicine, telehealth and teleadvice. Mr. Gordon shared that the WSVMA has worked with the board and stakeholders to improve the proposal and have incorporated feedback, emphasizing the importance of quality veterinary relationships, especially in underserved areas. Mr. Gordon views the proposed WAC changes as a necessary improvement to support long-term animal care and provides clarity on when telemedicine can be used to establish a VCPR. Mr. Gordon suggested a CE course to help clarify the new rules, to help reduce confusion within the veterinary medical community.

Dr. Able Gonzalez, Dutch Pet Health Clinical Director – Dr. Able Gonzalez spoke in support of modernizing Washington’s telemedicine VCPR rules to allow for virtual establishment of care relationships. Dr. Gonzalez emphasized that the proposed change is not about lowering standards but expanding access particularly in underserved areas. Dr. Gonzalez shared a case where a pet owner had to drive 3 1/2 hours for emergency care; telemedicine enabled treatment that significantly improved the dog's quality of life. Dr. Gonzalez highlighted that their care model focuses on chronic care behavioral concerns dermatology and provides guidance within legal limits, they do not perform surgery or handle emergencies. Dr. Gonzalez stressed that telemedicine complements in person care and fills gaps in underserved areas. Dr. Gonzalez addressed concerns about out-of-state veterinarians, affirming that safety and compliance remains a priority. Dr. Gonzalez noted regulatory barriers and asked that Washington aligns with actions and other states like California and Texas. Dr. Gonzalez ended his statement and urged the board to update rules to allow virtual VCPR.

A letter was submitted from WSVMA in support of the proposed rule. The letter was included in the agenda packet.

Board discussion included:

Dr. Aja Senestraro – Dr. Aja Senestraro opposed the rule change, but did acknowledge the effort behind the proposal and shared frustration with the slow but intentional rulemaking process. She noted that changes to veterinary practice rules in Washington State must go through a full rulemaking process, which can take 12 to 18 months, often years. She questioned the value of voting on language that she doesn't consider strong enough. Dr. Senestraro stated that if the board thinks it's OK for a doctor at a multi-doctor practice to perform telemedicine visits with an animal they have not seen, then it should also be OK for a doctor to establish VCPR via telemedicine. She pointed out that remote VCPR's were temporarily allowed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and no harm occurred. She stated that we know telemedicine is currently being performed, and the only way to ensure it is done safely is to regulate it. If it is regulated, the public will know the limitations, expectations, and how to file a complaint. We cannot regulate it the way the language is currently written. She stated that there are safeguards that are working in other states. She ended by saying, "the proposed language is not the way forward."

Dr. Debra Clabough-Sellon - Dr. Debra Clabough-Sellon expressed appreciation for the discussion and acknowledged differing opinions. She disagreed with the idea that there's no difference between a veterinarian at a multi-doctor practice sharing a VCPR and an independent veterinarian using telemedicine to establish a VCPR without an in-person exam. She supported the current recommendations as a meaningful step forward, even if not perfect, and urged the board not to delay progress. She reiterated previous board conversations, that they intend to re-open VCPR rules and continue making progress.

The board voted as follows: Approve – 7 / No – 1 / Abstained – 0

The hearing ended at 9:42 am.

3. Rules Hearing – Exam and Licensure Requirements and JP Exam Change

The purpose of this rules hearing is to consider updates to exam and licensure rules. WAC 246-933 and WAC 246-935.

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

3.1. Dr. Sanchez-Chambers opened the hearing at 9:43 am, then opened the floor to public comment.

Public comment was made by:

Ken Gordon, WSVMA – Mr. Gordon stated, "We support these changes".

The board voted as follows: Approve – 8 / No – 0 / Abstained - 0

The hearing ended at 9:50 am.

4. Open Forum (Limit to 10 minutes)

No public comment was given.

5. Reports

5.1. Dr. Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, DVM, Chair –No report was given.

5.2. Amber Freeberg, Executive Director – Ms. Freeberg gave an update on HELMS, and informed board that we are not able to pull any credentialing reports at this time but will get them credentialing stats as soon as they are available in our new program.

5.3. Poppy Budrow, Program Manager – Ms. Budrow informed the board that she will be opening recruitment for Dr. Sellon's position. Ms. Budrow informed the board that Dr. Vang will be out for a limited duration.

5.4. Lilia Lopez (in for Prina Patel), AAG – Ms. Lopez gave updates on the teeth floating case and the apprenticeship pathway case.

6. 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

- 6.1. Dr. Sanchez-Chambers opened the floor for public comment – The board reviewed the letter from Ryan Frazier, LVT, BS, MBA and Ashley Byrne, LVT. No additional comments were given.
- 6.2. Dr. Katherine Bibi gave an update from The Animal Healthcare Tasks Subcommittee. Dr. Senestraro and Dr. Haigh gave input.
- 6.3. The Board discussed and updated the draft rule language.
- 6.4. The Animal Healthcare Tasks Subcommittee scheduled the next subcommittee meeting for July 2, 2025, at 7:00 am.

7. FAQ Update – Humane Society FAQ

The purpose of this committee is to write a FAQ regarding Humane Societies, procedures, and guidelines.

Subcommittee Members: Dr. Dordor Vang, Dr. Maci Paden, Ms. Kim Morgan, LVT

- 7.1. Dr. Sanchez-Chambers opened the floor for public comment. –
Mr. Ken Gordon with WSVMA stated that the state veterinarians from the Department of Agriculture are doing a research report that may aide the board on this topic.
- 7.2. Kim Morgan from The Humane Society Subcommittee gave a progress update.
- 7.3. The Board discussed draft FAQs.
- 7.4. The Humane Society Subcommittee scheduled the next meeting for July 11, 2025, at 7:00 am. Dr. Senestraro will be filling in for Dr. Vang.

8. AAVSB VTNE Retake Policy

- 8.1. The board reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with effective dates of March 1, 2025, through February 29, 2028.
- 8.2. The board decided to table this discussion and have AAVSB come and speak at a future meeting.

9. Schedule 2026 Board Meetings

The board reviewed the following proposed dates:

February 27, 2026, June 5, 2026, September 11, 2026, and December 18, 2026.

There was a motion made to approve the listed dates above, it was seconded and approved unanimously.

10. Bylaws Review

The board reviewed the current bylaws and made recommendations.

10.1. Bylaws

10.1.1. The amendments are as follows: Amendments to bylaws in Article III, Section 3, Amendments to Article IV, Section1, and Section 1-B.

The amended bylaws will be circulated to all Board members and may be voted on at a future meeting.

11. Correspondence

The board received two letters for review. They are listed below.

11.1. Public Records Request – THIRVE.

The Board discussed the public records request. There was a motion to deny the public records request from Thrive. DOH Staff will send a letter explaining why the request was denied. Motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

11.2. Email Letter from Mr. Rybka, Attorney at Law

The Board reviewed and discussed the correspondence from Mr. Rybka. DOH Staff will send a letter stating, the board collectively stands behind the previous answers provided by Ms. Budrow and explaining that we welcome further discussion from Mr. Rybka at our September board meeting. Motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

12. Legislative Update

Ms. Budrow gave updates on:

- 12.1. 1705 Large Animal Veterinarian Recruitment this bill did pass. Ms. Budrow asked the Board if they would like to have a member of the board or DOH staff to be in attendance of the meeting. For the initial meeting of the workgroup, the Board agreed to have a DOH Staff member and one board member to attend and assess who would be best fit to attend future meetings. Motion made for Dr. Sellon, Dr. Haigh, Dr. Paden and Dr. Sanchez-Chambers as alternate to attend if schedules permit along with DOH Staff, motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
- 12.2. 5236 Greenhouse Gasses did not pass.
- 12.3. Budget request to increase in state seats at WSU Veterinary School did not pass.
- 12.4. 1904 Prohibiting the Declawing of Cats did not pass.

13. Conferences and Presentations

The board reviewed who will be attending the following conferences and updates were given on past conferences:

- 13.1. Board Basics & Beyond, Kansas City, MO: March 26-27, 2025.
Executive directors and registrars' summit: March 28-29, 2025.
Attending: Dr. Paden

Dr. Paden gave an overview of the Board Basics & Beyond conference.
- 13.2. PNW Veterinary Conference, Tacoma. Disciplinary Presentation.
Date: September 26, 2025.
Presenters: Drs. Haigh and Dr. Bibi. – Meeting Scheduled for July 28, 2025, at 7:00 am.
- 13.3. PNW Veterinary Conference, Tacoma. Panel Discussion.
Date: September 26, 2025
Panel: Dr. Sanchez, Dr. Bibi, Ms. Morgan, Tentative: Ms. Knoke and Dr. Sellon. – Meeting scheduled for August 13, 2025, at 7:00 am.
- 13.4. AAVSB Annual Meeting:
Dates: September 18-21, 2025, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Attending: Dr. Paden, Dr. Bibi

14. Reminders: Meeting Dates for 2025

- 14.1. September 15, December 8, 2025

15. Agenda Development

The board will review and identify agenda items for the September 15, 2025, business meeting.

- 15.1. Subcommittee: Animal Health Care Tasks
- 15.2. AAVSB for MOU
- 15.3. VCPR and new committee
- 15.4. Bylaws Updates
- 15.5. 1705 Large Animal Veterinarian Recruitment
- 15.6. AAVSB information for the annual meeting – does anything need to be voted on?
- 15.7. Disciplinary efficiency standardization matrix development

Open Session Meeting Adjournment at 1:34 pm.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

Submitted by:

Poppy Budrow, Program Manager
Veterinary Board of Governors

Approved by:

Andrea Sanchez-Chambers, Chair
Veterinary Board of Governors

On file

SIGNATURE

DATE

On file

SIGNATURE

DATE