

ALABAMA BOARD OF OPTOMETRY
April 27, 2020
Teleconference as Allowed by Governor's Proclamation of March 18, 2020

Members present:

Bill Tillman, O.D.	Norman Johnson, O.D.
Doug Clark, O.D.	Tim Nichols, O.D.
Ashley Williams, O.D.	Rob Svensen, O.D.
	Mazen Sahawneh, O.D.

Members absent:

None

Others present:

Fred Wallace, O.D., Executive Director
Two members of the public joined the teleconference

The Alabama Board of Optometry is statutorily created by the Alabama legislature and delegated with the authority to regulate the optometry profession in the interest of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public. With necessary oversight by the government, the board enforces standards and criteria set forth in statute and adds specificity through the promulgation of regulations. An administrative regulatory system provides consumers with an assurance of the qualifications of licensees along with a means of enforcement for the benefit of the public.

The board met via teleconference at 3:00 PM on April 27, 2020, as allowed by Governor Ivey's proclamation of March 18, 2020. Prior notice of this special meeting was given in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. All persons participating in the meeting could hear one another at the same time. President Tillman called roll, noted that all members were present, and called the meeting of the Alabama Board of Optometry to order. He reminded the board members that all deliberations or actions taken during the meeting would be limited to matters within the board's statutory authority necessary to respond to COVID-19 or necessary to perform essential minimum functions of the board.

A discussion was held concerning the expiration of mandates from the Governor and the State Health Officer postponing routine care that expire on April 30, 2020. It was noted that the Governor has planned an announcement for April 28, 2020 that may allow some or all optometry office clinics to resume routine eye and vision care services. A motion to publish an advisory concerning safely returning to these clinical functions was made by Dr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Nichols. President Tillman proceeded with a roll call vote and received unanimous approval of the motion by those present. The Executive Director was instructed to publish the advisory on the board's website and email such information to licensees.

A discussion was held concerning the cancelled Annual Meeting for Nominees to be presented to the governor for appointment to the board. A motion to reschedule the meeting on August 8, 2020, (exact time and location to be determined by the Executive Director) was made by Dr. Sahawneh, seconded by Dr. Svensen. President Tillman proceeded with a roll call vote and received unanimous approval of the motion by those present. The Executive Director was instructed to restart the preparations for the meeting.

The Executive Director reported that he has explored the possibility of holding the Written Examination for Licensure (presently scheduled for July 18, 2020 at the UAB School of Optometry) online through existing internet examination administration systems. A motion was made by Dr. Nichols and seconded by Dr. Clark to authorize the Executive Director to proceed with all necessary actions and expenditures to implement such systems for applicants who are unable to gather for the customary in-person administration. President Tillman proceeded with a roll call vote and received unanimous approval of the motion by those present.

President Tillman reminded the Executive Director that, per Governor Ivey's proclamation, a summary recounting these deliberations must be posted on the board's website within twelve (12) hours.

There being no further business the special meeting was adjourned at 3:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Wallace, O. D.
Executive Director

Bill Tillman, O.D.
President