



STATE OF ARIZONA
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGIST EXAMINERS
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Executive Director

Complaint Screening Committee REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

January 19, 2022

Held via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular session of the Arizona Board of Psychologist Examiners Complaint Screening Committee was called to order by Dr. Meier at 8:31 a.m. on January 19, 2022. Two executive sessions were held.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present

Matthew A. Meier, Psy.D. – Chair
Diana Davis-Wilson, DBH, BCBA

Committee Members Absent

Tamara Shreeve, MPA

Attorney General's Office

Jeanne Galvin, Assistant Attorney General

Staff Present

Heidi Herbst Paakkonen, Executive Director
Jennifer Michaelson, Deputy Director

3. CASE DISCUSSION/DECISION

a. Suzana Adams, Psy.D., Complaint No. 22-06

Dr. Meier summarized the case, including salient points of the investigation and pertinent records. The Complainant was present, made a statement, and answered questions from the Committee. Dr. Adams and her attorney, Flynn Carey, were also present.

At 8:46 a.m., Dr. Davis-Wilson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Meier, to go into Executive Session to receive confidential legal advice. Open session reconvened at 8:55 a.m.

Upon reconvening in open session, the Complainant answered additional questions from the Committee. Dr. Adams' attorney made a statement to the Committee regarding their discussion to possibly table the review of the case today.

It was the consensus of the Committee to table the matter to obtain the police report in this matter and to obtain additional information from the complainant. The Committee noted that the case will be reviewed at a later meeting date upon Board staff's receipt of this information.

b. Karen Hawk, Psy.D., Complaint No. 22-09

Dr. Meier summarized the case, including salient points of the investigation and pertinent records. The Complainant was present, made a statement, and answered questions from the Committee. Dr. Hawk and her attorney, Mandi Karvis, Esq., participated, made a statement and answered questions from the Committee.

At 9:27 a.m., Dr. Meier made a motion, seconded by Dr. Davis-Wilson, to go into Executive Session to receive confidential legal advice. Open session reconvened at 9:36 a.m.

Upon reconvening in open session, Dr. Hawk answered additional questions from the Committee. The Complainant provided a subsequent statement to the Committee.

The Committee expressed concern with several aspects of the case to include that Dr. Hawk did not obtain the parents written consent to provide testimony for their family court hearing after receiving a subpoena for her testimony from the mother's attorney; Dr. Hawk appeared to send email correspondence to the parents regarding the client's confidential treatment using an unsecure email account and did not have policies and procedures in place to protect the client's confidential health information; and various aspects related to the client's treatment plan to include that it was not clear if both parents signed the treatment plan or if they were made aware of the treatment goals to be discussed in therapy.

After deliberation, Dr. Meier made a motion, seconded by Dr. Davis-Wilson, to forward Complaint No. 22-09 to the Board for further review regarding potential violations of A.R.S. § 32-2061(16)(h), failing or refusing to maintain and retain adequate business, financial or professional records pertaining to the psychological services provided to a client or patient; A.R.S. §32-2061(16)(r), failing to obtain a client's or patient's informed and written consent to release personal or otherwise confidential information to another party unless the release is otherwise authorized by law; and A.R.S. § 32-2061(16)(dd), violating an ethical standard adopted by the Board as it pertains to sections 4.01 (Maintaining Confidentiality), 4.02 (Discussing the Limits of Confidentiality), and 4.05 (Disclosures), and 6.01 (Documentation of Professional and Scientific Work and Maintenance of Records). The motion carried unanimously (2-0), by a voice vote.

The Committee directed Board staff in the interim to seek the consultation of a forensic psychologist in this case regarding standards of practice regarding release of information and responding to subpoenas for family court matters. The Committee discussed that the selected psychologist will submit a report of their findings and provide testimony related to their findings at a future Board meeting date when this case is reviewed.

c. Janet Ranney, Ph.D., Complaint No. 22-10

Dr. Davis-Wilson summarized the case, including salient points of the investigation and pertinent records. The Complainant was not present. Dr. Ranney and her attorney, Charles Hover, Esq., participated, made a statement and answered questions from the Committee.

After deliberation, Dr. Davis-Wilson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Meier, to dismiss this matter, as there are no violations of rule or statute. The motion carried unanimously (2-0), by a voice vote.

d. Alicia Abby Garcia, Ph.D., Complaint No. 22-08

Dr. Davis-Wilson summarized the case, including salient points of the investigation and pertinent records.

The Committee took a comfort break at 10:29 a.m. and resumed at 10:34 a.m.

The Complainant was present, made a statement, and answered questions from the Committee. Dr. Garcia and her attorney, Sara Stark, Esq., participated, made a statement and answered questions from the Committee.

The Committee expressed concern that it was outside of Dr. Garcia's scope to provide recommendations in her 2020 letter related to custody.

After deliberation, Dr. Meier made a motion, seconded by Dr. Davis-Wilson, to forward Complaint No. 22-08 to the Board for further review regarding potential violations of A.R.S. § 32-2061(16)(g), engaging or offering to engage as a psychologist in activities not congruent with the psychologist's professional education, training and experience; A.R.S. § 32-206(16)(o), providing services that are unnecessary or unsafe or otherwise engaging in activities as a psychologist that are unprofessional by current standards of practice; and A.R.S. § 32-2061(16)(dd), violating an ethical standard adopted by the Board as it pertains to sections 2.01 (Boundaries of Competence), 3.05 (Multiple Relationships), and 9.01 (Bases for Assessment) of the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. The motion carried unanimously (2-0), by a voice vote.

The Committee directed Board staff to obtain the transcript for Dr. Garcia's testimony in the Complainant's family court hearing before scheduling the case for the Board's review.

e. Michael Hofrath, Ph.D., Complaint No. T-22-02

Dr. Davis-Wilson summarized the case, including salient points of the investigation and pertinent records. The Complainant was not present. The Respondent and his attorney, Sara Stark, Esq., participated, made a statement, and answered questions from the Committee.

After deliberation, Dr. Meier made a motion, seconded by Dr. Davis-Wilson to dismiss this matter, as there are no violations of rule or statute. The motion carried unanimously (2-0), by a voice vote.

4. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Dr. Davis-Wilson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Meier, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried (2-0) and the meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.