



May 06, 2021

Virtual Special Meeting of LPA Membership

EC Members Virtual Sign-in:

Erin Reuther, PhD

Christopher Parkinson, PhD

Matthew Holcomb, PhD

Paula Zeanah, PhD

Amanda Raines, PhD

Lucinda DeGrange, PhD

Melissa Kunimatsu, PhD

W Alan Coulter, PhD

Richard Niolon, PhD

Randall Lemoine, PhD

ValaRay J Irvin, PhD

The special meeting of LPA membership was called to order by Dr. Erin Reuther at 6:37pm. Dr. Reuther stated that according to our Bylaws only those issues/concerns made or reported to her in advanced would be allowed to be presented during the recorded meeting. She then explained the process of the meeting order; which was, members could post questions in the private 'chat box,' or direct questions separately to her or Dr. Matt Holcomb. Only members of LPA would participate in any voting. Members would be allowed two-minutes each to speak, but would be allowed to speak multiple times. And, finally, proxy voting would not be allowed as it goes against our "rules or order."

Dr. Reuther then read the *purpose of LPA which is "to support and advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting health, education, and human welfare."* She then proceeded to introduce agenda item one which was HB 477, a "fee" only bill which had been a collaboration with LPA, LSBEP, and a number of school psychologists over an 18mons. Period! Dr. Reuther stated that even before the bill went to the legislative branch, the sponsor had requested LPA support. The Executive Council (EC) of LPA had 'felt strongly that an independent board was essential to protecting psychology' and psychologists alike, and thus, was in support of the bill. Again, she reminded the membership that, a fee only bill did not interfere with the "scope of practice." At 6:51 pm Dr. Reuther opened the floor for comments, responses, questions and clarifications.

The first comment came from Dr. Kevin Bianchini who spoke against the bill. Dr. Bianchini stated the HB 477 was simply a distraction from the 'real' problem(s) of the LSBEP, i.e., the financial difficulties of the board, which reflect the operations of the board.

Dr. Marc Zimmermann next spoke against the bill; stating that there was nothing in the bill that could not be changed through "rule changes." Dr. Reuther then commented that the sponsor of the bill had 'promised' that the bill would not move forward IF "scope of practice" came up on the floor. Dr.

Zimmermann stated he didn't trust this. Dr. Bryan Gros then asked "if fees could be increased without a bill?" Dr. Wes Brockhoeff began by thanking the EC for addressing the opposition among members and commenting about the importance of the issues as represented by the sheer number of members in attendance, which at that point there were 92 members logged on! Dr. Brockhoeff commented on pros and cons from all of the speakers before him, but generally, was against the bill. Dr. Darlyne Nemeth next spoke against the bill with particular dis-interests in the call for assistants to be charged a fee and further questioning who would be responsible for paying such fees? Dr. Nemeth also commented that she had researched several other near-by state organizations and none of them charged fees for their assistants! She, too, felt the board (LSBEP) needed restructuring, she suggested by an "IO psychologist." Dr. Nemeth was interrupted because she went over her two-minutes.

After Dr. Nemeth, Dr. Jesse Lambert spoke in support of the bill. He also mentioned that as a past board member of LSBEP people really didn't know or appreciate the hard work of the board and the fact that they have always worked with inadequate resources! Dr. Koren Boggs agreed with Dr. Lambert's comment regarding the lack of resources the board has worked with over the years. She also cautioned members to compare like kind with like kind; not just similar too. She continued to comment that, "Texas, as an example, are now in a situation where psychologists there will not be able to self-regulate" because of restructuring of their board. In addition, she suggested that any member interested in "reforming" the board should get involved in the board! Dr. VanGeffen spoke on how the board establish fees and whether increasing members fees could be one way of assisting LSBEP. She also reminded members that "according to license and administrative rule," the board sets fees every July. Dr. Chris next spoke in support of the bill stating that not supporting it could, possibly, risk the board dissolving; a concern several members had spoken of. Dr. Clifton Mixon shared his support of the bill however, he spoke of the disturbing chatter he had recently observed on the list serv. He shared his concerns about both the "solvency" of the board, as well as those who represent our field.

Several other members were able to make comments regarding support of the bill in spite of it being limited in correcting, what many viewed as, the long-term, financial difficulties of the board; and members voiced appreciation for the collaboration between members of LPA, and LSBEP on drafting the bill. Some of these members were: Drs. Stephanie Grant, Amanda Raines, Paula Zeanah, Kim Sherman, Lauren Rasmussen, Kristin Fitch, Beeca Wallace, and Laura Brown. Dr. Julie Nelson, who was against the bill, shared her three major reasons as; 1. The board should not be making laws, 2. Fear of the board going under financially, and 3. Another option could be the board raising fees versus putting it into law. After an additional discussion about whether the sponsor would or would not pull the bill if any attempts to change it from the floor was held, a motion to "vote to support HB 477 was made by Dr. Koren Boggs. Question was called by Dr. Alan Coulter and he commented that LA School Psychologists were in favor of supporting the bill. Dr. Reuther than administered the anonymous, but not confidential process of voting. The results of the vote yielded 72% of the membership in favor; 22% opposed; 6% abstained. *The motion passed.*

Because the meeting ran shortly over the scheduled time, Dr. Reuther stated that the second agenda item for tonight would be addressed at the Annual Spring conference during the Business Meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

Submitted by
Dr. ValaRay J Irvin
Secretary

