

BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR ALCOHOL, DRUG AND GAMBLING COUNSELORS

Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 21, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

Via Zoom and In-Person at 4600 Kietzke Lane B-115, Reno, NV 89502

Board Members in attendance: Milagros Severin, Board President; Denise Everett, Vice President; Dr. Rory Reid, Secretary/Treasurer; Erin Warrell; Jeff Clark; Dr. Kobie West

Board Staff: Agata Gawronski, Executive Director; Paula Hlade, Licensing Specialist; Colleen Platt, Legal Counsel

Public attendees: Monica Benway, Nikki Haag, Jeanyne Ward CASAT, Adrienne Renwick, David Robeck, Vikki Erickson, Ted Hartwell, Kim Garcia, Jaime Clemens, Terra Hamblin, Kaitlyn Witt, Jennifer Ross

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **9:00 a.m.** by Board President, Milagros Severin-Ruiz.

2. Public Comment

Public comment was opened.

David Robeck provided public comment in support of Monica Benway who is listed on Agenda Item 5.

No actionable public comment was provided at this time.

3. Election of Officers — *For Possible Action*

The Board proceeded with election of officers.

Summary:

- Nominations were opened for officer positions.
- Discussion occurred regarding willingness and availability of members to serve.
- Standard voting procedure was followed.

Action Taken:

- Milagros Severin-Ruiz was **nominated** by Dr. West and **second** was received by Denise Everett. Milagros was re-elected as Board President by unanimous vote.
 - Denise Everett stated she was willing to remain in the position as Vice President, which was **seconded** by Erin Warrell. It passed by unanimous vote.
 - Dr. Reid agreed he is willing to remain as Secretary/Treasurer and Erin Warrell **seconded** the motion. He was re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer by unanimous vote.
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4. Approval of Minutes from August 15, 2025 — *For Possible Action*

The Board reviewed the draft minutes and Denise Everett noted a discrepancy in her Board position, which is Vice President, not Secretary.

Action Taken:

- Milagros made a **motion** to approve the minutes with the changes to Denise Everett's title.
 - **Second** received by Denise.
 - **Approved unanimously.**
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5. Discussion and possible approval of request by Monica Benway, pursuant to NAC 641C.220, to sit for an additional examination — *For Possible Action*

The Board reviewed Ms. Benway's request to sit for the exam after six failed attempts.

Summary:

- Discussion referenced NAC 641C.220 requirements and prior examination attempts.
- The Board clarified the standards for granting additional attempts.
- Discussion regarding options for Ms. Benway including taking the ADC exam instead of AADC exam

Action Taken:

- Dr. Reid makes a **motion** to approve the request.
 - Denise **Seconded** the motion.
 - **Motion passed unanimously.**
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6. Discussion of Governor Joe Lombardo’s September 24, 2025, letter regarding the Board’s noncompliance with an annual audit and lack of response to the Department of Business and Industry, including direction and approval of the Board’s remedial actions to bring the Board into compliance— *For Possible Action*

The Board discussed the Governor’s letter concerning:

- Annual audit requirements
- The Board’s response to the Department of Business and Industry
- Required corrective actions

Summary of Discussion:

- President Milagros Severin-Ruiz read the letter from the Governor’s Office for the record and apologized for omitting Nikki Haag, Deputy Director of Business & Industry from the Board’s response.
- The Executive Director gave an update on the audit, which is still in the process.
- Nikki Haag stated she was in attendance at the request of the Governor’s Office and clarified that communication has been with the Board President since this is who the Governor appointed. When asked for update regarding the Board’s compliance status, she stated if the Board followed the directives outlined in the letter and submitted the audit, they would be in full compliance. Ms. Haag was asked about the need to have a Board meeting to approve the minutes from this meeting and she stated she was in attendance so that this directive could be met without having a separate meeting to approve the minutes.
- The Executive Director noted that the audit required by the state has cost \$26,645, and that despite the intended spirit of the recent legislative proposals, this does not seem to be reducing costs or redundancy. The Executive Director also discussed the fall-out from the last legislative session, and the multiple attempts for clarification on what was needed and the lack of response from Ms. Haag.
- Board members discussed steps needed to achieve audit compliance and prevent recurrence.
- Dialogue centered on timelines, documentation, and resource availability.

Action Taken:

- The Board was in agreement that the Executive Director will continue to work with the CPA to provide the audit and will request an extension if the audit will not be on time.
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7. Discussion whether the Board wants to appointment Paula Lopez Hlade as either Interim Executive Director or permanent Executive Director or establish a process to employ the new Executive Director — *For Possible Action*

The Board discussed options for filling the Executive Director role following retirement of the current ED.

Summary:

- Board members thanked and congratulated Agata Gawronski on her 15 years of service with the Board.
- The Board reviewed the needs of the Board office and discussed both the positions of E.D. and the Licensing Specialist which would be vacated by the appointment of Paula.
- Discussion occurred regarding interim coverage versus immediate appointment.
- Consideration was given to workload, training, continuity, and statewide operations.

Action Taken:

- Milagros made a **motion** to appoint Paula as the Interim Director for no longer than six months
 - Jeff Clark **seconded** the motion
 - The Board approved the motion unanimously
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8. Discussion and review of the Board's FY 2026 Budget, including, without limitation, possible revisions to the Budget as a result of Executive Director Agata Gawronski's retirement from the Board such as reduction of staff and payout of sick and vacation leave pursuant to Board policy.— *For Possible Action*

The Board reviewed the fiscal year 2026 budget.

Summary:

- Discussion included staffing changes due to the Executive Director's retirement.
- Consideration of projected payout of leave balances per Board policy.
- The Board reviewed revenue projections, operating expenses, and potential cost-saving adjustments.

Action Taken:

- Dr. Reid made a **motion** to approve a salary of \$100,000 for Paula as Interim Executive Director for no more than six months

- Milagros Severin-Ruiz **seconded** the motion
 - Board approved the motion unanimously
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9. Presentation and Discussion: CASAT Problem Gambling Workforce Survey — *For Possible Action*

CASAT representatives provided an overview of the problem gambling workforce data.

Summary:

- Presentation included Problem Gambling Counselor workforce trends, shortages, and practitioner needs. Presentation provided data on nation-wide similarities and differences with regard to credentialing PG Counselors. CASAT is proposing alternative options, such as endorsements for current CADC/LADC, for those seeking to practice problem gambling counseling.
- Board members asked questions regarding provider availability and credential pathways.
- The Board discussed implications for licensing and future planning.

Action Taken:

- No formal action required; discussion only unless otherwise directed.
 - Presentation accepted.
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10. Public Comment

Public comment was opened again.

Paula read public comment submitted by Vikki Erickson, LCSW, Executive Director congratulating Agata on her service and retirement and Paula on her appointment as Interim E.D.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately **11:40am**.