

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS

F I N A L M I N U T E S

MEETING OF:

**STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORKERS,
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS,
AND PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS**

TIME: 11:51 A.M.

Held at
PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE
2525 North 7th Street
CoPA HUB, Eaton Conference Room
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110
as well as
VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

January 6, 2026

State Board of Social Workers,
Marriage and Family Therapists,
and Professional Counselors
January 6, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS:

Michelle Santiago, Psy.D., NCC, CCMHC, LPC, Chair
Kimberly Early, LSW, Vice Chair - Absent
Nichole Wray Maloney, Division Chief, Health
Licensing Division on behalf of Arion R. Claggett,
Acting Commissioner, Bureau of Professional and
Occupational Affairs
Joe Behun, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, ACS
Farida E. Boyer, MS, LMFT, AS
Eric DeCriscio, MA, LPC, ACS- Absent
Andy Gross, LCSW, MSS
Tiffany Welch, DSW, MSW, LSW - Absent
Johnnie Geathers, MSW, LSW

BUREAU PERSONNEL:

Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel
Patrick M. Greene, Esquire, Board Prosecution Liaison
Adrianne R. McClendon, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Berk V. Demiral, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Jason Anderson, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Willow Marsh, Legislative Aide, Department of State
Thomas Miller, Board Administrator
Holly Hoffman, Law Clerk, Department of State
CJ Restemayer, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Nicholas Kahler, Law Clerk, Department of State Legal
Office
Ronald Rouse, Esquire, PA Office of General Counsel
Andrew LaFratte, MPA, Deputy Policy Director, Office
of Policy, Department of State
Thomas Leech II, Esquire, Administrative Officer
Todd Kriner, Esquire, Senior Prosecutor-In-Charge
Liliana Fisher, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Molly Smith, Commissioner Liaison, Bureau of
Professional and Occupational Affairs
Caitlin Ostrowski, Education Certification Evaluator

ALSO PRESENT:

Kathleen Szallar, Senior Business Consultant,
Highmark Inc.
Jennifer Johnson, Project Manager, Highmark Inc.

State Board of Social Workers,
Marriage and Family Therapists,
and Professional Counselors
January 6, 2026

ALSO PRESENT: (cont.)

Alyson Kirleis, Esquire, Marshall Dennehey
Jenna DuBose, Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Intern, Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania
Brittani Berkeley, LMSW, Investigator, US Federal
Public Defender
Padmini Kunnathully, Applicant
Kira Dawson, Applicant
Megan
Erin Badstuebner, Sargent's Court Reporting Service,
Inc.

1 ***

2 State Board of Social Workers,
3 Marriage and Family Therapists
4 and Professional Counselors

5 January 6, 2026

6 ***

7 [Pursuant to Section 708(a)(5) of the Sunshine Act,
8 at 8:45 a.m., the Board entered into Executive
9 Session with Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel,
10 for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial
11 deliberations on a number of matters currently
12 pending before the Board and to receive the advice of
13 counsel. The Board entered into public session at
14 11:38 a.m.]

15 ***

16 The regularly scheduled meeting of the State
17 Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family
18 Therapists, and Professional Counselors was held on
19 Tuesday, January 6, 2026. Michelle Santiago, Psy.D.,
20 NCC, CCMHC, LPC, Chair called the meeting to order at
21 11:51 a.m.

22 ***

23 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, informed
24 everyone that the meeting was being recorded, and
25 those who continued to participate were giving their

1 consent to be recorded. She stated any AI programs
2 that are disruptive to the meeting would be removed.

3 Ms. Tully noted the Board entered into Executive
4 Session for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial
5 deliberations and to receive the advice of counsel on
6 the matters upon which the Board will later vote.]

7 ***

8 Roll Call of Board Members/Introduction of Attendees
9 [Thomas Miller, Board Administrator, provided a roll
10 call of Board members and introduction of attendees.
11 A quorum of Board members was present.]

12 ***

13 Approval of Minutes

14 MS. TULLY:

15 I believe we can move on to Item 1, the
16 Approval of the Draft Minutes.

17 Based upon Executive Session
18 deliberations, I believe our Chairwoman
19 would entertain a motion to accept the
20 Minutes as drafted for the November 25,
21 2025 meeting.

22 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

23 I'll entertain that motion.

24 DR. BEHUN:

25 So moved, Behun.

1 MS. BOYER:

2 Boyer, second.

3

4 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

5 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Geathers, aye;

6 Gross, aye.

7 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
8 voting on the motion.]

9

10 Report of the Prosecutorial Division - Annual Review

11 [Patrick M. Greene, Esquire, Board Prosecution

12 Liaison, reported the annual numbers had recently

13 become available. A report would be presented at the

14 next Board meeting.]

15

16 [Adrianne R. McClendon, Esquire, Board Prosecutor,

17 presented the Consent Agreement for Item No. 2, Case

18 No. 24-69-007948. Alyson Kirleis, Esquire, Marshall

19 Dennehey, provided a mitigating statement for the

20 Respondent.]

21

22 [Berk V. Demiral, Esquire, Board Prosecutor,

23 presented the Consent Agreement for Item No. 3, Case

24 No. 22-69-013250.]

25

1 [Patrick M. Greene, Esquire, Board Prosecution
2 Liaison, presented the Consent Agreement for Item No.
3 4, Case No. 20-69-012766.]

4 ***

5 [CJ Restemayer, Esquire, Board Prosecutor presented
6 the Consent Agreements for Item No. 5, Case No. 24-
7 69-011272.]

8 ***

9 MS. TULLY:

10 Based upon the presentations of
11 Prosecution, did any member of the
12 Board wish to reenter Executive Session
13 deliberations to further deliberate on
14 the Consent Agreements presented at
15 Items 2 through 5 of your Agenda?

16 All right, Seeing none, based
17 upon the Executive Session
18 deliberations, I believe our Chairwoman
19 would entertain a motion to reject the
20 Consent Agreement offered at Item 2,
21 Case 24-69-007948, as too lenient.

22 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

23 I will entertain that motion.

24 DR. BEHUN:

25 So moved, Behun.

1 MS. BOYER:

2 Second, Boyer.

3

4 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

5 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

6 Geathers, aye.

7 [The motion carried unanimously.]

8

9 MS. TULLY:

10 For Items 3 through 5, I believe, based
11 upon the Executive Session
12 deliberations, our Chairwoman would
13 entertain a motion to accept and adopt
14 the Consent Agreements presented at
15 Case No. 22-69-013250, Case No. 20-69-
16 012766, and Case No. 24-69-0011272.

17 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

18 I will entertain those motions.

19 DR. BEHUN:

20 So moved, Behun.

21 MS. BOYER:

22 Boyer, second.

23

24 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

25 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

1 Geathers, aye.

2 [The motion carried unanimously. The Respondents are
3 as follows: Item No. 3, Case No. 22-69-013250, Linda
4 Susan Cronin, LCSW; Item No. 4, Case No. 20-69-
5 012766, Brent Harlan Olean, LCSW; and Item No. 5,
6 Case No. 24-69-011272, Rachel Lynn Witkowski, L.P.C.]

7 ***

8 Report of Board Counsel - Proposed Adjudications and
9 Orders

10 MS. TULLY:

11 Item 6 on the Agenda, based upon the
12 Executive Session deliberations, I
13 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
14 a motion in the matter of Kelly Dunbar
15 Davison, Case No. 25-69-005789, to
16 authorize Counsel to complete a
17 Memorandum Order granting license.

18 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

19 I will entertain that motion.

20 DR. BEHUN:

21 So moved, Behun.

22 MS. BOYER:

23 Boyer, second.

24

25 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

1 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
2 Geathers, aye.

3 [The motion carried unanimously.]

4 ***

5 Regulatory Report

6 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the
7 Regulatory Status Report provided by Jacqueline
8 Wolfgang, Esquire, Regulatory Counsel. She stated
9 there were no significant changes since the November
10 2025 meeting.]

11 ***

12 Legislative Report

13 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, provided an
14 updated legislative report to the Board. She
15 completed a review on January 3, 2026, of the status
16 of all Board's related bills. She reported House
17 Bill 1853 concerning recreational therapy was
18 referred to the Professional Licensure Committee on
19 September 9, 2025. House Bill 1993 concerning the
20 use of AI in mental health care was referred to the
21 Professional Licensure Committee on October 24, 2025.
22 House Bill 2100 concerning chatbots and AI use by
23 mental health therapists was referred to the
24 Professional Licensure Committee on December 12,
25 2025.]

Report of Board Chair - No report.

Report of Commissioner - No report.

Report of Board Administrator - No report.

Report of Committees - No report.

Applications

MS. TULLY:

Starting with Item 11, based upon the
Executive Session deliberations, I
believe our Chairwoman would entertain
a motion to grant the Associate
Professional Counselor Application of
Latina Dorsey.

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

I will entertain that motion.

DR. BEHUN:

So moved, Behun.

MS. BOYER:

Second, Boyer.

Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

1 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
2 Geathers, aye.

3 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
4 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

5 ***

6 MS. TULLY:

7 Item 12 on the Agenda, based upon the
8 Executive Session deliberations, I
9 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
10 a motion to provisionally deny the
11 Associate Professional Counselor
12 Application of Lisa Philipkosky.

13 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

14 Can I have a motion, please?

15 DR. BEHUN:

16 So moved, Behun.

17 MS. BOYER:

18 Boyer, second.

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20 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;
21 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
22 Geathers, aye.

23 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
24 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

25 ***

1 MS. TULLY:

2 Item 13, based upon the Executive
3 Session deliberations, I believe our
4 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
5 grant the Application to practice as a
6 Clinical Social Worker of Margaret
7 McElwain.

8 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

9 Could I have a motion, please?

10 DR. BEHUN:

11 So moved, Behun.

12 MS. BOYER:

13 Boyer, second.

14

15 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

16 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

17 Geathers, aye.

18 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
19 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

20 ***

21 MS. TULLY:

22 Item 14, based upon the Executive
23 Session Deliberations, I believe our
24 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
25 grant the Reconsideration of Breeanne

1 Montoya on her Application for
2 Professional Counselor, which would
3 rescind the provisional denial
4 previously issued by this Board.

5 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

6 I will entertain that motion.

7 DR. BEHUN:

8 So moved, Behun.

9 MS. BOYER:

10 Second, Boyer.

11

12 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

13 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

14 Geathers, aye.

15 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
16 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

17 ***

18 MS. TULLY:

19 Item 15, based upon the Executive
20 Session deliberations, I believe our
21 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
22 deny the Reconsideration of Michelle
23 Bonilla on her Application for
24 licensure as a Professional Counselor.
25 The provisional denial previously

1 issued by the Board would stand.

2 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

3 Could I have a motion, please?

4 DR. BEHUN:

5 So moved, Behun.

6 MS. BOYER:

7 Boyer, second.

8

9 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

10 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

11 Geathers, aye.

12 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
13 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

14 ***

15 MS. TULLY:

16 Item 16, based upon the Executive
17 Session deliberations, I believe our
18 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
19 issue a provisional denial on the
20 Application to be licensed as a
21 Professional Counselor of Mahin Khader-
22 Namoff. This would rescind the
23 provisional license that was previously
24 voted on by the Board.

25 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

1 Could I have a motion, please?

2 DR. BEHUN:

3 So moved, Behun.

4 MS. BOYER:

5 Boyer, second.

6

7 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

8 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

9 Geathers, aye.

10 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
11 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

12 ***

13 MS. TULLY:

14 Item 17, based upon the Executive
15 Session deliberations, I believe our
16 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
17 grant the Reconsideration of Tiffany
18 Lara on her Application to practice as
19 an Associate Professional Counselor.
20 This would rescind the provisional
21 denial previously issued on this
22 matter.

23 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

24 Could I have a motion, please?

25 DR. BEHUN:

1 So moved, Behun.

2 MS. BOYER:

3 Boyer, second.

4

5 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

6 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

7 Geathers, aye.

8 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
9 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

10 ***

11 MS. TULLY:

12 Moving on to Item 18, based upon the
13 Executive Session deliberations, I
14 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
15 a motion to provisionally deny the
16 Application of Kira Dawson to practice
17 as a Professional Counselor.

18 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

19 Could I have a motion, please?

20 DR. BEHUN:

21 So moved, Behun.

22 MS. BOYER:

23 Second, Boyer.

24

25 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

1 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
2 Geathers, aye.

3 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
4 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

5 ***

6 MS. TULLY:

7 Based upon the Executive Session
8 deliberations, I believe our Chairwoman
9 would entertain a motion to grant the
10 Applications of Denise Van Der Wel and
11 Desiree Vanderlick, Items 19 and 20 of
12 our Agenda, to practice as a
13 Professional Counselor.

14 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

15 Could I have a motion, please?

16 DR. BEHUN:

17 So moved, Behun.

18 MS. BOYER:

19 Second, Boyer.

20
21 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;
22 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
23 Geathers, aye.

24 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
25 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

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MS. TULLY:

Item 21, based upon the Executive
Session deliberations, I believe our
Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
provisionally deny the Application of
Janae Danridge to practice as a
Professional Counselor.

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

Could I have a motion, please?

DR. BEHUN:

So moved, Behun.

MS. BOYER:

Second, Boyer.

Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;
Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
Geathers, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

MS. TULLY:

Item 22, based upon the Executive
Session deliberations, I believe our
Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
provisionally deny the Application of

1 Padmini Kunnathully to practice as a
2 Professional Counselor.

3 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

4 I will entertain that motion. Could I
5 have a motion, please?

6 DR. BEHUN:

7 So moved, Behun.

8 MS. BOYER:

9 Second, Boyer.

10

11 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

12 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

13 Geathers, aye.

14 [The motion carried unanimously.]

15 ***

16 MS. TULLY:

17 Item 23, based upon the Executive
18 Session deliberations, I believe our
19 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
20 provisionally deny the Application of
21 Jaqueline Concepcion to practice as a
22 Professional Counselor.

23 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

24 Could I have a motion, please?

25 DR. BEHUN:

1 So moved, Behun.

2 MS. BOYER:

3 Second, Boyer.

4

5 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

6 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

7 Geathers, aye.

8 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
9 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

10 ***

11 MS. TULLY:

12 The Board is going to be tabling the
13 Applications at Items 24, 25, and 32 to
14 get additional information.

15 Moving onto Item 26, based upon
16 the Executive Session deliberations, I
17 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
18 a motion to grant the Application of
19 Glenda Hayden to practice as a Clinical
20 Social Worker under Act 41.

21 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

22 Could I have a motion, please?

23 DR. BEHUN:

24 So moved, Behun.

25 MS. BOYER:

1 Second, Boyer.

2

3 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

4 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

5 Geathers, aye.

6 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
7 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

8 ***

9 MS. TULLY:

10 Item 27, based upon the Executive
11 Session deliberations, I believe our
12 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
13 provisionally deny the Application of
14 Jennifer Gilbert to practice as a
15 Marriage and Family Therapist.

16 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

17 Could I have a motion, please?

18 DR. BEHUN:

19 So moved, Behun.

20 MS. BOYER:

21 Second, Boyer.

22

23 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

24 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

25 Geathers, aye.

1 [The motion carried unanimously.]

2 ***

3 MS. TULLY:

4 Moving onto Item 28, based upon the
5 Executive Session deliberations, I
6 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
7 a motion to grant the Application of
8 Kassandra Lacayo to practice as a
9 Marriage and Family Therapist.

10 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

11 I'll entertain that motion.

12 DR. BEHUN:

13 So moved, Behun.

14 MS. BOYER:

15 Second, Boyer.

16
17 Santiago, nay; Maloney, aye;
18 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
19 Geathers, aye.

20 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago opposed the
21 matter.]

22 ***

23 MS. TULLY:

24 Item 29, based upon the Executive
25 Session deliberations, I believe our

1 I will entertain a motion. Could I
2 have a motion, please?

3 DR. BEHUN:

4 So moved, Behun.

5 MS. BOYER:

6 Second, Boyer.

7

8 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

9 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

10 Geathers, aye.

11 [The motion carried unanimously.]

12 ***

13 MS. TULLY:

14 Moving on to Item 31, based upon the
15 Executive Session deliberations, I
16 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
17 a motion to grant the Application of
18 Ashwini Gupta to practice as a Marriage
19 and Family Therapist.

20 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

21 Could I have a motion, please?

22 DR. BEHUN:

23 So moved, Behun.

24 MS. BOYER:

25 Second, Boyer.

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Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;
Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
Geathers, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

MS. TULLY:

Moving on to Item 33, based upon the
Executive Session deliberations, I
believe our Chairwoman would entertain
a motion to provisionally deny the
Application of Gregory Kolwicz to
practice as a Professional Counselor.

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

Could I have a motion, please?

DR. BEHUN:

So moved, Behun.

MS. BOYER:

Second, Boyer.

Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;
Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
Geathers, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

1 MS. TULLY:

2 Moving on to Item 34, based upon the
3 Executive Session deliberations, I
4 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
5 a motion to grant the Application of
6 Shauna Shepherd to practice as a
7 Professional Counselor.

8 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

9 Could I have a motion, please?

10 DR. BEHUN:

11 So moved, Behun.

12 MS. BOYER:

13 Second, Boyer.

14
15 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

16 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

17 Geathers, aye.

18 [The motion carried unanimously.]

19 ***

20 MS. TULLY:

21 Moving on to Item 35, based upon the
22 Executive Session deliberations, I
23 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
24 a motion to grant the Application of
25 Joan Burgos to practice as a

1 Professional Counselor.

2 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

3 Could I have a motion, please?

4 DR. BEHUN:

5 So moved, Behun.

6 MS. BOYER:

7 Second, Boyer.

8

9 Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;

10 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

11 Geathers, aye.

12 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
13 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

14 ***

15 MS. TULLY:

16 Moving on to Item 36 under the CE
17 Applications, based upon the Executive
18 Session deliberations, I believe our
19 Chairwoman would entertain a motion to
20 grant the Application of Quentin
21 Burchfield, AA0006687420, for approval
22 of a social worker course.

23 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

24 Could I have a motion, please?

25 DR. BEHUN:

1 So moved, Behun.

2 MS. BOYER:

3 Second, Boyer.

4

5 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

6 Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

7 Geathers, aye.

8 [The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
9 deliberations and voting on the matter.]

10 ***

11 MS. TULLY:

12 Moving on to Item 37, based upon the
13 Executive Session deliberations, I
14 believe our Chairwoman would entertain
15 a motion to grant the Application of
16 Jennifer Del Rosario for a course to be
17 offered to social workers, marriage,
18 and family therapists, and licensed
19 professional counselors.

20 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

21 Could I have a motion, please?

22 DR. BEHUN:

23 So moved, Behun.

24 MS. BOYER:

25 Second, Boyer.

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Santiago, abstain; Maloney, aye;
Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
Geathers, aye.

[The motion carried. Chair Santiago abstained from
deliberations and voting on the matter.]

MS. TULLY:

Moving on to Item 38, based upon the
Executive Session deliberations, I
believe our Chairwoman would entertain
a motion to deny the Application to
provide a course for all license
classes under Application AA0006707838.

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

Could I have a motion, please?

DR. BEHUN:

So moved, Behun.

MS. BOYER:

Second, Boyer.

Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;
Behun, aye; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;
Geathers, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

Ratifications - No ratifications.

Miscellaneous - Election of Officers

[Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, stated the nominations would be effective for the March 3, 2026 scheduled meeting to allow for a transition.]

DR. BEHUN:

I nominate Michelle Santiago for Chair.

MS. TULLY:

Is there a second on that nomination?

MS. BOYER:

I second.

MS. TULLY:

Dr. Santiago, do you accept the nomination?

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

Is there anybody else who would like it that is on the call? Farida? Joe?

DR. BEHUN:

I would do it if you didn't want it, but only if you did not want it. I'm not chomping at the bit.

CHAIR SANTIAGO:

1 Gotcha. Also, I'll decline the
2 nomination.

3 MS. TULLY:

4 Okay. So is there another nomination
5 for Chair?

6 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

7 Then I would nominate Joe.

8 MS. TULLY:

9 Is there a second on that nomination?

10 MS. BOYER:

11 I second.

12 MS. TULLY:

13 Joe, do you accept the nomination for
14 Chair?

15 DR. BEHUN:

16 I'll accept it.

17 MS. TULLY

18 Are there any other nominations for
19 Chairperson? Seeing none, we can close
20 the nominations and we can move on to a
21 vote.

22

23 Santiago, aye; Maloney, aye;

24 Behun, abstain; Boyer, aye; Gross, aye;

25 Geathers, aye.

1 [The motion carried. Dr. Behun abstained from voting
2 on the matter.]

3 ***

4 MS. TULLY:

5 Is there a nomination for position of
6 Vice Chair?

7 DR. BEHUN:

8 I'll nominate Michelle for Vice Chair.

9 MS. TULLY:

10 Is there a second?

11 MS. BOYER:

12 I'll second.

13 MS. TULLY:

14 All right. We have a second by Farida.

15 Michelle, do you accept the
16 nomination for Vice Chair?

17 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

18 Sure. Sure. Is Kimberly not in this
19 anymore?

20 MS. TULLY:

21 She's just not here today.

22 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

23 I would nominate Kimberly for Vice
24 Chair. She's already been in it, I
25 think, for two years.

1 MS. TULLY:

2 So we have a nomination for Kimberly as
3 Vice Chair. Is there a second on that
4 nomination?

5 DR. BEHUN:

6 I'll second, Behun.

7 MS. TULLY:

8 Are there any other nominations for the
9 position of Vice Chair?

10 Okay. With that, then the
11 nominations would be closed for
12 position of Vice Chair.

13 Since we do have two candidates,
14 as Tom goes through the roll call, you
15 have to state the name of the person
16 you are voting for. So it would either
17 be Dr. Santiago or Ms. Early.

18
19 Santiago, Early; Maloney, Early;
20 Behun, Early; Boyer, Early; Gross,
21 Early; Geathers, Early.

22 [The motion carried in favor of Ms. Early. Dr. Behun
23 took a moment to thank Chair Santiago for her service
24 to the Board.]

25 ***

1 Miscellaneous - Committee Assignments

2 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, reviewed the
3 current committee assignments that were recently
4 changed due to a vacancy on a committee. She noted
5 Mr. Gross and Mr. DeCriscio were departing the Board
6 on February 9, 2026, leaving two vacancies on the
7 Application Committee. She asked for volunteers to
8 shift to the Application Committee. Chair Santiago
9 volunteered. Ms. Tully noted Dr. Behun could keep
10 his position on the Probable Cause Committee, but he
11 would have to be recused from related votes.]

12 ***

13 Miscellaneous - Sunshine Act Presentation

14 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, provided a
15 Sunshine Act Presentation. She summarized that the
16 Sunshine Act ensures transparency in government by
17 requiring open meetings for all official actions and
18 deliberations involving agency matters. Any time a
19 quorum of Board members meets to discuss Board
20 business, the meeting must be publicly advertised.
21 Deliberations are defined as discussions intended to
22 lead to decisions, and official actions include votes
23 or policy decisions.

24 Public notice of meetings must be issued at the
25 beginning of the calendar year and at least three

1 days in advance, with any changes requiring 24-hour
2 notice. Emergency meetings are exempt but must be
3 justified. All meetings and agendas are posted
4 publicly, including in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* and
5 on the Board's website.

6 Ms. Tully noted that amendments to the Sunshine
7 Act in 2021 require that if the agenda changes within
8 24 hours of the meeting, an amended agenda must be
9 published afterward. Meeting locations and agendas
10 must be made available in advance, and discussions
11 outside the posted agenda are only allowed if there
12 is a natural connection. All votes must be publicly
13 casted, so virtual participant members must have
14 cameras on. Meeting minutes must include the time,
15 place, attendance, and substance of discussions,
16 though not verbatim. Executive Sessions may be held
17 for limited purposes, such as discussing litigation
18 strategy, deliberation matters, or personnel issues,
19 though personnel issues typically fall outside Board
20 purview. Executive Sessions must be announced with
21 reasons and remain confidential even after the
22 meeting.

23 She warned that violations of the Sunshine Act
24 can invalidate meeting actions and lead to litigation
25 or attorney fees. Criminal penalties are rare and

1 require District Attorney action. She clarified that
2 actions of Board committees like the Application
3 Committee or Probable Cause Committee are not
4 considered to be a meeting if there is no quorum and
5 if actions are preliminary or administrative.

6 Regarding recusals, Ms. Tully outlined the types
7 of recusals and the impact of those recusals.
8 Mandatory recusals include involvement in
9 prosecution, being a complainant, or having a direct
10 financial interest. Strongly recommended recusals
11 include personal connections or outside knowledge of
12 a case. Discretionary recusals apply when
13 impartiality is uncertain. She advised Board members
14 to consult Counsel in advance when unsure.
15 Abstentions from voting are allowed for lack of
16 preparation or uncertainty but prevent a member from
17 requesting reconsideration later. Members may still
18 attend for quorum purposes, but recusals count
19 against quorum.

20 She also detailed conflict-of-interest rules.
21 Professional members may not serve as officers or
22 agents of statewide professional associations, and
23 public members may not be part of the regulated
24 profession or have immediate family members who are.
25 Public members must not hold any other appointed

1 office in the Commonwealth.]

2 ***

3 Old Business - No old business.

4 ***

5 New Business

6 [Cathy A. Tully, Esquire, Board Counsel, echoed Dr.
7 Behun's earlier remarks and thanked Dr. Santiago for
8 her service to the Board as Chairperson. She also
9 recognized it was Mr. Gross' last meeting and thanked
10 him for his service.

11 Dr. Behun also noted it would have been Mr.
12 DeCriscio's last meeting. Ms. Tully added she had
13 emailed him to thank him for his service as well.]

14 ***

15 Public Comment - No public comment.

16 ***

17 Adjournment

18 ACTING CHAIR EARLY:

19 Last call for public comments? All
20 right folks. Seeing none, I guess we
21 can adjourn the meeting if there is no
22 other business. Can I get a first,
23 please?

24 DR. BEHUN:

25 So moved, Behun.

1 MS. BOYER:

2 Second, Boyer.

3 CHAIR SANTIAGO:

4 All right, meeting is adjourned. Than
5 you all. Have a great day.

6 ***

7 [There being no further business, the State Board of
8 Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and
9 Professional Counselors Meeting adjourned at 12:55
10 p.m.]

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing summary minutes of the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors meeting, was reduced to writing by me or under my supervision, and that the minutes accurately summarize the substance of the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors meeting.



Erin Badstuebner,

Minute Clerk

Sargent's Court Reporting
Service, Inc.

STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORKERS,
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS,
AND PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS
REFERENCE INDEX

January 6, 2026

TIME

AGENDA

8:45	Executive Session
11:38	Return to Open Session
11:51	Official Call to Order
11:52	Roll Call of Board Members/Introduction of Attendees
11:55	Approval of Minutes
11:56	Report of Prosecutorial Division
12:12	Report of Board Counsel
12:14	Regulatory Report
12:14	Legislative Report
12:16	Applications
12:33	Miscellaneous
12:53	New Business
12:55	Adjournment