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 VETERINARY MEDICINE

TIME: 10:30 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

March 27, 2026

<u>State Board of Veterinary Medicine</u>
<u>March 27, 2026</u>

<u>BOARD MEMBERS:</u>

Apryle Horbal, V.M.D., Chair
Arion Claggett, Acting Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs
Joseph S. Bender, V.M.D.
Anjilla Cooley, D.V.M.
Clement George, Public Member
Valerie Kehoe, C.V.T.
Hilary Vesell, Public Member

<u>BUREAU PERSONNEL:</u>

Thomas M. Davis, Esquire, Board Counsel
Paul Jarabeck, Esquire, Senior Prosecutor In Charge
Sarah Buhite, Esquire, Board Prosecutor
Marc Farrell, Esquire, Regulatory Counsel, Office of Chief Counsel
Ronald Rouse, Esquire, Senior Counsel, PA Office of General Counsel
Lorese Ali, Board Administrator
Ryan Lysaght, Esquire, Office of General Counsel
Amanda Richards, Fiscal Supervisor, Bureau of Finance and Procurement
Taylor Koch, Fiscal Chief, Bureau of Finance and Procurement
Sara Trimmer, PharmD, RPh, Executive Secretary

<u>ALSO PRESENT:</u>

Erin Kawa, Esquire, Post and Schell, PC
Suzanne R. Todd, DMV
Erin Badstuebner, Sargent's Court Reporting Service, Inc.

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State Board of Veterinary Medicine

March 27, 2026

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[Pursuant to Section 708(a)(5) of the Sunshine Act, at 9:30 a.m. the Board entered into Executive Session with Thomas Davis, Esquire, Board Counsel, for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial deliberations and to receive the advice of counsel. The Board returned to open session at 10:30 a.m.]

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The regularly scheduled meeting of the State Board of Veterinary Medicine was held on Friday, March 27, 2026. Apryle Horbal, V.M.D., Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

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[Thomas Davis, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the Board met in Executive Session for the purpose of conducting quasi-judicial deliberations on the matters under the Report of Prosecutors and the Report of Board Counsel.

Mr. Davis also noted the meeting was being recorded, and those who continued to participate were giving their consent to be recorded.]

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Roll Call

[Apryle Horbal, V.M.D., Board Chair, conducted a roll call of the Board members. A quorum of Board members was present.]

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Introduction of Attendees

[Lorese Alli, Board Administrator, provided an introduction of attendees.]

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Approval of Minutes of the January 30, 2026 meeting.

CHAIR HORBAL:

Any questions, comments, concerns from our last meeting?

No. All right. Hearing none, I'll entertain a motion to accept those please.

DR. BENDER:

So moved.

MS. KEHOE:

I approve.

CHAIR HORBAL:

All right. We'll take a vote.

Chair Horbal, aye; Dr. Bender, aye; Dr. Cooley, aye; Ms. Vessel, abstain; Mr.

Claggett, aye; Ms. Kehoe, aye; Mr. George, aye.

[The motion carried. Ms. Vessel abstained from voting on the motion.]

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Appointment - Annual Financial Presentation

[Amanda Richards, Fiscal Supervisor, and Taylor Koch, Fiscal Chief, Bureau of Finance and Procurement, presented to discuss the Board's financial report and fee package proposal.

Ms. Richards referred to graph demonstrating a breakdown of the licensees population by class and a six-year history of total licensee population. She noted the prior biennial licensee population was 8,809 licensees. The current biennial population was at 9,941 licensees, an increase of 1,132. She noted the addition of the euthanasia technician license.

She noted the Board approved a fee increase in 2022. It was a three-step 3% incremental increase. Referring to the beginning of November 2026, a 3 percent increase was noted from 2028 to 2030. 2032 stays the same as 2030.

Ms. Richards noted the revenue by sources definitions for the Board’s review. She discussed a chart reflecting the biennial review by source. In the prior biennium, the Board brought in about $2.5 million in revenue. Their current projected biennium will be approximately 2.58 million in revenue. The bulk of this revenue is coming from renewals, about 94.5% of the revenue.

The cost category definitions were noted. Ms. Richards explained the expenses are made up of two categories, administrative costs and legal costs. She stated there are three main ways that expenses come to the Board. One way, she commented, is through direct costs like timesheet-based costs. Another expense comes from the license population, meaning that all of the boards pay into that expense depending on their license population.

She noted, on a biannual basis, their prior biennial balance was about $2.28 million in expenses. The current estimated biennial costs was about $3 million, much of it attributed to the new modernization project.

Ms. Richards addressed the Board's current financial status. Beginning in 2024-2025, the Board's expenses were starting to exceed their revenue. The expenses are continuing to exceed the revenue in 2026-2027. The expenses are projected to exceed in 2028-2029, continuing into 2032-2033. She explained the increase in expenses were due to the licensing modernization project and legal expenses with the prosecution and hearing examiners.

Paul Jarabeck, Senior Prosecutor in Charge, stated, from 2016 to 2020, the number of complaints received was averaging 211 per year. From 2021 to 2025, the complained averaged 272 per year. The number of complaints had substantially increased. He clarified the prosecutors, not being veterinarians, could not determine whether the standard of care might have been breached or not. Given this situation, expert witnesses were needed to verify the outcome of the allegations. Expert witnesses will always drive-up costs. He stated the Board had been sued and multiple individuals, though not necessarily the members within the Board but Board counsel, had been sued, increasing the Board’s costs. Hearings held before the Board also constituted additional costs.

Chair Horbal asked if Mr. Jarabeck expected the trend in complaints to continue to rise. Mr. Jarabeck responded with a verbal recounting of each year and the corresponding number of complaints for that year, beginning with 2016 and continuing through 2025. Complaints with this Board are often more adamant than any other board.

Mr. Jarabeck commented that the bulk of expenses for the modernization project would continue within this fiscal year and the next fiscal year.

Taylor Koch, Chief, presented an updated fee regulation proposal that would go into effect November of 2026. He stated a fee increase of 5%, as opposed to the 3% increase that Ms. Richards originally quoted, would be a better suited plan for helping the Board build their reserves again. He noted not every board was having these types of issues, but the costs, since COVID, had increased in about every facet of doing business. This Board was not the only board looking at increased costs.

He requested the Board on the 5% increase for November 2026.]

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[Apryle Horbal, V.M.D., Chair, lost connection from 10:56 a.m. until 10:59 a.m. Thomas Davis, Board Counsel, updated on the information presented while disconnected.]

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Report of Regulatory Counsel

[Thomas Davis, Board Counsel, requested of Chair Horbal that Item Nos. 6 and 7 on the agenda be addressed next given their relation to the meeting topics presented by Ms. Richards and Mr. Koch.

Mr. Davis addressed the Board on the Final Preamble and Final Annex for Fees, 16A-5732. The Board approved the numbers back in 2022, but had not approved the proposed regulation until 2024. He commented the final regulation was not in place for that past renewal cycle, subsequently became a lower priority. He noted the Board was required by statute to bring in as much money as it is spending.

Mr. Davis noted the history behind the slowdown in revenue and the rise in expenses for the Board. He reiterated the numbers by Ms. Richards and Mr. Koch with regards to the Board's financial standing. The Board had every reason to accept that those numbers would keep the Board in the black.

Mr. Davis stated the proposed final rulemaking with the veterinary renewal fee had already stated. The veterinary technician fee would be increasing from $100 to $105, followed by $110, an increase of $15 over the next eight years. He noted the effective application fees. The increases in the application costs were strictly aligned with the actual cost it would take to process the applications.]

MR. DAVIS:

Based on the Board's discussion in open session, I believe the Chair would accept a motion approving the fee increase, final form rulemaking presented by Counsel this date and directing Counsel to promulgate the final form rulemaking through the regulatory review process.

DR. BENDER:

So moved.

MS. KEHOE:

Second.

Chair Horbal, aye; Dr. Bender, aye; Dr. Cooley, aye; Ms. Vessel, aye; Mr. Claggett, aye; Ms. Kehoe, aye; Mr. George, aye.

[The motion carried unanimously.]

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Report of Prosecution -

[Timothy Henderson, Esquire, Board Prosecutor, noted the Consent Agreement and Order, Case No. 24-57-016585, is tabled.]

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Report of Board Counsel

MR. DAVIS:

Based on the Board's discussion in Executive Session, I believe the Chair would entertain a motion authorizing Counsel to draft an Adjudication and Order consistent with the Board's discussions in Executive Session in the following matter, Commonwealth BPOA vs. Donald Lee Yorlets, VMD, Case No. 21-57-004873.

CHAIR HORBAL:

Someone like to make a motion?

DR. BENDER:

So moved.

MS. KEHOE:

Second.

Chair Horbal, aye; Dr. Bender, aye; Dr. Cooley, aye; Ms. Vessel, aye; Mr. Claggett, aye; Ms. Kehoe, aye; Mr. George, aye.

[The motion passes unanimously.]

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[Thomas Davis, Esquire, Board Counsel, noted the

Adjudication and Order for Cynthia L. Maro, Case No. 21-57-015947, is tabled.]

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Report of Board Chair - No Report

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Report of Acting Commissioner Claggett - No Report

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Report of Board Administrator - No Report

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[Chair Horbal announced the upcoming meeting dates for 2026 are: May 29, July 31, September 25 and November 20.

The upcoming meeting dates for 2027 are: January 29, March 26, May 28, July 23, September 24, November 19.]

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Public Comment - None

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Adjournment

CHAIR HORBAL:

If someone would make a motion to adjourn.

DR. BENDER:

So moved.

CHAIR HORBAL:

Perfect. Thank you all.

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[There being no further business, the State Board of Veterinary Medicine Meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.]

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing summary minutes of the State Board of Veterinary Medicine meeting, was reduced to writing by me or under my supervision, and that the minutes accurately summarize the substance of the State Board of Veterinary Medicine Meeting.

Erin Badstuebner,
Minute Clerk
Sargent’s Court Reporting
Service, Inc.

STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
REFERENCE INDEX

March 27, 2026