

Accountancy Board of Ohio  
Minutes of Board Meeting June 2, 2017

The Accountancy Board met on June 2, 2017 in Room West B & C on the 31st floor of the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio with the following members present: James Gero, CPA (Chair), James Gottfried, CPA (Vice-Chair), Adriana Sfalcin (Public Member), Michael Guinigundo, CPA (Secretary), Margaret Gilmore, CPA (Member), Kenya Watts, CPA (Member), James Redmond, CPA (Member), John Soucie, CPA (Member), and Gerald Weinstein, CPA (Member).

Representing the Board staff was John E. Patterson, Executive Director, Tracey F. Fithen, Assistant Executive Director and Donna M. Oklok, Investigations Supervisor. Board counsel present was Rachel Huston, Esq., representing the office of the Attorney General.

Present in the audience was Laura Hay, Executive Vice President and Barbara Benton, Vice President for Governmental Affairs of the Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants (OSCPA).

Mr. Gero called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Gero also welcomed the guests in the audience.

**FORMAL HEARING: BRADLEY E. STEPHENSON / STEPHENSON AND COMPANY CPAS, INC**

Mr. Gero opened a disciplinary hearing at 10:01 a.m. pursuant to Chapter 119 of the Revised Code. The Board charged Mr. Stephenson with a violation of section 4701.16(A)(9), concerning the failure of a public accounting firm to obtain a firm registration; and 4701.16(A)(11), concerning failure of a public accounting firm to comply with section 4701.04 of the Revised Code. Mr. Stephenson was in attendance and was not represented by counsel.

Ms. Huston called Mr. Stephenson as a witness and introduced State's exhibits A, 1 through 19; B, 1 through 4; and C, 1 through 7. Ms. Huston called Ms. Charlene Nortey as a witness. Mr. Stephenson then spoke and was questioned by the Board.

The Board admitted into evidence all exhibits. Mr. Gero concluded the hearing.

**REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF LATE FEES**

**ADAM SMALL**

Mr. Small requested a waiver of the \$200 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio registration.

**NATHAN COLOPY**

Mr. Colopy requested a waiver of the \$200 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio permit.

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DEMEKA JACKSON

Ms. Jackson requested a waiver of the \$200 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio registration.

SUZANNE STEIN

Ms. Stein requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio registration.

TRACEY MCCONAGHY

Ms. McConaghy requested a waiver of the \$500 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio permit.

DANIEL PISSINI

Mr. Pissini requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio registration.

THOMAS KRAMER

Mr. Kramer requested a waiver of the \$500 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio permit.

TRAVIS VAN SKYOCK

Mr. Van Skyock requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio registration.

JAMIE WILCOX

Ms. Wilcox requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio registration.

JENNIFER HUNTER

Ms. Hunter requested a waiver of the \$500 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio permit.

CAREN SPARKS

Ms. Sparks requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of her Ohio permit.

RICHARD BEDELL

Mr. Bedell requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio permit.

CHRISTOPHER DELANY

Mr. DeLany requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio registration.

RONALD FRISCH

Mr. Frisch requested a waiver of the \$250 late fee due to non-renewal of his Ohio permit.

### **QUASI-JUDICIAL DELIBERATIONS**

Upon Mr. Gero's direction, the Board went into quasi-judicial deliberations to discuss the formal hearings and requests for waivers of late fees. After discussion, the Board returned to general session.

### **BOARD DECISIONS**

#### **Bradley E. Stephenson / Stephenson and Company, Inc., CPAs (Case #2017-7)**

Upon the motion by Board Secretary Mr. Guinigundo, and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted to revoke the CPA certificate and firm registration of Mr. Stephenson, but stay the revocation subject to completion of the following conditions by August 31, 2017:

- (1) Payment of a fine of \$2,500
- (2) The recall of the prior issued audit report, along with documentation of the client's affirmation of recall
- (3) Three (3) credits of Ohio-based, Board-approved professional standards and responsibilities training

Motion carried 9-0 on a roll call vote.

### **LATE FEE WAIVER REQUESTS**

Upon the motion by Mr. Guinigundo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted to deny the requests for waiver of the late filing fee for Adam Small; Nathan Colopy; Demeka Jackson; Suzanne Stein; Tracey McConaghey; Daniel Pissini; Thomas Kramer; Travis Van Skyock; Jamie Wilcox; Jennifer Hunter; Caren Sparks; Richard Bedell; Christopher DeLany; and Ronald Frisch.

Motion carried 9-0 on a roll call vote.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Patterson stated that he and Laura Hay of the Ohio Society of CPAs have discussed how to communicate with non-member firms with regard to AICPA fees for attest services/peer reviews. The Ohio Society will notify those 40-50 firms who need notification of fees. Ms. Hay will provide a draft of the additional fee ranges.

A response to the AICPA Quality Assurance program will be prepared by Mr. Gero and this response is due June 30.

Information regarding extensions to the CPA exam testing window was added to the Board website. Mr. Patterson stated that all requests for extension are considered on a case by case basis.

The Board received a request for an honorary CPA certificate on behalf of a person who successfully completed three parts of the CPA exam before passing away. Ms. Huston stated that the Board's statutory authority to issue CPA certificates does not extend to honorary credentials, and suggested a letter of recognition or other acknowledgment may be an appropriate response.

Mr. Patterson explained the recent increase in late fee waiver requests is related to a more pro-active approach to notifying licensees who are out of compliance prior to initiating disciplinary action.

Mr. Patterson also reported that the budget passed the House and anticipates it will pass the Senate.

Finally, Mr. Patterson explained the Board's functions to the new Board members related to travel and attendance at NASBA and other conferences.

## **INFORMATION REPORTS AND UPDATES**

### **Budget and Financial Report**

### **Education Assistance Report**

### **Rules Update – Requirements to Return to Practice**

No response has been received from stakeholders as yet.

### **Investigative Update**

### **Approval of the April 28, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion by Ms. Sfalcin, seconded by Mr. Gottfried, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2017 meeting. Motion carried 9-0.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Status of Past Hearings**

Rachel Huston, Assistant Ohio Attorney General, reported that there have been no updates to the status of past hearings.

Mr. Gottfried requested a discussion of the need for licensees to complete Ohio-based professional standards and responsibilities (PSR) courses in order to address common deficiencies in various areas of practice. Several factors would need to be considered, including input from NASBA, the Ohio Society of CPAs and other stakeholders. Mr. Gero asked that these factors be looked into, including PSR requirements in other states, to be addressed at the Board's annual retreat.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Mr. Gero stated he is drafting a letter in response to AICPA's evolution of peer review proposal, and requested input from Board members.

Mr. Patterson and Mr. Gero will meet with faculty at Case Western Reserve University next week regarding the September 8, 2017 Board meeting. Local colleges as well as Dan Dustin from NASBA will be invited to the October 20, 2017 Board meeting. If feasible, the Board discussed inviting a representative from Prometric to attend the October meeting to provide an update on exam locations in Ohio and give potential exam attendees the opportunity to hear from the examination provider.

Mr. Gero stated the standing committee listing was distributed, and to let him know if there are any changes to be made.

### **SUMMARY OF BOARD REQUESTS**

Upon motion by Ms. Sfalcin and seconded by Mr. Gottfried, the Board voted to adjourn.

Motion carried 9-0.

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**JAMES P. GERO, CHAIR**

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**MICHAEL M. GUINIGUNDO, SECRETARY**