

Minutes have not yet been approved and are subject to revision at the next meeting.



STATE OF NEVADA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

SUMMARY MINUTES PUBLIC BOARD MEETING March 21, 2026

Members Present: Chelsea Gonzalez, Christopher Liebl, Jocelyn Pereira,
Katherine Varughese, Scott Oakley

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Heather Hartley, Executive Director
Stacey Whittaker, Director of Licensing & Operations
Henna Rasul, Senior Deputy Attorney General

Public Present: Lea Cartwright, Julia Graham, Matt Olivier, Angela Terencio

Call to Order, Confirmation of Quorum

Chair Gonzalez called the Board meeting to order at 9:32 am. A roll call confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comment

Chair Gonzalez called for public comments, there were none.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Jocelyn Pereira, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 24, 2026. Katherine Varughese abstained. The motion passed.

Disciplinary Matters – Recommendation for Dismissal of Complaint Case C26-06.

Executive Director Hartley stated that after review of all documentation received regarding the above referenced complaint, it has been determined that there is insufficient evidence to file a formal complaint for hearing before the Board and the facts set forth in the accusations are insufficient to establish a violation of Chapter 640A of the Nevada Revised Statutes or the Nevada Administrative Code.

Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Scott Oakley to dismiss complaint case C26-06. The motion passed.

Public Hearing – Proposed Regulations R094-25

Chair Gonzalez opened the Public Hearing on proposed regulations R094-25.

- New Section - adds requirement of licensees to notify the Board within 30 days after certain actions are taken or filed against the licensee.
- NAC 640A.062 - removes requirement for a person who has previously been issued a

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temporary license from applying for another temporary license until 6 months after the expiration of the initial or renewed temporary license.

- NAC 640A.350 - amends unprofessional conduct to include failing to report to the Board any judgment, settlement, or final disposition pursuant to section 1.

Chair Gonzalez opened the hearing for public comments. Hearing none, Chair Gonzalez closed public comments.

LCB File No R094-25 - Consideration of Public Comments

Executive Director Hartley stated that there have been no written public comments submitted to the Board regarding the proposed regulations. Additionally, there were no verbal comments from the public or feedback from the Board at today's hearing.

Consideration of Adoption of Regulations 094-25

Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Katherine Varughese to adopt the regulations pertaining to LCB File No. R094-25. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Annual Performance Evaluation

Pursuant to the employment agreement entered into between the Executive Director and the Board, the Board is to conduct annual performance evaluations. The last performance review was completed by the Board on February 15, 2025. The last salary increase took effect July 1, 2024, due to the State's salary ranges and cost of living adjustments approved by the 2023 Legislative Session.

Board Members were asked to complete and submit individual performance evaluations for Heather Hartley, Executive Director.

Ms. Hartley provided a verbal summary of achievements from February 15, 2025, to March 21, 2026. Chair Gonzalez read into record her individual performance evaluation summary and stated that Ms. Hartley is great at keeping the Board informed. The Board members were in agreement and there were no further questions or comments.

Consideration of Employee Performance

Board salary ranges are based upon the State Compensation Schedules and the FY26 approved Budget allocates \$10,000 for bonuses and merit increases.

Chair Gonzalez stated that Executive Director Hartley is an asset to the Board, and her contributions should be noted when considering a compensation adjustment. It was requested that the Board consider the award of a salary increase for Heather Hartley, Executive Director, at 6.6%. It is also recommended that the Board consider an individual performance bonus of 5% to Stacey Whittaker, Director of Licensing and Operations, for outstanding service and continued support.

Jocelyn Periera made the motion, seconded by Vice Chair Liebl to approve a 6.6% annual salary increase for Executive Director Hartley. Katherine Varughese abstained. The motion passed.

Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Jocelyn Pereira to issue a one-time performance bonus to Stacey Whittaker in the amount of \$2,158.55. Katherine Varughese abstained. The motion passed.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Hartley provided a thorough report on Board Office Administrative Activities to include License Statistics, Board Member Appointments and Reappointments, Department of Business and Industry Regulations, Board Office Lease, and an update on Complaints.

Ms. Hartley notified the Board that contracts have been approved for both bookkeeping/payroll services and audit services as of March 3, 2026.

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The process of obtaining a new contract for Legislative Services has begun. Request for Proposals through an informal solicitation process were conducted in mid-February. Contract duration would be for the 2027 Legislative Session beginning October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. The Board received a total of four proposals. Proposals were submitted by Tri-Strategies, Strategies 360, Silver State Government Relations, and Cartwright NV Government Affairs. The proposals ranged in cost from \$3,000.00 to \$6,000.00 per month. Board members had the opportunity for review and consideration of the proposals. Executive Director Hartley recommended that the Board pursue a contract with Strategies 360 for a twelve-month period, and for the contract not to exceed \$48,000.00. Chair Gonzalez indicated that Strategies 360 represents the Nevada Chiropractic Board and whether this would create any conflict of interest with the Board's dry needling efforts. Executive Director Hartley pointed out that Strategies 360 recently represented the Nevada Speech and Hearing Board during the last Legislative Session and has received positive feedback. Conversation then centered around Tri-Strategies currently representing the Nevada Physical Therapy Board. Chair Gonzalez asked the Board to narrow their decision down to two proposals and asked Matt Olivier with the Nevada Occupational Therapy Association (NVOTA) if he had any input to share. Matt stated that physical therapists and athletic trainers tend to oppose dry needling for OTs in other states, however in Nevada OTs have a strong partnership with PTs and ATs. Matt feels that Chiropractors and Acupuncturists tend to be the loudest in opposition with dry needling legislation for OTs and that he would send Ms. Hartley documentation from Georgia.

The Board agreed to narrow down the selections to Tri-Strategies and Strategies 360 but felt that additional information and communication of expectations need to be addressed and to table until the next meeting. Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Jocelyn Pereira, to bring back the two proposals to the next Board meeting for further consideration. The motion passed.

Report from Deputy Attorney General

Henna Rasul, Senior Deputy Attorney General, had no report.

Board Activities & Reports from Members

The Board discussed the upcoming 2026 NVOTA (Nevada Occupational Therapy Association) Conference and interest from Board members attending. The Board encouraged participation but cautioned that Board members should attend as a licensee and to not speak on behalf of the Board. Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Jocelyn Pereira for Board members who choose to attend the conference, to do so as an individual/licensee and not as a representative of the Board. The motion passed.

The 2026 Meetings and Activities Schedule was presented with Board meetings scheduled for May 9th, July 18th, September 26th, and November 14th. Scott Oakley stated he is not available on May 9th. Vice Chair Liebl made the motion, seconded by Jocelyn Pereira to approve the 2026 Meeting Schedule as presented. The motion passed.

Public Comment

Chair Gonzalez opened the floor for public comment. Angela Terencio, Advocacy Chair for the Nevada Occupational Therapy Association (NVOTA) asked if the Board can provide licensee information by county. Board Staff offered to assist Ms. Terencio with her request and will follow up on Monday.

Matt Olivier, NVOTA noted that he will be sending additional information to the Board regarding dry needling. There were no further comments.

Adjournment – Chair Gonzalez adjourned the meeting at 10:29 am.