

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS

April 17, 2020

1. Call to Order/Determination of Quorum. The meeting of the Board of Law Examiners was convened in open session by Augustin Rivera, Jr., Chair, on Friday, April 17, 2020, at 10:03 AM via videoconference as authorized by Order of Governor Greg Abbott, suspending Application of Tex. Gov't Code Sec. 551.127(b). The meeting was conducted through Zoom at <https://txcourts.zoom.us/j/2792541638>. All Board Members were present for the meeting.
2. Consider Approval of the Minutes and Certified Agendas. Orr moved to approve the submitted minutes and agendas. Massey seconded to approve acceptance of the minutes and agendas. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Consider Communications from the Public. Deans Michael Barry, Leonard Baynes, and Jennifer Collins were present to participate in discussion of agenda item #4. Members of the public Randy Bowers and Deborah Firestone were also in attendance, but offered no public comments.
4. Report from COVID-19 Response Committee. Rivera gave an update on the activities and discussions of the COVID-19 Response Committee, including potential options and actions the Supreme Court could take related to the July 2020 exam, including a reschedule of the examination to September, 2020.

After discussing the activities of the COVID-19 Response Committee, Rivera opened the floor for discussion. Board Members and the law school Deans in attendance provided comments and concerns on plans for the bar examination. The Board also considered that NCBE is offering to provide materials for two additional administrations of the MBE in 2020. BLE staff presented its recommendation that an additional examination be scheduled on September 9-10, 2020 to reduce density and allow for additional safety procedures. Rivera relayed to the Board that the COVID-19 Response Committee and the Board would continue to monitor these issues, as it is an everchanging scenario. He noted that current options and proposals for exam administration discussed by the Committee and the Board would be forwarded to Supreme Court liaison, Justice Busby.

5. Report of Accountant.
  - a. Investment Report. Rod Shaheen presented and the Board reviewed the Investment Report for the period ending 2/29/2020.
  - b. Financial Report. Shaheen presented and the Board reviewed the Financial Report for the period ending 2/29/2020.

6. Report of the Executive Director. Henricks provided the Board with updates related to:
- publications and articles off interest
  - staffing and supply issues as they relate to ongoing operations under COVID-19 and the July 2020 Bar Exam
  - an updated supervised practice rule for presentation to the Supreme Court
  - informal settlement conferences planned for April 24, 2020
  - calendar updates
  - February 2020 grade release

The Board discussed and provided input on the proposed unsupervised practice rule.

7. Report of the Director of Character and Fitness. Director of Character and Fitness Allison Drish presented an update on application processing and Character and Fitness determinations.
8. Report of the Director of Eligibility and Examination. Director of Eligibility and Examination Nahdiah provided updates related to:
- July 2020 Texas Bar Exam application numbers
  - June 2020 Formal Reviews

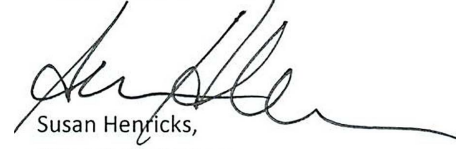
The Board requested that staff develop a proposed schedule and procedures for Formal Reviews, to be presented at the next Board Meeting.

9. Report of General Counsel.
- a. Litigation Report. Pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code, Sec. 551.071, this agenda item was discussed in executive session called at 11:48 AM by Chair Augustin Rivera, Jr. The meeting resumed in open session at 11:52 AM. No action was taken.
10. Consider Issues Arising from Reports of Executive Director, Director of Character and Fitness, Director of Eligibility and Examination, and General Counsel. No issues were brought up for discussion.
11. Consider Scheduling of Future Meetings, including Board Retreat/Workshop. Rivera and Henricks noted the following calendar changes:
- May 15, 2020, Hearings Panels have been cancelled.
  - May 15, 2020, Waivers will be heard by Soltero, Odom and Mackenzie.
  - May 15, 2020, ISCs will be conducted with Odom serving as the Board member on the panel.

Rivera asked the Board to begin thinking of potential dates for a retreat to be scheduled later in 2020.

Adjourn. Rivera adjourned the meeting at 11:56 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Henricks', written over a horizontal line.

Susan Henricks,  
Executive Director

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Augustin Rivera, Jr.', written over a horizontal line.

Augustin Rivera, Jr., Chair