**Minutes**

**State Board of Private Career Education**

**Arkansas Division of Higher Education – Meeting by Phone**

**November 16, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Alice Obenshain, Brittney Matthews, Brock Thompson, Jacqueline Brownell, Jasmine Wilson, Sterling Penix

**Others Present:** Alana Boles, Tracye McKeown, Jessie Walker, Julie Chavis, Jennifer Dedman

**Welcome and Approval of Minutes of August 5, 2020 Meeting**

Alice Obenshain called the meeting to order and asked if anyone had any comments or questions regarding the minutes from the last meeting. There being no questions or comments, the minutes of the August 5, 2020 meeting were approved with all present voting in favor.

**Introduction of New Board Members**

Alana Boles introduced new board members, Jasmine Wilson and Sterling Penix, and asked them to introduce themselves. Ms. Wilson said she teaches business courses at Morrilton High School and serves on the City Council in Morrilton. Sterling Penix said he is from Clarksville and has worked in the public sector for 22 years and currently works at the Arkansas Department of Correction. Mr. Penix added that almost all of his career has been spent in law enforcement and criminal justice, and that he holds an undergraduate degree in education. He also said a large portion of his experience has a major emphasis on career education, the adult learning industry and workforce training.

Ms. Boles informed the members that Josh Blevins’ term on the board has expired and his position has been filled by Jasmine Wilson. Ms. Boles said Mr. Blevins asked her to tell the board how much he enjoyed working with each of them, Julie Chavis and ADHE staff.

**Introduction of Jessie Walker, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, ADHE and Angela Kremers, Director of Division of Career and Technical Education**

Ms. Boles introduced Dr. Jessie Walker as the new supervisor overseeing SBPCE schools on behalf of ADHE. Dr. Walker said he looks forward to getting to know the members of the board and learning more about private career education. Ms. Boles added that Dr. Angela Kremers would also be overseeing SBPCE schools as the Director of Career and Technical Education.

**Report from Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) Staff**

Ms. Boles reported that staff members are working on four new schools including a medical assisting school, two CDL schools and a school that provides business training courses. Ms. Boles added that ADHE staff receives calls regularly seeking information on opening private career education schools and staff sends out information to those inquiring about opening new schools.

Ms. Boles informed the board that ADHE received positive responses from letters Julie Chavis sent to schools that had not renewed their licenses. Ms. Boles said only one school has not renewed due to Covid-19.

Ms. Boles added that Tracye McKeown would be heading up the project on inventory of instructors at each school. Ms. Boles said this project is done annually in the summer but was delayed due to Ms. McKeown working during the summer at the Arkansas Department of Health Education Call Center Hotline for Covid-19.

**Proposed Legislation for 2021 Legislative Session – Jennifer Dedman, Arkansas Department of Education (ADE)**

Jennifer Dedman updated the board on a bill for private career education schools proposed for the 2021 session. Ms. Dedman said the bill would remove and update obsolete language from portions of the code. She also added that the language seeks to clarify the definition of “school” as it applies to private career education. Ms. Dedman said current code makes institutions subject to the jurisdiction of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB).

Ms. Dedman said the bill would also remove references to the Private Career Education Arbitration Panel since the panel was never formed. This would allow the SBPCE to continue to assume those duties as they arise.

Ms. Dedman added the bill would eliminate the requirement to issue a temporary license after 60 days have elapsed from the date of application for a license.  Currently the law requires ADHE to issue a temporary license to a school if the application has been pending for 60 days. Since there are many reasons an application may be pending for more than 60 days, including nonpayment of the license fee, incomplete application, or failure to employ qualified instructors, removing the 60-day requirement gives ADHE more flexibility with respect to licensure.

Ms. Dedman informed the board she will be leaving ADE effective November 25 to assume a position with the Bureau of Legislative Research and the new contacts for this bill and others are Alana Boles and Ann Clemmer. Ms. Dedman also said Courtney Salas-Ford would be the contact at ADE.

**Input from SBPCE Members**

There being no questions or unfinished business, the meeting adjourned at 10:12 a.m.