

THE LOUISIANA BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTERS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2023

Pursuant to notice, the board meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Judge Kimya Holmes on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, Section D, 2700 Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana, 70119, and was conducted in person and via Zoom Video Conference and/or Telephone Conference. Present were:

Judge Kimya M. Holmes
Celeste P. Ware
Lori Ceasar
Andrea Davis
Janet McBride
Rosa Manale
Laura Putman, via Zoom

ALSO PRESENT: Vickie Nguyen, Administrator
Christian Helmke, investigative attorney
Joshua Force, CSR board attorney

I. PRELIMINARIES:

Judge Holmes called the meeting to order and the pledge of allegiance was recited. Vickie Nguyen made the roll call and it was determined a quorum was present. Lori Ceasar requested the minutes from the meeting of January 13, 2023, be deferred until our next scheduled board meeting. The deferment was approved.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. FINANCE:

1. Rosa Manale gave the report from the finance committee meeting citing everything is in order and moved to accept the finance report. Lori Ceasar seconded that motion, and the motion carried.

2. Rosa Manale gave the report on the operating statements finding everything in order and moved to accept the operating statements. Lori Ceasar seconded that motion and the motion carried.

3. Rosa Manale gave the report concerning the Webmaster contract and moved to defer that discussion to the next scheduled meeting. The deferment was approved.

4. Rosa Manale gave the report on the 2023-2024 projected budget and moved to accept the projected budget. Laura Putman seconded the motion and the motion carried.

B. LICENSING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION:

1. Lori Ceasar moved to approve the upcoming sessions listed in the packet for the 2023 Nuts & Bolts seminar for court reporters.

2. It was requested that the Webmaster CE Summary database be deferred to the next board meeting.

3. The 2023 CCR and CDR non-renewal hearings will be conducted by Christian Helmke, attorney at law, during this meeting and is listed in more detail hereinbelow.
4. The noncompliance hearings for the 2021-2022 cycle will be conducted by Christian Helmke, attorney at law, during this meeting and is listed in more detail hereinbelow.

Ms. Ceasar moved to approve these four items, which was seconded by Rosa Manale, and the motion carried.

III. LICENSING:

Lori Ceasar gave a report on the CE request by Raymond Serpas. Ms. Ceasar also reported on the retirement requests of Toni Bourgeois, Milton Donegan, Denise Etheridge, Yvonne Griffith, Linda F. Hanes, Rhonda Hollingshead, Kathleen Mathews, Lois H. Meche, Dez O'Rourke, Shelly Parola, Kathryn J. Searight, Linda Sorge-Howard and Theresa C. Watts. Ms. Ceasar moved for the board to accept the listed CE requests and retirement requests, seconded by Rosa Manale, and the motion carried.

Ms. Ceasar listed the discontinued CDRs of Holley Chapman, Marzavier Conway, Sarita Craig, Cindy Fontenot, Lela Griffin, Linda Hanes, Megan Lay, Jordan Ledet, Nichole Mason, Rosa Vassel and Deborah Williams, and moved for the board to accept the discontinued CDRs of those listed, seconded by Janet McBride, and the motion carried.

Lori Ceasar gave the report of the inactive request of Zuleika Rebelo and the reinstatement request of Alicia Ware. It was moved that both of these requests be accepted by the board, seconded by Andrea Davis, and the motion carried.

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2023 CDR NON-RENEWALS FOR NONPAYMENT AND/OR LACKING CE's HEARINGS

The CDR hearings for nonpayment of renewal fees and/or lacking CE credits were called by Christian Helmke, attorney at law. Those present are as follows:

1. Misty Holden was called and was present via Zoom. Ms. Holden was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke concerning her failure to pay her annual renewal fee of \$175.00, a late fee of \$50.00, and the suspension of her CDR license since January 1, 2023. Ms. Holden reported she was engaged in court reporting services approximately five times in Pineville City Court since her suspension. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

It was determined by the board that Ms. Holden shall submit a letter to all attorneys and/or party litigants involved in any court hearings that she was engaged in since January 1, 2023, notifying them that her license was suspended during this time and submit a copy of each letter to the board. It was also reiterated that Ms. Holden is currently suspended from the practice of court reporting until her renewal fee and late fee payment is received by the board.

Laura Putnam made a motion to reinstate Ms. Holden once payment in full of the renewal fee and late fee is received by the board, which was seconded by Lori Ceasar, and the motion carried.

2. Lindsey Terrell was called and was present via Zoom. She was questioned by Mr. Helmke concerning her failure to pay her annual renewal fee of \$175.00, a late fee of \$50.00, and the suspension of her CDR license since January 1, 2023. Ms. Holden reported she was engaged in court reporting services approximately five times in Pineville City Court since her suspension. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

It was determined by the board that Ms. Terrell shall submit a letter to all attorneys and/or party litigants involved in any court hearings she was engaged in since January 1, 2023, notifying them that her license was suspended during this time and submit a copy of each letter to the board. It was also reiterated that Ms. Terrell is currently suspended from the practice of court reporting until her renewal fee and late fee payment is received by the board.

Laura Putnam made a motion to reinstate Ms. Terrell once payment in full of the renewal fee and late fee is received by the board, which was seconded by Lori Ceasar, and the motion carried.

3. Kristin Strother was called and was present via Zoom. She was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke concerning her late payment of her annual renewal fee of \$175.00. It was determined that Ms. Strother's renewal fee of \$175.00 and late fee of \$50.00 was received by the board office on February 6, 2023. Ms. Strother indicated she has not been engaged in any court reporting activities since her suspension of January 1, 2023.

Lori Ceasar made a motion to reinstate Kristin Strother as of today's date, February 14, 2023, which was seconded by Andrea Davis. The motion carried.

4. Nicole Mason was called and was present via Zoom. She was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. Ms. Mason informed the board that she has been retired since July 10, 2022, and requested that her license be placed in retirement status. She also informed the board that she has not engaged in any court reporting services since July 10, 2022.

Lori Ceasar made a motion that Nicole Mason's license be moved to retirement status, her CDR license discontinued, and the motion was seconded by Rosa Manale. The motion carried.

5. Cynthia Grimes was called and was present by Zoom. She was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. Vickie Nguyen, board administrator, reported that Ms. Grimes lacks 8 general CE credits for the cycle of 2021-2022. Ms. Grimes indicated that she has not been engaged in court reporting services since 2019, and is a standby court reporter for Baker City Court. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

A motion was made by Lori Ceasar that an affidavit of non-compliance will be sent to Ms. Grimes to sign and that Ms. Grimes will have to acquire the 8 general CE credits she is lacking for the cycle 2021-2022, by June 30, 2023. Ms. Ceasar also suggested the board waive the penalty for Ms. Grimes. The motion was seconded by Andrea Davis and the motion carried.

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2023 CCR NON-RENEWALS FOR NONPAYMENT
AND/OR LACKING CE's HEARINGS

The CCR hearings for nonpayment of renewal fees and/or lacking CE credits were called by Christian Helmke, attorney at law. Those present are as follows:

1. Ashton LeBlanc was called and was present via Zoom. He was sworn in and questioned by Christian Helmke concerning the late payment of his renewal fee of \$175.00 which was received by the board on February 6, 2023, and the nonpayment of the late penalty of \$50.00, which resulted in the suspension of his CCR license since January 1, 2023. Mr. LeBlanc reported he has engaged in court reporting services approximately six times in depositions since his suspension. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

A motion was made by Celeste Ware that Mr. LeBlanc shall submit a letter to all attorneys and/or party litigants involved in any depositions he was engaged in since January 1, 2023, notifying them that his license was suspended during this time and submit a copy of each letter to the board. Ms. Ceasar also made a motion that since the board has confirmation of his fees having been mailed by FedEx and will be received shortly, that he be reinstated as of today's date, February 14, 2023. The motion was seconded by Rosa Manale, and the motion carried.

2. Shannon Deruise was called and was present via Zoom. Ms. Deruise was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke concerning her failure to pay her annual renewal fee of \$175.00 and the suspension of her CCR license since January 1, 2023. Ms. Deruise reported she was engaged in court reporting services approximately five times in civil district court since her suspension. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

It was determined by the board that Ms. Deruise shall submit a letter to all attorneys and/or party litigants involved in any court hearings that she was engaged in since January 1, 2023, notifying them that her license was suspended during this time and submit a copy of each letter to the board. Ms. Deruise was informed that the annual renewal fee of \$175.00, plus the late fee of \$50.00, should be submitted to the board office and that she is currently suspended from the practice of court reporting until those fees are received by the board office. She was also advised to update her status information with the board administrator, Ms. Nguyen.

Lori Ceasar made a motion to reinstate the CCR license of Ms. Deruise once payment is received, and that she update her status information, which motion was seconded by Laura Putnam. The motion carried.

3. Trina Graves was called and was present in person. She was sworn and questioned by Mr. Helmke. It was reported that Ms. Graves paid her annual renewal fee and late fee today. She has also failed to obtain the full 12 CE credits required by law to maintain her CCR license, lacking 2 general credits from 2020. Since her suspension on January 1, 2023, she has been engaged in at least two depositions. Vickie Nguyen, board administrator, verified that Ms. Graves lacks 2 general CE credits for the cycle of 2019-2020.

Lori Ceasar made a motion to reinstate Ms. Graves as of today, February 14, 2023. Ms. Ceasar also moved that Ms. Graves be allowed until May 31, 2023, to acquire the 2 CE credits she needs to bring her in compliance with the previous cycles. Ms. Graves is also required to submit a letter to all attorneys and/or party litigants involved in any depositions she was engaged in since January 1, 2023, notifying them that her license was suspended during this time and submit a copy of each letter to the board. The motion was seconded by Rosa Manale and the motion carried.

4. Lisa Alwert was called and was present via Zoom. She was questioned by Mr. Helmke concerning the payment of her annual renewal fee and late fee. The board was informed by Vickie Nguyen, administrator, that the annual renewal fee and late fee payment was received this date, February 14, 2023, for Ms. Alwert's CCR license. The board was also informed that Ms. Alwert has submitted an affidavit of noncompliance concerning her 12 outstanding CE credits.

Lori Ceasar made a motion that Ms. Alwert be allowed until June 30, 2023, to acquire the 12 CE credits she needs to bring her in compliance with the previous cycle. A motion was also made to reinstate Ms. Alwert as of today's date, February 14, 2023, due to the receipt of her annual renewal payment and late fee payment. The motion was seconded by Janet McBride and the motion carried.

5. Candy Leger was called and was present via Zoom. She was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. The board was informed by Vickie Nguyen, board administrator, that Ms. Leger lacks 2 general CE credits for the cycle of 2021-2022. Mr. Helmke submitted the information to the board.

A motion was made by Lori Ceasar to reinstate Ms. Leger as of today's date, February 14, 2023, and that an affidavit of noncompliance will be sent to Ms. Leger to sign and that Ms. Leger will have to acquire the 2 general CE credits she is lacking for the cycle 2021-2022, by June 30, 2023. The motion was seconded by Janet McBride and the motion carried.

6. Rene Richard was called and was present via Zoom. He was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. The board was informed that Mr. Richard has signed an affidavit of noncompliance admitting that he is lacking 2 CE credits for the cycle 2021-2022. Mr. Richard informed the board that he has other CE credits that he did not submit to the board. Vickie Nguyen, board administrator, informed the board that Mr. Richard's file only shows 4 CE credits submitted for the cycle of 2021-2022.

Lori Ceasar suggested to hold the suspension of Mr. Richard in abeyance for two weeks so he can submit a completion certificate of each of the claimed CE credits he acquired that he did not previously submit to the board office for the cycle of 2021-2022.

7. Kathy Stewart was called and was present via Zoom. She was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. The board was informed that Ms. Stewart has signed an affidavit of noncompliance admitting that she is lacking her mandatory 4 ethics CE credits for the cycle 2021-2022. Ms. Stewart was not in suspension.

A motion was made by Lori Ceasar that Ms. Stewart acquire her 4 ethics CE credits before June 30, 2023. The motion was seconded by Janet McBride and the motion carried.

8. Tina Beckel was called and was present via Zoom. Vickie Nguyen, administrator, informed the board that Ms. Beckel was in compliance with her CE credits. Her name appearing on the noncompliance list was a computer error and has been corrected showing her correct CE credits.

9. Kathy Martiny was called. She was not present due to a death in the family. The board determined that Ms. Martiny should sign an affidavit of noncompliance admitting that she is lacking her mandatory 12 CE credits for the cycle 2021-2022. Ms. Martiny was not in suspension.

A motion was made to give Ms. Martiny until June 30, 2023, to be in compliance with the mandatory 12 CE credits for the cycle of 2021-2022. The motion was seconded by Rosa Manale and the motion carried.

10. Raymond Serpas was called and was present via Zoom. He was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. The board was informed that Mr. Serpas has completed the necessary CE credits for the cycle 2021-2022, but evidence of those credits was not timely submitted to the board. As of today's date, the certificates of completion have been submitted to the board and have been approved.

Lori Ceasar made a motion that Mr. Serpas be deemed in compliance, which motion was seconded by Rosa Manale, and the motion carried.

11. Virgene Biggers was called. Ms. Biggers was not present. Vickie Nguyen, administrator, announced that Ms. Biggers did leave a payment today at the board office. A

telephone call was made to Ms. Biggers and she was sworn in and questioned by Mr. Helmke. Ms. Biggers informed the board that she has paid the \$175.00 today. She has not paid the late fee of \$50.00. She has not engaged in any court reporting activities since January 1, 2023,

Lori Ceasar made a motion to reinstate Ms. Biggers once the renewal fee of \$175.00 and the late fee of \$50.00 is received by the board. The motion was seconded by Janet McBride and the motion carried.

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Mr. Helmke announced that all of the remaining reporters listed on the agenda for noncompliance of CE credits and/or noncompliance of payment of renewal fees who have not appeared will be issued an additional letter of notice of hearing at a future board meeting date for the board to consider any other violations or sanctions in addition to the prior penalties against the reporters who have not appeared.

Lori Ceasar made a motion for the remaining reporters in globo listed on the agenda who did not appear to be issued an additional letter of notice of hearing for a future board meeting. The motion was seconded by Janet McBride and the motion carried.

The next board meeting was scheduled for July 21, 2023. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
