

**MINUTES OF THE TELECONFERENCE MEETING**  
**NEBRASKA CENTER FOR NURSING**  
**December 4, 2020**

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Nebraska Center for Nursing (CFN) Board was called to order by Lisa Walters, Chair, on December 4, 2020, at 9:36 a.m. The central meeting location was at the Nebraska State Office Building, Room 3D, Lincoln NE 68508. Members participated via teleconference. Copies of the agenda were distributed in advance to the Board members on November 24, 2020, posted outside the Licensure Unit within the Nebraska State Office Building on November 24, 2020, and posted on the Department of Health and Human Services website on November 24, 2020. Staff announced the location of a current copy of the Open Meetings Act within the room.

**Roll Call**

The following Board members answered roll call via teleconference:

- Tamara Allen
- Sheila Bjerrum
- Lina Bostwick
- Kathy Bowman
- Beth Burbach
- Suszanne Deyke
- Charity Ebert
- Christi Glesmann
- Joan Nelson
- Dorothy Scrivner
- Lisa Walters
- Laura Weber

The following Board members joined the meeting after roll call: Ronda Ehly (joined at 9:55 a.m.) and Kathy Harrison (joined at 9:43 a.m.).

No Board members were absent: Two Board positions were vacant.

The following staff member was present: Sherri Joyner, *Health Licensing Coordinator*

The following staff members attended via teleconference:

- Ann Oertwich, *Program Manager*
- Kathy Hoebelheinrich, *Nursing Practice Consultant*
- Jacci Reznicek, *Nursing Education Consultant*
- Juan Ramirez, PhD, *Independent Consultant*

**Adoption of the Agenda**

**Motion:** Bostwick made the motion, seconded by Allen, to adopt the agenda for the December 4, 2020, meeting of the Nebraska Center for Nursing Board.

Voting Yes: Allen, Bjerrum, Bostwick, Bowman, Burbach, Deyke, Ebert, Glesmann, Nelson, Scrivner, Walters, and Weber. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Ehly and Harrison. Motion carried.

**Approval of the Minutes**

**Motion:** Bostwick made the motion, seconded by Allen, to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2020, meeting of the Center for Nursing Board.

These minutes were approved by the Nebraska  
Center for Nursing Board on February 19, 2021.

Voting Yes: Allen, Bostwick, Bowman, Burbach, Deyke, Ebert, Glesmann, Nelson, Scrivner, Walters, and Weber. Voting No: None. Abstain: Bjerrum. Absent: Ehly and Harrison. Motion carried.

### **Social Media Reports**

Glesmann reported that the Center's Facebook page is slowly and steadily extending its audience. Posts about COVID-19 and posts about the Center's specialty license plate seem to generate a lot of interest. She noted that the Center could "boost" particular posts, but there would be a charge of \$10.00 to \$40.00. Glesmann demonstrated how to invite Facebook friends to the Center's page. She reported that at her school each cohort has its own Facebook page, and that she occasionally sends particular Center for Nursing posts to the cohorts' Facebook pages, which enables the students to repost to other sites if they wish.

Walters reported that she had been interviewed by the *Omaha Reader* regarding COVID-19. She said she would forward the article when it is published to Glesmann as a potential post to the Facebook page. Hoebelheinrich and Reznicek reported that they had been contacted by a representative of Blue Cross/Blue Shield asking for assistance with the distribution of yard signs. Staff said that when they received more information, they might ask that the Center's Facebook page and website be used to disseminate the project if appropriate.

Ramirez noted that the Center for Nursing's website includes a link to the Center's Facebook page. He said he would look into moving the link to a more prominent location. Ramirez reported that after COVID-19 resources were added to the website in April, there is a substantial increase in traffic to the site. There was another large increase in November after the Center added job opportunities to the website. In April 2020, the site had 883 unique visitors. In November 2020, there were 2,462 unique visitors. Oertwich reported that information about APRNs has been added to the website. She said that APRN stakeholders are planning to sponsor a bill in the 2021 legislative session for full practice authority for all APRNs.

Weber suggested that the site have a separate tab for employment opportunities. She said that it was not intuitive to her where the employment listings could be found on the website. Ramirez said that additional tabs can be added to the homepage, but that due to technical limitations on the changes he can make, he would need to ask the website host to make this change. Glesmann suggested that the website include contact information for the various nursing associations in Nebraska, such as the Nebraska School Nurse Association, noting that it would make it easier for these groups to connect.

### **Nebraska Action Coalition (NAC)**

Deyke reported that the Nebraska Action Coalition has held two meetings with its new Executive Director, Amberly Wagner-Connolly. Deyke noted that Wagner-Connolly is well-spoken and NAC members are impressed with her performance. Deyke reported that NAC is looking into holding a conference this spring, given that it was not practical to hold their annual fall conference this year. The spring conference would provide an opportunity to recognize the recipients of NAC's 40 Under 40 awards. Deyke said the presentations being discussed for the conference include a session on implicit bias training.

### **Center for Nursing Foundation Report**

Bostwick reported that the Foundation has approximately \$21,000 in its account, most of which comes from pre-applications for the Center for Nursing specialty license plates. In order to start production on the license plates, the Foundation needs 77 more applications. The Foundation also recently completed a financial compilation. A requirement to conduct a compilation regularly will be added to the Foundation's bylaws. Bostwick noted that more frequent compilations may be necessary if the Foundation gets a large grant.

Bostwick reported that current Foundation member Theresa Delahoyde also serves on the Nebraska Assembly of Nursing Deans and Directors (NANDD) and has recently been appointed to the Board of Nursing. Delahoyde would like to leave the Foundation Board if a replacement member can be found. Glesmann said that several members of NANDD have expressed interest in joining the Foundation Board. NAC's Wagner-Connolly has also expressed interested in joining the Foundation Board.

Bostwick provided an update on the Foundation's survey of rural nurses and their educational needs. They are ready to write data analyses for two of the three questions on the survey questionnaire.

Bostwick requested that the Center for Nursing Board review and vote on the Foundation's proposed statement in support of the vision, mission and strategic plan of the Center for Nursing. The Foundation thought that the statement would be preferable to the Foundation developing a separate vision, mission, and strategic plan. Center for Nursing members reviewed the statement developed by the Foundation and provided feedback. Bostwick will discuss the changes with the Foundation and bring the statement back to the Center for a vote.

The Foundation plans to mail key chains to license plate applicants as a way to thank them for their applications and their patience through the process. The total cost will be approximately \$2,500.00. Bostwick asked Center members to consider donating \$20.00 to the Foundation to help cover mailing costs. Check should be sent to Lin Hughes, the Foundation's Treasurer.

### **COVID-19**

Walters asked if the Center should promote COVID-19 vaccination on its website, noting that a survey has indicated that 30% of nurses are distrustful of vaccinations to some degree. Deyke recommended referring people to their public health office. She said that she intends to be vaccinated, but that her health office will not make the vaccine mandatory for hospital employees. She noted that both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are being distributed under emergency use authorization. A fact sheet is not available for either vaccine, and neither has been tested on pregnant women or people under 18 years of age.

Joyner provided an update on the deferral of RN renewals. RN licenses were set to expire on October 31, 2020, but an Executive Order from the Governor has deferred renewals until after the COVID-19 emergency is lifted. Joyner explained that the expiration date on RN licenses was changed from October 31, 2020, to December 31, 2020. The expiration date will be changed soon to a date further out in the future, but it has not yet been decided which date to use.

## **Biennial Report**

Oertwich reported that copies of the Center's biennial report have been printed. Oertwich will distribute the reports to State Legislators. The report will also be posted to the Center for Nursing's website. Glesmann asked that she be notified when the post to the website is made so that she can post a link on Facebook. Members suggested that reports also be sent to facility CEOs and CNOs in Nebraska, members of the Nebraska Assembly of Nursing Deans and Directors, and to Nebraska's Senators and Representatives in Washington, D.C.

## **Strategic Planning**

Oertwich reported that she had been told that the Governor will not appoint new members to the Center for Nursing Board until the next legislative session starts in January. Oertwich expressed that it might be best to wait until new members are appointed before starting extensive strategic planning. Walters said that she would like to have a meeting in 2021 devoted just to strategic planning.

## **COVID-19 Environmental Scan**

Walters requested feedback on how nurses are being supported during the COVID-19 emergency. Walters noted that many practices used in health care settings to help staff cope with highly stressful situations, such as incident debriefings, are based on one-time incidents rather than an ongoing, long-term crisis. Walters said that COVID-19 for many nurses may be more akin to a wartime situation. Walters noted that among soldiers PTSD symptoms usually do not appear during deployment but rather when the soldier returns home.

Weber reported that her organization is promoting access to counseling for its employees. Bostwick said that students in her program can access mental health services from Boystown via telehealth. Deyke reported that her organization has designated wellness officers, has established respite rooms, and that chaplains are regularly making rounds to ensure that staff feel appreciated and cared for. Ebert said that being as transparent as possible with staff has helped reduce staff apprehensions. Ebert also noted the importance of Zoom meetings and selfies so that staff can see each other and be seen. Scrivner reported that her organization is conducting frequent town halls and is emphasizing the dissemination of factual information.

Nelson reported that the Chief Medical Officer at her facility has been providing weekly updates. At the end of each workday, the facility is also posting updates to a Frequently Asked Questions page. Nelson noted that the facility is using automated temperature scans to control access to buildings. After staff scan their badges, they need to put their face to a scanner for a temperature check. Nelson said that the need to prioritize patient admission is a significant source of stress, noting that decisions made on who gets admitted can be ethically challenging and agonizing.

Ebert said that some Assisted Living Facilities and independent living communities will not allow persons who have had a COVID-19 exposure during the past 14 days to enter their facilities, which has made it difficult to provide home health care to clients in these types of facilities given the frequency of COVID-19 exposure among home health staff. Due to COVID-19, people are being discharged from hospitals sooner than previously, which increases the need for home health care. Ebert also noted that her organization has had some aides leave employment or reduce their hours of employment due to issues with anxiety or long-term use of Personal Protective Equipment.

Ehly reported that her organization is conducting debriefings, publicizing Employee Assistance Program services, and is having a mental health practitioner make rounds with employees. Ehly noted that some staff say they do not need extra help, but the organization will continue to offer the services. Bowman said that working on a COVID unit is so stressful that when employees are off-duty, they just want to go home and forget about everything. This makes it even more important for employers to be proactive in offering resources to staff.

Glesmann suggested that resources for mental health support be added to the Center for Nursing webpage. Reznicek suggested partnering with the Nebraska Nurse Practitioners association, particularly with mental health Nurse Practitioners. Nelson wondered if retired nurses with mental health backgrounds would be willing to volunteer with support activities. Bjerrum suggested that Nebraska Strong might be able to offer assistance, noting that the recovery project has reached out to her county regarding support services for COVID-19. Oertwich recommended that members keep track of resources and ideas to share at the February meeting.

### **Conclusion**

The meeting concluded at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sherri Joyner  
Health Licensing Coordinator