

Delaware Health Care Commission
DELAWARE INSTITUTE OF DENTAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DIDER)
Board of Directors
Wednesday, February 8, 2017
3:00 p.m.

Herman Holloway Health & Social Services Campus
Main Administration Building, Room 301, New Castle

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Louis Rafetto, DMD, Chair; Theodore W. Becker, Jr.; Nicholas Conte, DMD, MBA; Wanda Gardiner Smith, DDS; Lisa Goss, RDH, BS; Bruce Matthews, DDS; and Howard W. Zucker, DDS

Staff Present: Helen Arthur, Director of Planning and Policy (via teleconference), and Shebra Hall, Community Relations Officer

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Dr. Rafetto, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:01p.m.

Meeting Minutes – December 14, 2016

Dr. Rafetto asked if there were suggestions for changes to the meeting minutes from the December 14, 2016 Board of Directors meeting. Dr. Conte pointed out a word choice mistake on the last page of the draft minutes, in the “Other Business” section. DHCC staff will correct the mistake in the final version of the meeting minutes. Voting on the approval of the minutes was postponed until the end of the meeting until additional Board members had arrived and a quorum was met. Before the end of the Board meeting, Dr. Rafetto asked for a motion to approve the corrected meeting minutes. Ted Becker motioned to approve the minutes. Dr. Nicholas Conte seconded the motion. None were opposed. Motion carried.

Update on DIDER advocacy efforts

Dr. Rafetto shared a brief summary of some of the DIDER advocacy efforts thus far. This included several advocacy and outreach activities: Dr. Howard Zucker testified at a Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) budget administrative hearing; Dr. Rafetto, Laura Howard, and others participated in an advocacy group discussion via teleconference, hosted by the Delaware Healthcare Association; and, Dr. Rafetto testified at a Governor Carney Transition Team public meeting for the Education & Healthy Families Committee. More recently, Dr. Rafetto met with Governor Markell, prior to the end of his term; contacted the Delaware State Dental Society Legislative Committee, so that its members can start a letter-writing campaign to legislators; and he attended the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) public hearing on February 7th. Although Dr. Rafetto was not able to testify at the hearing or leave his remarks with the JFC to be considered, he shared his two-page remarks with the Board members for review.

The results of these advocacy efforts have all been positive. DIDER and DIMER are in the FY 2018 state general fund budget proposal, and the perception of the JFC hearings reveal resolute support of funding DIDER and DIMER. However, we are uncertain of when we will have a final decision. Dr. Rafetto inquired about communication between the administration and the Health Care Commission. Helen Arthur replied that there is an open line of communication, particularly between Laura Howard and the Department of Health and Social Services. We anticipate that we will have more information shortly, but the final budget will not be available until June. Dr. Rafetto got the impression from Gov. Markell that in

spite of his support, it may be more challenging to receive funding for DIDER for FY18 because it was not in the general fund for FY17. Although DIDER is not a new program, FY17 funding came from the Grants-in-Aid bill, so it will have to be considered a new program to add to the FY18 general fund budget. Mr. Becker reminded the Board that Gov. Carney did serve as Chair of the Health Care Commission previously, so has a good understanding of the benefits and importance of funding DIDER and DIMER, in spite of the \$350 million state budget deficit. Gov. Carney will be presenting his final state budget proposal on March 1st.

Dr. Rafetto wondered if it is still advisable to write letters to the JFC and other legislators. Mr. Becker confirmed that it is appropriate to send letters to the legislature, as well as to request in-person meetings. Shebra Hall added that in addition to letters, phone calls are also appropriate. Ms. Hall reminded the Board that a Senate seat on the JFC will be assigned in late February, based on the results of a Senate race in New Castle County, however, the current list of the General Assembly (GA) is available online. Mr. Becker also suggested optimizing personal connections with members of the JFC and GA. Dr. Bruce Matthews and Lisa Goss mentioned members of the JFC that they know through work at their practices. Mr. Becker also suggested that Board members could encourage DIDER alumni to contact their legislators and share testimonials.

When speaking with legislators, Dr. Rafetto suggested it might be helpful to know how DIDER funding is broken down, specifically on how it supports the residency program. Dr. Zucker stated that for \$148,000 of DIDER funding, participants in the residency program at Christiana Hospital have a profound impact on the number of dental patients served throughout the state. He reiterated the vital importance of DIDER funding to support the dental residency program at Christiana, reminding the Board that DIDER residents at Christiana serve about 11,000 of the most critical, underserved patients. It might also be helpful to find out how much of this population served are children. DIDER funding enhances the culture of the residency program, and has long-lasting effects that elevate the quality of care for Delawareans. Dr. Matthews wondered if DIDER funding supports specialized programs or oral surgeons, to which Dr. Zucker replied that DIDER funding supports general dentistry.

Dr. Rafetto posed the questions to the Board: Do we need a fresh vision for the future, or should we continue to do the same; is there an opportunity for DIMER to be more effective; what aren't we doing that we could be; and, do we need a different strategy or want to have a different role? The Board contemplated these questions and shared their thoughts. Ms. Goss wanted to know if the DIDER Board will have input on how funding is allocated for DIDER initiatives? She stated that the student slots at Temple are a priority, while SLRP and supporting the residency programs are equally as important. DIDER currently receives \$0 for tuition assistance. There was discussion about how tuition assistance is distributed among the DIDER (and DIMER) students. Ms. Arthur informed the Board that participating schools determine the tuition assistance eligibility and allocation, based on a needs-based formula developed by the school.

Dr. Conte said that tuition assistance and loan repayment are important factors for when dentists are deciding where to practice, based on their impending dental school debt. There was discussion in previous years about possibly considering a DIDER partnership with the University of Maryland School of Dentistry, where after a year, students would receive in-state tuition status. However, that provision did not pass, so it was decided to continue the partnership with Temple University. Currently, the liaisons from Temple are still on board, and we expect will continue to honor the partnership with DIDER.

Dr. Rafetto will follow up with the Delaware State Dental Society and their letter-writing campaign in support of DIDER. Ms. Goss will reach out to the State Dental Hygiene Society with a similar request. Dr. Zucker mentioned some DIDER alumni and dental residents at Christiana that he will also reach out to for support. Dr. Rafetto suggested making all of these requests before the end of February.

Other Business and Board Member Updates

There was no update on SLP, but there was some discussion around the requirements for SLP. It was reiterated that without the state funding for SLP, Delaware would be throwing away federal dollars, as well. The DHCC will inform the Board of any new updates on SLP.

Anthony Vattilana, DDS, appointed by the State Dental Society, has resigned from the DIDER Board, although his term expires 11/1/17. The Delaware State Dental Society will appoint another representative to serve on the DIDER Board. We are awaiting formal confirmation from the State Board of Dentistry on the appointment of Dr. Matthews, who replaced Dr. Sharon Walsh, whose term will expire 4/3/17. We are also waiting on action from the Governor's Office to update the expired Board terms.

Dr. Matthews shared that 19 individuals took the Delaware Practical Board Examination in dentistry, and 17 passed. Two dental hygienists took the examination, and 1 passed. Dr. Matthews stated that although most of those that were examined were young, there was a diverse age range, as well. Mr. Becker asked if there was any way to know where these individuals reside or where they might practice, to which Dr. Matthews answered that the Board does not receive that information. The State Dental Director also does not get a list of the individuals that pass the examination; in fact, Dr. Conte will be taking the Board Examination in the next round.

The Board gave Dr. Conte the opportunity to formally introduce himself. Dr. Conte is the former Director of Clinical Research and Education for Dentsply-Caulk in Milford. He received his BA from the University of Rochester, his DMD from the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ), and an MBA from Wilmington University. Dr. Conte is a Prosthodontist and has served on the faculty at UMDNJ for almost 9 years. Dr. Conte is pleased to be able to give back to the dental profession by serving as the State Dental Director. Dr. Conte was asked what issues he sees in his new position in Delaware. There was discussion about access to care, with both the Medicaid-eligible and uninsured populations, and with both pediatric and aging populations. Dr. Zucker mentioned that Delaware needs to improve the perception of state dental clinics so that clinicians would be more willing to practice, even part-time, in the state clinics. Dr. Conte hopes to make Delaware more attractive to clinicians wanting to practice here. Dr. Conte has requested a speaking opportunity with the Delaware State Dental Society and looks forward to working with them to help improve the image of state clinics.

Adjourn

Hearing no other business items, Dr. Rafetto asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Becker motioned to adjourn and Ms. Goss seconded. None opposed. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:58pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 3pm via videoconference. The meeting will be at the Herman Holloway Health & Social Services Campus, Main Administration Building, Room 198 in New Castle and in the Jesse Cooper Building, Third Floor Conference Room in Dover.