

Council on Naturopathic Medical Education

Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday & Sunday, November 7 – 8, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Session One: Saturday, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. ET

Session Two: Saturday, 2:30 p.m. ET – 4:30 p.m. ET

Session Three: Saturday, 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. ET

Session Four: Sunday, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. ET (if needed)

Session Five: Sunday, 2:30 p.m. ET – 4:30 p.m. ET (if needed)

Call to order and roll call

CNME board president Dr. Wallace called the meeting to order at 11:38 a.m. ET. The following Board members were present:

- Brian Andrew, JD, MA (Public Member), Chesterfield, Missouri (board treasurer);
- Sarah Beasleigh, ND (Institutional Member Rep., BINM), New Westminster, British Columbia;
- Margot Gregory, ND (Profession Member), Tucson, Arizona;
- Arvin Jenab, ND (Profession Member), Costa Mesa, California;
- Joni Olehausen, ND (Profession Member), Dayton, Ohio (board vice president);
- Eileen Stretch, ND (Profession Member), Tucson, Arizona (board secretary);
- Randy Swenson, DC, MHPE (Institutional Member Rep., NUHS), Lombard, Illinois;
- Cynthia Hope, ND Bastyr U. (Institutional Member Rep., Bastyr U.), San Diego, California;
- Jamey Wallace, ND (Profession Member), Seattle, Washington (board president);
- Melissa Woodin, CPA, MBA (Public Member), Kent, Connecticut; and

Staff present:

- Daniel Seitz, JD, EdD (executive director), Great Barrington, Massachusetts

Review of Board meeting agenda and Zoom meeting protocols

There were no changes to the agenda.

Officers' and Executive Director's reports:

Secretary's report

CNME Secretary, Dr. Stretch, asked the board needed to review, suggest changes/additions,

and approve minutes of the May 2020 board meeting.

Mr. Andrew, JD, MA moved, and Dr. Beasleigh seconded, the following motion:

To approve the minutes of the May 23 – 24, 2020 Board of Directors meeting, with typos corrected.

The motion was unanimously approved, with one abstention.

President's report

CNME President, Dr. Wallace, shared with the board the ongoing challenges to the schools due to the Covid situation, and noted that at least students were able to graduate on time and that many clinical interns were, fortunately, able to complete most of their clinical experience in person. He also noted that CNME would be conducting its first virtual site visit this coming week for initial accreditation of the UAGM ND programs, and that CNME was still in the midst of the US Dept. of Education re-recognition process. Finally, Dr. Wallace thanked the board for going the extra mile this year with special meetings to work on emergency policies necessary to give the schools the flexibility they needed to continue delivery of the programs in the face of Covid-related challenges; the schools appreciated the Council's responsiveness to their needs.

Vice-President's report

CNME Vice-President, Dr. Olehausen, stated that she had nothing to report in her capacity as VP.

Treasurer's report

CNME Treasurer, Mr. Andrew, JD, MA, presented the FY 2020 third quarter (i.e., 9/30/20) budget-to-actual report. He noted that there were no big surprises: administrative support expenses were up a bit primarily due to the USDE application, which required a lot of organizing of documents and culling of information. Once again it looks like we will end the fiscal year with a surplus that will be somewhat larger than expected due to not meeting in person.

Next, Mr. Andrew presented the draft FY 2021 budget, explaining that revenues and expenses tend to be fairly predictable from year to year. The board asked questions and engaged in discussion on how the Covid situation might impact the schools financially.

Dr. Gregory moved, and Mr. Andrew, JD, MA, seconded, the following motion:

To adopt the FY 2021, as presented.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Executive Director's report

CNME Executive Director, Dr. Seitz, noted the following:

- The main focus this past fall was on the USDE re-recognition application. While the CNME has addressed all of the USDE findings, we will not know where we stand until we

receive the final staff report. The NACIQI hearing on re-recognition will take place in February or March of 2021; Dr. Wallace and he will represent CNME.

- The Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) continues to meet bi-weekly to compare notes on a range of accrediting agency issues such as actions regarding Covid, changes to the USDE requirements, etc.
- The NABNE advisory board, of which the CNME is a member, met recently; one of the current topics is whether online testing would ever be possible.
- Figuring out how to conduct the upcoming UAGM visit virtually has been a big project, but we think we have everything in place to make next week's visit a success. We will need to schedule a special CNME board meeting in January to conduct the hearing on initial accreditation of UAGM's ND program.
- There is a Bastyr focused visit scheduled for fall 2021; given the Covid situation, we will need to figure out how to handle this as the time approaches.
- NUNM has a site visit for reaccreditation of the ND program coming up in fall 2021 or winter 2022; we'll probably opt for a later date in order to increase the odds that we'll be able to conduct the visit in person. An onsite visit is preferable, because the USDE regulations require an a subsequent onsite visit for reaccreditation if the agency conducts a reaccreditation visit virtually due to the Covid situation.
- He is considering enrolling in a Spanish language course at a local community college next year to be better able to support CNME's work with UAGM.

Committee reports and action on committee recommendations:

Executive Committee

Dr. Wallace, chair of the EC, reported that the EC had a met couple times, both to plan this board meeting and to consider options for conducting the ED performance review process.

Finance Committee

Ms. Woodin, CPA, MBA, chair of the Finance Committee, noted that there is nothing report on in regard to the CNME's finances, apart from the FY 2019 audited statement, which is a subsequent agenda item.

Nominations Committee

Dr. Gregory, chair of the Nominations Committee, reported on upcoming board member vacancies, and recommended that the Nominations Committee work with Dr. Seitz down the road to figure out a plan for soliciting nominations for upcoming vacancies. Dr. Gregory also noted that during the closed session later on in the meeting, there would be interviews and board action on appointments for board seats and also a vote on the officer position of treasurer (normally officer elections take place in odd years; however, Mr. Andrew, JD, MA, is stepping down from this role).

Dr. Gregory also noted that it is U. Bridgeport's turn to nominate someone to serve in an institutional member seat. However, the U. Bridgeport ND program will cease operation before the end of the 3-year term. The board discussed various options and decided that the 3-year term should not be shortened as a result of the earlier cessation of the program.

Mr. Andrew, JD, MA moved, and Dr. Jenab, seconded, the following motion:

The duration of the term of institutional member representative seat held by someone from U. Bridgeport will be for the usual three-year period.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Committee on Postdoctoral Naturopathic Medical Education

Dr. Stretch, chair of the CPNME, reported that residency sites have adapted to the Covid situation though the increased use of telemedicine. There is some concern that the number of resident positions may be decreased next year due to Covid; this remains to be seen. The residency competencies taskforce has postponed meeting till spring 2021 due to the challenges taskforce members are dealing with due to Covid.

Committee on Standards, Policies and Procedures

Dr. Olehausen, chair of COSPP, stated that COSPP had been busy in three areas: revisions to CNME policies in order to fully comply with US Dept. of Education regulations; updates to temporary emergency policies implemented due to the Covid situation; and developing procedures for conducting remote site visits.

Audit Committee

Mr. Andrew, JD, MA, chair of the Audit Committee, noted that for FY 2019 CNME arranged for an audit of its financial statements. Both he and Ms. Woodin, CPA, MBA, confirmed that there was a clean opinion, meaning that the auditors did not have any findings regarding CNME's financial management.

Mr. Andrew, JD, MA moved, and Dr. Stretch, seconded, the following motion:

To accept the FY 2019 audited financial statements.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Strategic Planning Committee

Dr. Wallace, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, stated that there was nothing to report, and suggested that once the Covid situation is somewhat behind us, it would be a good idea to initiate a new round of strategic planning.

Reports from other naturopathic organizations

Dr. Beasleigh noted that AANMC and CCACO were mostly focused on sharing practices for

dealing with the Covid situation, including how to assess competencies in the new environment. All of the schools are using hybrid or totally online delivery for didactic classes; some schools fulfilling patient treatment numbers entirely through telemedicine. Enrollment have been somewhat better than expected. Patient numbers have been down but are starting to rebound

Dr. Jenab noted that MD programs are also continuing with to make Covid-related accommodations; they have, among other things, moved to smaller group clinical experiences, emphasizing observation. He is seeing a growing movement towards integrative medicine, and UC-Irvine is very much at forefront of this; one of the main challenges for NDs to be part of this movement is effectively conveying the strength of ND education, since the length and depth of MD education is a big part of what gives credibility to MDs. An important question is: How should NDs position ourselves? There is a lot of scrutiny on both the content of ND programs and lack of universal residencies for all graduates. Also, there's a certain amount of inconsistency among the schools in terms of curriculum content.

Update on US Dept. of Education re-recognition application

Dr. Seitz reported that the policy revisions being addressed a little later in the meeting are intended to bring a few of our policies in line with US Dept. of Education regulations that diverge with the current regulations. Once these revisions are adopted, CNME should be in full compliance with the USDE regulations. After this, there are two more steps in the re-recognition process: a hearing before NACIQI, the federal advisory committee under USDE responsible for making formal recommendations to the US Secretary of Education, and then a final decision by the Secretary of Education.

Update/discussion on COVID-19 impact on ND programs;

Dr. Seitz noted that the USDE continues on a temporary basis to allow accrediting agencies the leeway to give accredited programs the flexibility they need to continue delivering courses in the face of Covid-related limitation. As noted earlier, the schools have successfully transitioned to using much more online and blended delivery of coursework, and have extensively incorporated telehealth into clinical internship training. While the CNME needs to be in step with the USDE's temporary measures, they are sometimes slow to act; this means we may at some point need to extend the temporary accommodations even if not yet formally authorized to do so.

Plan for reviewing substantive change applications

The board reviewed the document submitted to CNME titled "AANMC Joint Temporary Substantive Change Submission". All agreed that the CNME should continue to provide flexibility to accredited ND programs to adapt their curriculums and delivery mechanisms along the lines recommended by AANMC, which are reflected in the earlier temporary emergency policies issued by CNME. Dr. Seitz will update the current policy with the goal of the CNME adopting a updated guidance memo by the end of 2020.

Review draft revised CNME policies

Dr. Olehausen stated that the minor changes to policies being proposed are necessary to ensure that CNME is full compliance with USDE regulations. Dr. Seitz noted that he has been in regular contact with the USDE analyst assigned to review CNME re-recognition application and has confirmed with her that the proposed changes will conform the policies to USDE requirements. A minor, non-substantive working change was suggested.

Dr. Swenson moved, and Dr. Gregory, seconded, the following motion:

To approve the draft revisions to the four policies presented to the board, with the one suggested edit.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Seitz will issue a new edition of the *CNME Handbook of Accreditation* with the revised policies later this month.

[CLOSED SESSION]

The board next entered into closed session to address recognition matters and to take action on nominations.

Business related to recognition actions

Update on initial accreditation of UAGM's ND program

Dr. Seitz noted that the evaluation team is all ready to conduct next week's virtual visit for initial accreditation of UAGM's ND program. As noted earlier, the USDE will require a subsequent onsite visit, since that is what is required under their regulations; however, we will have the option of sending a smaller team than normal, if we feel that's appropriate. The board will need to meet in January to conduct an initial accreditation hearing on the UAGM ND program and to make a decision. Dr Seitz thanked Dr. Olehausen for serving on the team; with the Covid situation, it was a bit challenging finding people to serve the evaluation team.

Review of BINM focused report

Drs. Jenab and Beasleigh recused themselves from this discussion and decision based on their having a conflict of interest as defined by the CNME Conflict-of-Interest Policy.

Dr. Wallace stated that a focused site visit to BINM had been planned for February 2021, but that given the plans in the works for CCNM and BINM to merge, it may be best to postpone a focused visit until sometime after the merger takes place—assuming it happens as planned. Board members agreed to revisit the issue of a focused visit to BINM when it meets in January 2021. The board next discussed what reporting, if any, they would require of BINM.

Mr. Andrew, JD, MA moved, and Dr. Swenson, seconded, the following motion:

To review at the CNME meeting planned for January 2021 the need for a focused visit to BINM in February 2021 based on the status of the planned CCNM-BINM merger; to require submission of a focused report/substantive change application from BINM regarding the merger, with financial and related information using the CNME Branch Campus Policy as a guide (this report is due at least one week prior to the date of the CNME January 2021).

The motion was unanimously approved.

Nominations matters

Dr. Gregory noted that there were two nominations matters to address at this meeting:

- Interview of two candidates (Drs. Prenguber and Zampieron) for an institutional member representative seat—this time from U. Bridgeport—and vote on the appointment of one of them.
- Interview a candidate (Dr. Alexander) for a profession member seat, and a vote on her appointment.
- Vote to appoint Ms. Woodin, CPA, MBA, to serve out the remaining year of the board treasurer two-year term.

The board in, in turn, interviewed the candidates listed above for the various board roles. Dr. Wallace reminded board members that a secret ballot is used whenever there are votes on board member appointments, whether to a board seat or a board officer position.

The board first voted via secret ballot on the position of institutional member representative. Dr. Prenguber was elected to the 3-year term (note that institutional member reps are eligible to serve one term).

The board next voted via secret ballot on the position of profession member; Dr. Alexander was elected to a 3-year term (profession members may serve up to two consecutive 3-year terms).

Finally, the board voted via secret ballot on the officer position of treasurer; Ms. Woodin, CPA, MBA, was elected to serve out the remaining year of the board treasurer two-year term.

Recognition of departing members

Dr. Wallace thanked Drs. Gregory and Beasleigh for their dedicated service to CNME and their excellent contributions to the Council over the years they served. He also recognized Dr. Gregory's service as VP and chair of the Nominations Committee.

Executive Director review and contract

The board next went into executive session without Dr. Seitz in attendance in order to determine a process for conducting a performance review of Dr. Seitz and for considering renewing his contract, after which the meeting was adjourned.