

**VTAA Annual Meeting
October 21, 2017
Holiday Inn South Burlington, VT
Draft Minutes**

Member Attendees: Suzanna Bliss, Beth Bloomfield, Kerry Boyle President, Katie Chivington, Stuart Cohen, Kiki Colgan, Robert Davis, Hanna DeFuria, Maria Dewees Leon, Jen Ethridge Director, Liz Geran, Taylore Grymonnt, Annette Hansen-Schmidt, Kelly Kaeding, Brendan Kelly, Dianne Mallik, Deb Marshall, Susan McNulty, Karen Miller-Lane, Trish Mitchell, Jeanette Moy, Rebecca Padnos, Marlana Pecora, Glynn Pellagrino, Donna Powell, Dalite Sancic, Josh Singer Vice President, Baylen Slote Treasurer, Julie Suarez-Cormier, LiMing Tseng, Diana Vachon Secretary

Guest Attendees: Jessica Oski Necrason Group, Rebecca Ramos Necrason Group, Michael Taromina, Esq.

Called to order at 9:10am

Board Reports:

Kerry Boyle President welcomed the members, gave an overview of the agenda and introduced board members present: Jen Etheridge Director, Josh Singer VP, Baylen Slote Treasurer, and Diana Vachon Secretary. Laura Cooley Director could not be with us today.

Treasurer report. (ATTACH)

- 1) \$4,315 was donated back from practitioners who participated in the Medicaid Study participants
- 2) The annual meeting cost for 2017 includes the cost of the mailing and one day's expense at the Holiday Inn. There will be more expenses to report on this line item.
- 3) Lobbyist expense includes Necrason fees and State registration payments
- 4) Deposits and transit/checks not cleared includes \$725 deposit not posted and \$1,284.76 check to Holiday Inn not cleared.
- 5) Estimated CEU costs is payment and transportation costs for Speaker Stephen Cina.
- 6) The Directors and Officers insurance will be paid next week, and is not included yet.
- 7) Bottom line is we have about \$26,000 in available funds.

Everything else should be fairly self-explanatory. Donna asked about the lobbyist reporting. We have committed funds until 12/31/17.

Motion: Suggestion made to move away from using TD bank for VTAA accounts and use a local bank. So moved by Suzanna Bliss. Seconded by Brendan Kelly. Discussed other banks to work with such as North Country Federal Credit Union,

Northfield Savings Bank, or whatever is easiest for the treasurer. The choice will be up to the VTAA Board's discretion. Motion passed unanimously.

Secretary Report – This year the VTAA celebrates 30 years of service and promoting our profession in the state of Vermont. The VTAA has 66 current members, which is about 33% of the licensed acupuncturists in the state of Vermont. 66 members is the second highest number of members the organization has ever had. But the 33% is low. We've been at 40%, so we have room to grow here. Diana welcomed Michael Taromina Esq. and thanked him for attending the meeting. He will be teaching our ethics and safety class this afternoon. Our membership dues are paid annually and expire at the Annual Meeting. Next on the agenda are the Board elections. The President and Secretary positions are up for election. In order to vote, please renew your membership at this time. The basic membership fee is \$100. We have reserved a Card Room at the State House for January 30, 2018. We hope some of you will be able to attend.

A discussion regarding mal practice insurance coverage for needling at events, such as at the State House or the Cancer Conference, came up. Malpractice insurance is not site specific. It is practitioner specific. The VTAA does not need insurance for its members to needle at event demonstrations. It is beneficial to use the demonstration for the power of seeing it working. That's the reason legislation passes.

VTAA Board Elections

Motion: Kerry nominates Jen Etheridge as Secretary. Diana Vachon seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Motion: Diana nominates Kerry Boyle as President. Liz Geran seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Jessica Oski and Rebecca Ramos are here to talk about lobbying and our scope of practice updates and process. Robert Davis will talk about the Medicaid study results and process of taking the hard work and results to the Vermont Legislature next year with the intention to get Medicaid to cover acupuncture and insurance mandated.

Scope of Practice Update:

Reviewed and discussed the 2016-2017 legislative work including final draft for scope of practice changes. The reasons for looking into updating our scope of practice were multi-fold. Our scope has not been reviewed nor updated since 1996. Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) advised us that other professions do this on a regular basis i.e. every couple of years, and has recommended this step for us. We were also advised that this process opens our scope up to input from other factions.

OPR's mission is to protect the public safety and hear complaints. We are voting on the scope of practice final draft to be handed in to OPR so that it can go in with the annual OPR bill in 2018.

For the record Kerry read the final changes:

26 VSA § 3401. Definitions

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Acupuncture" means treatment by means of mechanical, thermal or electrical stimulation effected by the insertion and manipulation of solid or filiform needles to the body.

(2) The "Practice of Acupuncture by a licensed acupuncturist" includes examination, evaluation and management, to determine a plan of acupuncture care for the purpose of promoting health. A "plan of acupuncture" may include acupuncture and adjunctive therapies including but not limited to: manual therapy, nonprescription remedies, nutritional and herbal therapies, thermal therapies, therapeutic massage, exercises and activities, and lifestyle counseling.

Motion: Kiki Colgan moved to accept the scope as read by Kerry and allow for the BOD to work with OPR to keep it in their bill 2018 to make minor change that does not change the intent. The board agrees to consult the membership with any major changes that may arise. Seconded by Dalite Sancic. The membership discussed regarding the changes and manual therapies.

Motion: Glynn Pellagrino moved to end the discussion. Kerry seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion on the floor to accept the scope changes. Kerry called the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Necrason Group presentation by Jessika Oskii & Rebecca Ramos:

Necrason Group's mission is to make Vermont a better place. They are at the Statehouse during the legislative session. So they can keep acupuncture and health care in the minds of the legislatures.

1. The major goal is to mandate insurance coverage for acupuncture. Two bills have been introduced to mandate acupuncture coverage by insurers. One this past February 2017 H282 <http://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2018/H.282> . This bill enables us to get some committee time, and gives us a talking point with legislators.

2. Medicaid Pilot Study Funding, supported by State Senators, \$200,000 was allocated to enact the state wide study to measure acupuncture's affects on chronic pain, also the social, psychological and occupational impacts. We now

have effective, local data to use as evidence for our case for mandated coverage.

3. Inclusion of acupuncture in the new opioid prescription guidelines from the state.

Going forward, Necrason will continue to work with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS). They have been responsive to expanding acupuncture coverage. Ideally we would like to convince BCBS to do this before a possible mandate for coverage is enacted.

Necrason is hopeful that this year, largely because of the Medicaid Pilot Study, that we will be able to move forward in our efforts to acquire Medicaid coverage. They will also be working on incorporating our scope of practice changes into OPR's bill for 2018. This will have the same process as every other bill presented. This is the second year Biennium coming up in 2018. Necrason would like to know of any patients that would be willing to call legislators, make statements, etc.

Discussion of keeping Necrason Group on as VTTA lobbyists for 2018. Contract currently from Dec2016 - Dec2017.

Minimum costs for the year will be \$25,000. Kerry will be negotiating for a lesser amount due to having to do less work over the next year.

Motion: Kerry made a motion to end discussions on hiring lobbyist for next year. Liz Geran seconded motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To approve funds to hire Necrason group for the next year (Dec 2018- Dec 2019), the total amount will be determined by the board. Seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed 29 – 0 - 2. Glynn Pellagrino and Stewart Cohen abstained.

Meeting adjourn at 11:15 am.

Respectfully Submitted by
Diana Vachon Past Secretary and Jen Etheridge Secretary