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GOVERNOR

CALIFORNIA ARCHITECTS BOARD
PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH EXAMINATION, LICENSURE, AND REGULATION

MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

May 25, 2017
California Architects Board
2420 Del Paso Road, Sequoia Room 109
Sacramento, CA 95834

Committee Members Present

Sylvia Kwan, Chair
Nilza Serrano, Vice Chair
Denise Campos
Cynthia Easton (arrived at 12:45 p.m.)
Ted Pratt
Ronald Ronconi
Krista Roston

Committee Members Absent

Jack Paddon
Rona Rothenberg

Board Staff Present

Doug McCauley, Executive Officer
Vickie Mayer, Assistant Executive Officer
Alicia Hegje, Program Manager, Administration & Enforcement
Mel Knox, Administration Analyst
Coleen Galvan, Communications Analyst

Guests Present

Jonathan Burke, Board and Bureau Relations, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), Executive Office

A. Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of a Quorum

Chair, Sylvia Kwan called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. There being six members present at the time of roll call, a quorum was established.

Ms. Kwan welcomed the two new members and requested each committee member to provide introduction. Jonathan Burke, Board and Bureau Relations, DCA, introduced himself.

B. Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

There were no comments from the public.

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C. Review and Possible Action on November 10, 2016, Communications Committee Meeting Summary Report

Ms. Kwan asked for questions, comments, or changes concerning the November 10, 2016, Communications Committee Meeting Summary Report. There were none.

Denise Campos moved to approve the November 10, 2016, Communications Committee Meeting Summary Report.

Nilza Serrano seconded the motion.

Members Campos, Pratt, Ronconi, Roston, Serrano, and Chair Kwan voted in favor of the motion. Member Easton was not present at time of vote. The motion passed 6-0.

D. Review and Possible Action on Potential California Architects Newsletter Articles

Coleen Galvan presented this agenda item. She informed members that the list of articles planned for 2017 had been previously approved by the Communications Committee and compiled into a list by staff. Ms. Galvan stated no action was necessary.

Ms. Campos inquired if each edition of the newsletter allows for an additional article based on necessity, which was answered affirmatively. She suggested that each edition be promoted on Twitter and Instagram. Ms. Campos asked how many e-subscribers the Board currently has. Vickie Mayer replied she would confirm number of e-subscribers and report back. Ms. Serrano asked if the Board had flexibility to mail each licensee and candidate a postcard informing them of Board's newsletter being distributed electronically. Doug McCauley explained that prior to the newsletter being disseminated electronically recipients were informed it would be available online only. Ms. Mayer commented that sending a mass email to over 30,000 addresses could severely impact DCA's server. Ms. Campos asked if the Board could utilize MailChimp or an alternate email marketing service. Ms. Mayer conveyed that email addresses are stored in multiple locations and she was unsure if utilizing MailChimp was a possibility. Ms. Mayer advised that in the past, legal had an issue with utilizing email addresses collected on licensing and renewal applications. She stated legal had opined that candidates and licensees were not given prior notification of the intent of the use of the email addresses.

Ms. Kwan suggested Board staff confirm with the Legal office whether or not email addresses collected on initial licensure and renewal applications could be utilized to increase the distribution of the publication. She also mentioned Board staff should look into utilizing MailChimp or another similar email marketing service.

Krista Roston inquired if there is any place on either the candidate or initial licensure application which asks if a person would like to be added to the mailing list. Ms. Mayer provided an overview of the Board's e-subscriber's list; specifically, self-registered users and stated that it consists of candidates, licensees, and those who are interested. Ms. Kwan restated the Committee members feel the Board should focus upon increasing distribution of the newsletter through social media.

E. Discussion and Possible Action on the Following 2017-2018 Strategic Plan Objectives:

1. Collecting Data from Candidates Related to the Licensure Process and Assess the Need of Other Means (Focus Groups) to Better Foster Candidate Clarity

Ms. Galvan presented this Strategic Plan objective and asked Committee members for suggestions on collecting data for clarifying candidates on licensure process. She informed them that Board staff had recently conducted an informal query of examination and licensure staff of frequently asked questions received from candidates. Ms. Galvan explained the questions could be used to enhance and update applicable webpages for candidates on the Board's website.

Ms. Roston commented that when she began doing research on becoming a licensed architect using the internet, she was directed to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), not the California Architects Board and suggested doing a compare and contrast of licensure requirements amongst states, and how that information could affect candidates. She conveyed that she chose an alternative path to become licensed. Ms. Roston stated that when researching licensure in California, that one is redirected to the national organization (even when you reside in California). Ms. Roston said that while she was attending an Emerging Professionals' meeting through the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Central Valley chapter, it was the overwhelming opinion of candidates, that NCARB was the ultimate decisive board and did not understand the importance of the Board's jurisdiction requirements.

Ms. Kwan suggested that we focus on how to increase traffic to the Board's website to alleviate any confusion of candidates. Ron Ronconi suggested the frustration candidates experience in obtaining licensure information, often times becomes a deterrent to becoming licensed.

Ms. Mayer stated that NCARB directs candidates to create a NCARB record and then are directed to the appropriate state licensing board. She explained within the content of the email NCARB sends to candidates, it specifically instructs them to apply with their state board. Ms. Mayer opined, the common denominator to frustration, is that candidates do receive instruction via emails, but that emails are not being read.

Committee members discussed that in today's society, people prefer to get a subject-line in emails to capture one's attention. In the same vein graphics are used to tie-in to the subject line of emails (i.e., Woodbury Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure program, a graphic of Woodbury campus). Mr. McCauley explained that as a governmental agency, the Board has to be judicious in usage of graphics unless photograph copyright releases have been obtained.

Local AIA Emerging Professional meetings are held monthly. At the Committee's suggestion, Board staff is to attend as an effort to collect information from candidates. The information received during these outreach meetings would be brought to the next Committee meeting. Mr. McCauley conveyed that the information received locally, could be used throughout California AIA chapters. He also mentioned that the Board collaborates with these chapters and NCARB providing licensure information.

Ms. Campos questioned the Board’s purpose regarding our audience—architects, candidates, consumers. Ms. Mayer stated the Board’s newsletter is focused upon candidates and licensees. She further explained Board staff needs to collect information on what candidates are confused about, before clarification could be provided.

The Board staff will continue working on this objective and it will be included on the agenda for the Committee’s September 2017 meeting.

2. **Working with Department of Consumers Affairs (DCA) to Collaborate with the Contractors State License Board and the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists to assess the Feasibility of Developing a Consumer Website in Order to Educate Consumers about the Design and Construction Sector and Strengthen Consumer Protection**

Ms. Galvan presented this agenda item and stated the Strategic Plan objective was to assess the feasibility of developing a consumer website in order to educate consumers about the design and construction sector and strengthen consumer protection. Ms. Galvan explained that previously DCA had maintained a joint website on construction and design between the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) and the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (BPELSG), but that archived material for this website could not be located.

Ms. Kwan asked who would develop and maintain a joint website. Mr. McCauley stated that part of the objective is to assess the feasibility of a website, which would include a cost analysis, determination of website content, and primary responsibilities of the website development and maintenance.

Ms. Mayer stated another option to consider would be to create consumer content on the Board’s website under “Consumer” information that would link to CSLB and BPELSG and their consumer webpages.

Ted Pratt suggested the Board link to CSLB, as consumers often utilize a contractor. Mr. McCauley also suggested linking to planning and building departments. Ms. Kwan suggested that a letter be written by the Board’s architect consultant, Bob Chase, as he was a former building official, requesting the building and planning department’s link to the Board’s website.

3. **Promoting the Board’s Revised *Consumer’s Guide to Hiring an Architect, Candidate Handbook, and Building Official Information Guide to Keep Stakeholders Better Informed***

Ms. Galvan stated there is a Strategic Plan objective to promote the Board’s updated *Consumer’s Guide to Hiring an Architect, Candidate Handbook, and Building Official Information Guide*. She explained that the three publications are in various stages of being updated. Committee members were asked to discuss distribution methods and identify additional methods once the publications are finalized.

Ms. Mayer suggested that once the publications were updated to create separate dissemination plans for each publication and highlight options for distribution.

Ms. Campos also suggested that the length of the *Consumer's Guide to Hiring an Architect*, could be shortened. Committee members were provided with copies of the *Consumer Tips for Design Projects* which is a distilled version of the guide and disseminated to consumers. Committee members agreed the tips guide was an adequate condensed version and no changes necessary for the Consumer's Guide. Mr. Ronconi stated the *Consumer's Guide* is disseminated through many Silicon Valley building and planning departments.

4. Exploring the Possibility of the Board Participating in Consumer Events as a Means of Communicating Directly with the Public

Committee members were asked to explore the possibility of the Board participating in consumer events as a means of communicating with the public. Ms. Galvan stated that staff had previously attended home shows and that it did not appear that attendees were in attendance for the purpose of hiring an architect or designer.

Ms. Serrano suggested that staff determine who consumers of the Board are, and who would be a credible group to work with. Mr. McCauley suggested that the Board have quality information disseminated through building officials, as it is difficult to provide outreach to a consumer, who may hire an architect once in their lifetime.

Committee members discussed creating a basic newsletter that would link to the Board's consumer webpage. This newsletter would highlight three to five consumer related facts about the Board and be disseminated via email to each legislator with a statement requesting that they forward the information to their respective planning and building departments within their constituency.

Ms. Serrano conveyed to Committee members that she attended training at DCA and obtained a *Consumer Connection* magazine. She explained that there was an article in the publication detailing what a consumer should do when considering building a pool. Ms. Serrano stated this information was invaluable and requested the Board publish an article in this magazine to promote the Board and provide consumer outreach.

Denise Campos moved to recommend the Board work with legislative offices to disseminate information to the building and planning departments within their legislative districts about the Board, and publish an article in California Consumer Connection magazine published by DCA.

Ted Pratt seconded the motion.

Members Campos, Easton, Pratt, Ronconi, Roston, Serrano, and Chair Kwan voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

F. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:22 p.m.