

# Washington State Board for Architects meeting transcript

July 25, 2024

Sian Roberts (00:00:02):

Members, please respond if you're in attendance.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:05):

Absolutely. Chair Roberts?

Sian Roberts (00:00:07):

Here.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:08):

Vice Chair Loynd?

Erica Loynd (00:00:10):

Here.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:11):

Board Member Harm?

Scott Harm (00:00:12):

Here.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:13):

And Board Member Wu.

Paul Wu (00:00:15):

Here.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:16):

We have our quorum.

Sian Roberts (00:00:18):

Excellent. Thank you, Sydney. Okay, we're going to move on to approval of the agenda, so I will need a motion to approve the agenda.

Erica Loynd (00:00:29):

I move to approve the agenda.

Paul Wu (00:00:32):

And I second the motion.

Sian Roberts (00:00:35):

Thank you, Erica and Paul. Is there any discussion about the agenda? Hearing no discussion, and we have a motion and a second, so all those in favor of approving the agenda, please say aye.

Scott Harm (00:00:50):

Aye.

Sydney Muhle (00:00:51):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (00:00:52):

Are there any opposed? The agenda is approved. Okay. We're going to move on to the approval of the minutes from the April 25th meeting. For this, I'll also need a motion.

Paul Wu (00:01:07):

I move.

Scott Harm (00:01:10):

This is Member Harm. I'll second that.

Sian Roberts (00:01:15):

Now I'm going to bring this up for discussion. I actually have a comment on the minutes. Does anybody else have a comment? Oh, looks like Scott does.

Scott Harm (00:01:23):

No, I'm going back to my copy of it to see what red lines I had.

Sian Roberts (00:01:28):

Oh. My comment just had to do with the language in it. And I don't know if this is actually what was said, but I did note that...

(00:01:38):

And again, our Board Member Manley is no longer on the Board. I actually did see that he's in this meeting, in attendance, but I did note that there was some terminology in his comments that I felt...

(00:01:50):

I didn't remember the actual word being used, and I felt like it maybe might not be representative of what he meant, and that had to do with a junket for a committee meeting. It was described as a junket. He may have used that word, but if he used that word, I'm sure it was in jest. I think we all recognize the value of NCARB committees and creating the programs

that our Board relies on. And so, I like to consider maybe changing that terminology to better reflect the type of event that it was that he attended. Maybe removing the word "junket."

Sydney Muhle (00:02:28):

Yeah, we can change that to meeting. He had used the word junket, and we weren't certain, not having been there, and we didn't have anything to do with that event, so we were going, "Okay, is that what it actually..." So, we can just change that to meeting.

Sian Roberts (00:02:45):

I think meeting would be more appropriate and reflect the event better.

Erica Loynd (00:02:53):

I'm so sorry to interrupt, Sydney. The PowerPoint presentation that I'm seeing has the... Oh, thank you.

Sydney Muhle (00:03:01):

[inaudible 00:03:01].

Erica Loynd (00:03:01):

I wasn't sure if it was a technical issue or... Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (00:03:03):

Sorry. No, that was me.

Erica Loynd (00:03:05):

No worries.

Sian Roberts (00:03:07):

Okay. Are there any other comments on the meeting minutes from the April 25th meeting?

Scott Harm (00:03:13):

No. Chair, I thought I had some, but it's just highlights of things that caught my attention. But no, I have no comments.

Sian Roberts (00:03:21):

Okay. Well, I'll call for vote then. All those in favor of approving the minutes as amended by changing the word "junket" to "meeting," please say aye.

Paul Wu (00:03:30):

Aye.

Scott Harm (00:03:31):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (00:03:33):

Any opposed? Okay. The minutes have been approved. All right, let's move on. Sydney, if you could move the slide. Okay. Old business. Okay. Outreach update. Board members and staff. So, Sydney, I think you are going to be leading the discussion on this item.

Sydney Muhle (00:03:57):

Yes, and unfortunately, there's not a real big update. Unfortunately, heading into summer, things just kind of slow down at the universities and colleges, so as of our last meeting, we were still waiting to hear from NCARB on what their outreach was going to look like for the year.

(00:04:16):

I know they're trying to focus more on alternative pathways for the coming school year, and less so on the universities and the established architecture programs, so we're still waiting to hear from NCARB on what that's going to look like. They had indicated to us that they work was just kind of on pause until the schools come back in the fall, and they can have a better idea of what their calendars are going to look like.

(00:04:43):

So, we'll keep the board posted as those move forward. I believe from the last meeting, Roch did share some contact information for one of the technical colleges down in Vancouver with us, and so we can provide that to the board. And then, I believe Chair Roberts had some contacts that she was going to share as well, and so we're kind of just in a holding pattern on school outreach at the moment.

Sian Roberts (00:05:13):

Sounds good. Yeah, I have done some digging on the community college side as well, and I think there are a couple of programs in particular. There are a lot of programs that are more manufacturing focused, CAD-manufacturing focused, but there are two or three that I think could be good opportunities for NCARB and for us. So, maybe be curious to hear what NCARB is thinking of.

(00:05:41):

But, as I mentioned before, Lake Washington Technical College has sort of a two year, then pathway in, directly to WSU. And then, Clover Park has an interesting program, and Spokane also has an interesting program, who might be interested in having a visit or a discussion with us.

(00:06:02):

So, I'll write up the results of what I've found. I was supposed to have it for this meeting, but I realize I missed that deadline, so I'll have it for next. And as you said, Sydney, it will be into the fall, and it'll be better timing for getting access to students at that point as well.

Sydney Muhle (00:06:21):

Absolutely. Yeah, the school should be coming back here in about two weeks. Well, I think staff is kind of slowly starting to trickle in at this point, but they should really be back here in about two weeks, and so we'll start reaching out to them in the end of August, beginning of September, and seeing if we can really get on their calendars.

Sian Roberts (00:06:43):

Is there any other board member discussion about this agenda item?

Scott Harm (00:06:50):

This is Board Member Harm. Are we doing anything in conjunction with the AIA, because I know Neetha and I once attended, I can't remember what event it was for the AIA, but we actually handed... I can't remember if we handed out actual licenses to new licensed architects or not, but are we doing anything in general, I would say, just with the AIA, at any point in time?

Sydney Muhle (00:07:17):

So, staff does not have anything on the books with AIA at the moment, but I know that Chair Roberts, Vice Chair Loynd, and Board Member Wu have all had different involvement with AIA at different levels in different groups, so I don't know if any of them have anything to add.

Paul Wu (00:07:43):

I don't. I don't have anything to add.

Sian Roberts (00:07:43):

I don't either. It's been a while, I think, since Paul and I did... We met with the Young Architects Forum, which is a group of young architects, many of whom are candidates. And Sydney joined virtually. That was, I thought, a good event. We actually had quite a bit of participation there. I think that was maybe a year or so ago.

(00:08:02):

And I remember, Scott, now what you're talking about, I thought was a really nice thing where we... And what was the event that you showed up at? I can't remember what... Did we actually invite all of the new architects who've been licensed within the year, or how did that... I can't remember what the actual event was.

Scott Harm (00:08:26):

And I hate to admit it, Chair, that I can't remember exactly what it was either. It was a fairly healthy size crowd, maybe 25 or 30 people. And it was an event that the new licensees was only a portion of it. And I know what it is. We handed out congratulatory letters. It wasn't the licenses, it was congrats. But I can't for the life of me remember what the "larger," the air quotes, event was. Yeah.

Erica Loynd (00:08:54):

This is Vice Chair Erica. The AIA Seattle, and when I was on the membership board, we initiated a program where there was an event to celebrate the newly licensed people. And so, AIA Seattle hosted an event at the Center for Architecture in Seattle, and I would attend that on behalf of being an AIA member and leader. And I know that some of you came, and they had... It was a reception passing out the certificates of congratulations, and some little accolades from AIA Seattle. So, it was intended to really celebrate and bring them together because of the hard efforts that they'd done that year.

Sian Roberts (00:09:35):

So, that has not been an ongoing program. Is that right, Erica? Nobody's picked up the mantle on that to continue doing it annually?

Erica Loynd (00:09:43):

They had done it a few. I've gone to it multiple times. I don't know if it's on the docket to be happening still in the past year or two. I haven't gone to it then, but I had gone to it more than one time.

Sian Roberts (00:09:59):

Okay. I will reach out to AIA and see. I mean, ideally we are able to be able to add our congratulations at that event, so if that's something that's ongoing, I'll see if we can get an invitation to that event. Thanks for [inaudible 00:10:15].

Erica Loynd (00:10:15):

I was going to say, I know Tammy's listening to the call today, so I'm sure we can connect outside of the meeting with her and get on the calendar.

Sian Roberts (00:10:28):

Sounds great.

Erica Loynd (00:10:28):

She's indicating yes.

Sian Roberts (00:10:29):

Yes. Thumb's up. Thank you, Tammy.

(00:10:35):

Okay. All right. Well, if I'm not hearing any other thoughts about this particular item, we'll move on to 6.2. And there were quite a few of us, actually, at the NCARB annual business meeting this a couple of months ago here. So, yeah, I think it might be good for us to share our experiences. And I won't start. I'll maybe turn it over to some of the other folks who attended.

Erica Loynd (00:11:08):

This is Vice Chair Loynd. I can start. Because this was my first time being able to go to the annual business meeting, so I got to see everything firsthand. It was a great collaboration of all the different state agencies coming together, along with representatives from the partner organizations, like AIA, and throughout NCARB, or other partners with them, NOMA and et cetera. There were many groups there.

(00:11:37):

But I also appreciated that there was a large group of candidates that were going after two additional board member positions or director positions that have been initiated this year, and it brought a very diverse group of people who made themselves very active in the conversations that were going on throughout the weekend, and were really showing how important it is to live

in the profession of architecture, and promote what we're doing as a path to change in our communities and our environments.

(00:12:17):

They all had very different perspectives of how to develop the career and how licensure and growth of our industry is really important, so that was very inspiring. And have a lot of good sessions of talking with the groups about where the new initiatives are coming, such as conversations about artificial intelligence and how that affects our industry.

(00:12:45):

And Chair Roberts hosted a session that she can describe in more detail of what her plan was, but overall I was very inspired to see people coming together. Look forward to the ongoing participation and things that I'll be able to develop with them as well.

Sian Roberts (00:13:03):

Thanks, Erica. Scott, I wonder if you could maybe, as the voting delegate, run down what happened in terms of the resolutions?

Scott Harm (00:13:14):

Yeah. I don't have my notes up in front of me, but... Where do I find... so-

Erica Loynd (00:13:22):

They're on the page. You could scroll down in the docket. Wouldn't it be on here? Do you have a slide for it here?

Scott Harm (00:13:27):

Oh, yeah.

Sian Roberts (00:13:27):

We do have them.

Scott Harm (00:13:31):

Thank you very much, Erica. Yeah. So, I think the housekeeping resolutions one through six, I think, or five, yeah, six, including the mutual recognition agreements between various jurisdictions outside of the US, all passed. I think it was kind of expected that those would kind of, with air quotes, "sail through," that there would be not much heartburn with it.

(00:13:58):

The big discussion was the realignment, which is 24-07. Lots of testimony, or speaking on both sides of the issues, until finally somebody, I can't remember the term in Robert's rules, but someone called to question to bring about the vote after probably close to a half hour of hearing testimony from both sides. And that resolution failed.

(00:14:29):

And I think, speaking as a board member of NCARB, Board of Directors, I think that's kind of marked it as kind of a dead issue. Put it to bed for the foreseeable future. Don't revisit it. Personally, I wasn't too surprised the way that it went. It didn't seem like it ever had the two-thirds that it would need to make it a ruling.

(00:14:54):

But I think it was a healthy discussion, in all honesty, about... Especially with the influences of DEI, are we making sure that all the regions are equally represented with the number of architects? It could be on board members, but everyone seemed to think that what we're doing is just fine. So, there was pretty healthy vote, pretty much split kind of down the middle, but more on the failed side, if I remember correctly.

(00:15:32):

The resolution on streamlining the regulations for IPEL passed, and so we've got more jurisdictions hopefully moving towards where Washington State is, where quite frankly you can get licensed with just a... Sorry, Heather, there we go.... you can obtain a license with only a high school diploma or A GED. It just means you need to work in an office or in the industry a lot longer before sitting for the test.

(00:16:08):

But I think more and more people are seeing the light of day, and understanding that while a NAB-accredited degree is very valuable, and may be our preferred pathways, we didn't want to be exclusionary and not allow people who didn't have the means and methods the opportunity to become licensed.

Sian Roberts (00:16:28):

Scott, just a quick clarification. I think that this particular resolution was just about exam eligibility and not about actual licensure. So, these... yeah.

Scott Harm (00:16:39):

So, yeah. I extrapolated.

Sian Roberts (00:16:39):

Yes.

Scott Harm (00:16:40):

Yes, you're right. My bad. Apologies. Resolution 24D was held back, the mutual recognition agreement between the United States and Taiwan because it's kind of a volatile situation, so there was a wait-and-see kind of attitude articulated, at least at my level as a Board of Directors member. So, that one will probably come back up depending on how world events happen.

(00:17:14):

And I think that about does all of them. Let me recheck the list here. Yeah. So, yeah, the big one was the realignment, the regional realignment. And, again, it was healthy discussion, but it ended up failing ultimately, or not being approved.

Sian Roberts (00:17:33):

Okay. Anything else you want to add, Scott?

Scott Harm (00:17:36):

Oh. Yeah. I appreciate Erica getting value out of the meeting. I think it's the one meeting you don't want to miss. A lot of opportunity to rub elbows with constituents, even out of our region. We had a hearty internal discussion with Western Council of Architectural Registration Boards, or WestCARB, of which we are part of, with a new executive director being interviewed and selected and brought on board, and closing out, handing over business-related items such as the budget and access to the checking accounts and credit cards and all that. And that's an ongoing process.

(00:18:28):

In fact, Chair Member Roberts and I are on the interview panel for the new executive director for WestCARB. That's going on, starting at the top of the next hour, and then going through a couple hours today. So, WestCARB specific had some pretty good conversations. Nothing that I really want to go into detail about, but we're kind of seeing a changing of the guard with our current chair rotating off of not only WestCARB but her state board, and installing new members.

(00:19:02):

Our new Chair is Tian from the California Board, and then we have the whole cadre of supporting people. And Tian is part of that group, the leadership of WestCARB. And then, other than that, I don't know that I have anything else burning that I needed to cover, or wanted to.

Sian Roberts (00:19:24):

Thanks, Scott.

Paul Wu (00:19:27):

Can you hear me? Is my-

Scott Harm (00:19:29):

Yep.

Paul Wu (00:19:30):

Can you hear me?

Sian Roberts (00:19:31):

Yep.

Paul Wu (00:19:32):

Yeah. I would like to add that this was my second attendance at the National Business Conference, and I found that the workshops are very helpful and timely with our profession at the crossroads between politics, technology, and the way that our profession's going, with the

ability to be able to do a lot more than just simply creating drawings for buildings. So, I think that I got a lot out of this conference, basically, attending all the workshops.

Sian Roberts (00:20:23):

Great. And I'll just wrap up with, my workshop was about the efforts of our Competency Task Force over the last two years. So, we've developed a competency framework, and we got a lot of feedback, great, during all of our workshops.

(00:20:41):

We are having a final round of edits, and then, that will move on for Board approval hopefully in the next Board meeting. And that will, then, begin to inform some of NCARB's program. So, a framework at a high level to filter down, in terms of what the experience program needs to be, what the education program needs to be, and also in order for us to support alternative pathways to licensure, having a clear framework for what competency means, regardless of the path that you take. So, that effort is hopefully wrapping up here in the next month or two.

(00:21:20):

And then, the other thing I wanted to mention, unfortunately I couldn't go to any of the other workshops because I had to lead the workshop I was in, but I know that ICOR has been talking about this whole issue of incidental practice for years now. And I know that it's a hot topic for our Board, and also for AIA Washington council.

(00:21:43):

And unfortunately, my understanding is that there is no imminent direction coming out of that group. They're still in discussions, and I'm not sure that there's any real takeaways, unfortunately, from our Board, in terms of how we might be able to clarify the incidental practice issues that we have been encountering.

(00:22:12):

And I'd open it up to anybody who was actually able to attend that workshop, if you have any additional thoughts about that, because I know that's a topic that we in particular are... we're kind of anxious to see some direction on. Did anybody go to that?

Paul Wu (00:22:30):

I didn't go to that particular one. Yes.

Erica Loynd (00:22:34):

This is Board Member Loynd. I did attend it. I don't have my notes in front of me of some of the takeaways that I had found, but it was... Yeah, sorry, I don't have the notes on top of my head to be able to go into depth about the specifics for the items. But it was focused on interior designers and some of the other practices of where would be the lines and limitations of what they would be. I don't believe that there was any direct specifics. I did not come away thinking there was a path. It was more identifying where the connections are overlaps may be able to occur, but I don't believe that there was any resolutions.

Sian Roberts (00:23:23):

I think we're all anxious to get some model law that would clarify this, and help us with our language, but I don't see that as being imminent, unfortunately.

Erica Loynd (00:23:35):

Yeah. And I was somewhat confused throughout the conference because I felt like in the session they said that their initiative is to not create model law. But in the larger, there was a lot of direction saying that that was the intent. So, I felt that there was a miscommunication between what the overall end goal for the group is. I do remember that.

Sian Roberts (00:23:59):

Okay. So, I think we can not expect anything anytime soon, but maybe they'll be redirecting their efforts. Scott, you may end up having a little bit more information from the Board level on that.

Erica Loynd (00:24:16):

And real quick, one more. They did show a schedule, and it seemed like it was kind of 2030 kind of a timeline, not a 2025 kind of timeline.

Sian Roberts (00:24:26):

Oh my gosh. Okay.

Erica Loynd (00:24:28):

They really were showing that they're more near the beginning than what I think most people anticipated.

Sydney Muhle (00:24:35):

I think I can provide a little bit of additional context. I obviously was not at the annual business meeting, but there was a informational session virtually a few weeks before that, where they gave a preview of the ICOR presentation, and it sounds like it probably changed in that span of time.

(00:24:57):

But it sounded like among the industries that are involved in that ICOR committee, one industry in particular they met quite a bit of resistance to any proposals that were coming out. And so, that was where I think they got into that, okay, this is going to be a much bigger project than what we anticipated it would be.

(00:25:19):

So, I know that there is supposed to be additional coming out about it this fall, and we can bring that back as an agenda item as soon as we have it.

Sian Roberts (00:25:28):

Thanks, Sydney. Okay, any other comments about the ABM? All right. Let's move on, then, to new business and the program fund classification discussion. So, I'm going to turn this over to, I guess Bill, if he is here, to lead this discussion.

Bill Lutra (00:25:54):

Good morning. Thank you, Chair Roberts. My name is Bill Lutra. I work for the Department of Licensing in the Business and Professions Division. The Department of Licensing right now is engaging in agency legislation to move some of our smaller professions to what we call the business and professions account or our 06L account.

(00:26:16):

Currently, we have funeral and cemeteries, geologists and landscape architects that have signed on to this legislation that will be moving them into this account.

(00:26:25):

Here are some of the issues, and the purpose behind this is that professions with a small licensee base and their own dedicated account or standalone dedicated account can experience greater fee volatility relative to those that are in this larger business and professions account.

(00:26:43):

For example, if the legislature passes a bill that creates a new endorsement or new changes to your law that requires significant funding, or addresses your fund balance, that can be a hardship on a profession that has a smaller licensing base. It just creates some fee volatility for smaller licensing.

(00:27:03):

It just creates some fee volatility for smaller licensing groups. To address this, the DOL is proposing to move some of these, what we call dedicated accounts or stand-alone accounts into the Business of Professions O6L account. Currently, there are 18 of our professional licensing groups that are part of this account at this time.

(00:27:20):

This does not create a general fund type of account. Each profession is still required to maintain themselves and maintain through their licensing fees the administration of the profession or the operating costs of the department. What this allows, and the best way to put this, it gives professions and it gives programs some overdraft protection. Each program is required to have a three-month operating capital for them. This is what we require to ensure that if something were to happen, there'd be a legislative move, a large regulatory action that your board takes, that there are sufficient fees to cover that.

(00:28:05):

If moving to this account, some of those professions, if they have to dip into their three-month expenditures or their capital accounts, it gives them times to make that money back up. The other thing that this allows us to do for programs is if we have to go into fee increase discussions, and I know nobody ever wants to talk about fee increases, but it happens. Our costs go up, so your costs need to go up also. This allows us to do this over a period of time. We could stagger fee increases out.

(00:28:38):

Now, I mentioned that horrible term, fee increases. As of today, Sydney can probably give a little bit more information, there's nothing to suggest that architects are going to go through another fee increase. Your accounts look fine. They look like they are sustainable at this moment. However, one thing to consider is that this licensing group has an extremely high number of licensees that are coming very quickly upon what we'd call traditional retirement ages, and I don't want to say anybody's old and we can all practice as long as we want, but traditionally, that's some of the things that we forecast and we look at, and there's not a significant amount of people coming into the profession right now.

(00:29:24):

We have, as part of our stakeholdering work and some of the work that we have done, our policy and legislation office has had conversations with AIA to talk about this as well, to get their feedback and their information as well, and I believe they're in the audience today and will be speaking during the public comments about this. I wanted to bring this to the full board. I recently had an opportunity a couple of weeks ago to meet with Chair Roberts and Vice Chair Lloyd to talk about this. If this is something that the board would like to do, that's something you all can talk about and make that decision. We don't want to force anybody into any legislation. We want it to be very inclusive and invite architects into this legislation with us as well, but again, we don't want to force anyone.

(00:30:14):

It does not cause any changes into how the structure of the department operates today. It doesn't change the people that you work with today. It doesn't change any of the enforcement or regulatory authorities that the board has. We're talking about an internal structure of how we manage your money, is what we're talking about, and the fees that come in and the fees that we send out. One of the questions that came up, does this have any effect on our ability to continue to interact with NCARB or the other outside organizations? No, it doesn't. You should see no impact at all. The minimal cost that this will cost is very, very, very minimal spread out among this entire O6L account, which holds several millions of dollars and it is very, very minimal and you will not require any sort of fee increases for architects at all.

(00:31:11):

That's my real brief, 30 second or two-minute high level of what I think we remember speaking with Chair Roberts and Vice Chair Lloyd about. Chair and vice chair, if I missed anything from that original conversation we had also with Jen Claussen, please let me know and we can address that.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:27:04]

Sian Roberts (00:31:32):

I think you captured it well, Bill. Erica, do you have anything to...

Erica Loynd (00:31:36):

Nope. No. This is Vice Chair Lloyd and that was my recollection of the conversation as well, and the information shared.

Sian Roberts (00:31:43):

And so for clarity, this is an opt-in option for this board. There is no motion. No formal motion is required but we should decide as a board whether we would like to opt-in or not. I know that our public comment usually comes at the end of a meeting. However, I believe we may have some interested parties here with the public who may want to comment specifically on this item and might inform some of our discussions, so I'd like to ask the board if it's okay to open this topic up for public comment right now?

Erica Loynd (00:32:22):

This is Vice Chair Lloyd. I agree that this will be an opportunity for public comment and I move that they may speak.

Sian Roberts (00:32:32):

Great. So let me just go through this. At this time, the public manages the board on this item only. Each person will be limited to a single three-minute comment. Get ready, Tammy. Board staff will read any written comments that have been submitted regarding this topic. Neither the board nor board staff are permitted to answer any questions or have any dialogue with the public during this time, and the board will ask staff to address any questions after the close of public comments. Let's see. Let's start with, I'm going to ask Sydney if any comments have been submitted in writing on this topic.

Sydney Muhle (00:33:11):

Nothing that I don't think Tammy is going to cover herself, so I will let her address it.

Sian Roberts (00:33:17):

Okay. Then I open it up to the public. Are there any members of the public who would like to speak on this topic?

Tammy (00:33:24):

Yes, I would.

Sian Roberts (00:33:25):

Okay. Tammy, go ahead.

Tammy (00:33:28):

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to come and speak today. We would have provided written comments, but we've been meeting with members ever since we had the opportunity to talk to Bill and his team. Although we were a little skeptical about endorsing something like this previously, once we were given the data that Sydney provided to us showing the large number of licensed holders, I think it's half of them at this point are above the age of 50, and that's concerning, and certainly we want to try to get to the bottom of why that is. I think that somewhere around 2008, 2009, we lost a lot of licensed architects just leaving the profession and so that's probably moving its way through. I can say that that's where I ended up, was in that group. So given that information, we want to make sure that this account continues to stay strong. We will take this opportunity to start working on how we backfill that, but from the standpoint of AI Washington Council, we believe that this is a good move for our state board to take. Thank you.

Sian Roberts (00:34:36):

Thank you, Tammy. I appreciate it. Are there any other members of the public that would like to speak on this topic? Okay. Hearing none, I'd like to open it up to the board for discussion.

Erica Loynd (00:34:57):

This is board member Lloyd. Just after the conversation we had a few weeks ago, it became very aware to me that this was fairly a stabilizing and not impactful thing to the board. I appreciate the financial support that it would give to the group and be able to provide that backing should events happen in the future, and we won't have to move forward with it as it's been offered to other board. With the state of Washington, it seemed the main thrust was giving the opportunity to all the boards to understand what the opportunities were and I think it enlightened us that there's ways to be stabilized together. So I have no significant impacts of either way and I would support moving forward if this was the decision of the board.

Sian Roberts (00:35:57):

Any other board members have comments? Yeah, Paul?

Paul Wu (00:35:59):

Yes, I do support this initiative, and my understanding, that this is strictly a financial structure change and nothing changed to how we operate as architects and as a board, so I do support this.

Sian Roberts (00:36:19):

Yeah, thank you, Paul. We had a lot of questions about that and I think the meeting that Erica and I had with Bill, we did ask a lot of questions about does this have any impact on the operations of the board, on support of NCARB programs, for instance, which are so critical to us being able to be able to license candidates. Our understanding is that none of those things will be impacted by this. It's sort of an accounting change, but it does require... It's one of those things that I was thinking, well, it requires action to opt in, so the default position being we maintain our own charter and course. We've been very stable, but as we've been hearing now, I think as we do, this is a profession and generational issue, I believe, that our profession is facing. We are going to be losing more licensed architects probably over the next 10 years, so that certainly could have an impact on our financial health.

(00:37:28):

Scott, do you have any thoughts or any concerns? Yeah, how do you feel about this?

Scott Harm (00:37:36):

On the surface, it doesn't appear to be anything that I would have an issue with. I am concerned with the aging population. I'm in the group that will not be around in 10 years. Hopefully, still on the face of the Earth but not practicing architecture anymore, and if there's no other structural changes to the way the board operates or the profession operates, I think it's just fine. Any sun setting actions, any other legislative move to move away from our current practice and licensing process would be something that I'd be concerned about, but I'm not hearing any of that. So it just seems like it's just something that's being a good prudent business decision I think is the

way I would wrap it up. Yeah, I don't think I have an issue with this the way I understand it today.

Sian Roberts (00:38:34):

Yeah, and I would agree. And again, I've tried to think in my mind, what is the downside of this? Because like I said, I agree with you. The skepticism of, okay, now we're making a change. Do we need to make a change? If we don't need to make a change, why should we make a change? But I've failed to come up with any concerns that would make me think we shouldn't do it, and it does appear that there are some benefits.

Bill Lutra (00:39:08):

So I appreciate the conversation and the information being shared again, and to Chair Harm's comment note, again, this does not change the structure of how the department's going to operate or support your programs or regulatory environment or how we're going to help people get licensed. This is how we operate with the fees that we collect from your profession, because obviously as you know, you need to support your profession and we think long-term, this would probably be the best that happens for programs that have smaller licensing bases. Again, at any point in time during the legislative process, this is going to be a long session. Remember, it's a budget year. At any point, if this becomes a problem, please work with AIA, and also, AIA has been working with their policy and Ledge office. If this is not something that you want to see as it goes through all of its changes, then work to pull yourself out of it. That's the bottom line also, is that we're not going to force people to stay in with us.

(00:40:15):

With that, I don't think there's any other questions for me. Chair Roberts and Vice Chair Lloyd, Sydney Muhle will be sending you an email here after this meeting just asking for your support as the chair and the vice chair that you would like to consider going in this. After that, you'll be getting some more information from our office, a summary and what we call a Z draft, which would be what the legislation would look like, the language in it. And I think I just interrupted somebody, I apologize.

Sian Roberts (00:40:50):

No, but it looks like Scott has his hand up.

Scott Harm (00:40:52):

Yeah, I'm trying to be the more polite version of myself rather than interrupting. So Bill, thank you very much for that closing remark. On other topics that interest me and I thought of this, why I raised my hand, hopefully it's prudent. So we know that we have this aging population coming through that we may end up with much fewer architects. I just wonder if NCARB is tracking that for any other states or jurisdictions, and if this is going to be a common problem and is anybody trying to get ahead of it kind of a thing? I can't imagine that Washington State would be alone in something like this and I just wonder how much of a larger issue it might be, just kind of curious.

Sydney Muhle (00:41:38):

I can jump in on that one. We have not had any conversations with NCARB about that. We don't have any statistical data as staff to monitor that, but I can reach out to NCARB and see. Another question that came up as we were looking at this one last time this morning, making sure we had all of our points covered for you guys, was seeing if we could break out our active licenses and our renewals by age category. We just lump everything together right now in just total active licensees, but try and see if we can dig a little deeper to see if we are seeing any of that flow coming in from those younger demographics, and so we're going to be digging a little bit deeper.

(00:42:34):

Another point on this is going to be legislative action so it'll be presented for the 2025 legislative session. At any point, if anybody isn't comfortable with this, feels like the program should come back out of it, we can always make that change down the line, but right now, what we're trying to do is really get that draft language going and finalize all of those internal processes so that we can get this before the legislature. So this doesn't mean that if you guys are indicating to us, yes today, that you guys are forever tied to that decision, but we've really been looking very closely at this and we can't find a downside for you guys. And I wouldn't say there's an immediate pressing need, but the biggest thing that we're seeing is that potential bubble, and that's what we don't want the program to get into because it is a full 50% of your licensing base that is over the age of 55 and that's a very concerning statistic for us at this particular moment.

(00:43:42):

So as we are moving forward with this legislation, for the other programs, that made sense to go ahead and offer it for you guys at this point, just because it's much, much harder for us to do this on a single program down the line and we don't want you guys to get into that situation here in a few years and need to have this opportunity again.

Sian Roberts (00:44:08):

Yeah, I think what I remember about the timing is in order to opt in, we have to opt in now, and to Sydney and Bill's point, if for some reason, we feel like we need to pull ourselves out, we probably between now and the next meeting, we could pull the rip cord. But Erica, it looks like you have a comment.

Erica Loynd (00:44:32):

Yeah, I just wanted to share for the record, one resource that NCARB does pull together each year is the NCARB By Numbers, because they have access to the data of who's licensed, who's going after their licensures and even statistics down to how long it takes people of different demographics, and then they also break it down by state. And so there is information. They publish this every year. It was distributed at the ABM annual business meeting. I find it a very interesting compilation every year and it shows the growth year to year, but it will identify what states are also coming through this impact. I have not been a part of any conversations of analyzing the data in the context of what we're discussing right now, but it is data that's available and presented.

Sydney Muhle (00:45:20):

I will go find it on NCARB's website. Thank you.

Sian Roberts (00:45:23):

And I think Scott, you're probably in a good position to be able to see whether it's happening anywhere else and to bring it up with the board. Yeah.

Scott Harm (00:45:33):

Yeah.

Sian Roberts (00:45:35):

I have a comment from, I don't know Elizabeth Braun, Elizabeth Braun or Sydney?

Sydney Muhle (00:45:42):

She's a member of the public. So technically, you did not close the public comments, so if the board still wants to allow the comment, you can.

Sian Roberts (00:45:51):

I would be in favor of allowing one more public comment.

Scott Harm (00:45:54):

I'm in favor of more. Yeah, please.

Sian Roberts (00:45:56):

Okay.

Elizabeth Braun (00:45:57):

Great. Okay. And hello. Some of you may know me as Betsy Braun. I've been a licensed architect in Washington since woo-hoo, the early nineties, and I am one of those people who are aging out. I was recently recruiting for a large architectural firm and was shocked in a bad way to find that one of the challenges our industry is facing is that we are directly competing with the gaming industry for the new architectural candidates who are coming out of schools. And the difficulty of being an architect and the career paths and the educational challenges that the profession offers, as well as the salary structures, simply can't compete with going out on day one and developing the most fantastic thing you can imagine.

(00:46:58):

So we really are seeing a direct negative impact to our profession by this demand from the gaming industry for the potential young architects, and I think that the compensation structure that firms are offering to young architects plus perhaps some of the creative opportunities that tend to go to senior staff are going to need to start to shift if we're going to retain and encourage those young architects to actually get their license. Because right now, most of the firms with over three or four people do not need to have every member licensed, and the cachet of being licensed is diminishing as these other career opportunities arise. Thank you for letting me speak.

Sian Roberts (00:47:51):

Thank you, Betsy. I think you'd be encouraged to know that NCARB has actively, step-by-step in trying to make sure that we can make licensure more accessible and make the path not as cumbersome as it has been, but I certainly understand where you're coming from and the challenges that our profession has. Elizabeth, you have your hand up as well. The other Elizabeth. Oh, you're muted. Sorry. If you're talking, you're muted. Sorry, we can't hear you if you're talking. Maybe you don't have your hand up.

Sydney Muhle (00:48:42):

She might be having technical difficulties. We've been having issues with Teams not letting people off of mute since Microsoft crashed the world last week so she might be experiencing that, but I know that she is also waiting for our next item and probably has another meeting that she needs to rush off to here soon, so if there were any other questions or comments on this one before we move on?

Sian Roberts (00:49:07):

Paul, do you have something important? It sounds like Elizabeth might be needing us to move on, but do you have anything to add?

Paul Wu (00:49:15):

Yes, I do want to echo Elizabeth's concern regarding our profession.

Sian Roberts (00:49:24):

Which is not entirely this agenda item, but yes, I understand. I'm trying to keep us on topic here.  
(00:49:36):

Okay. So moving on to our mutual recognition agreement discussion 7.2, which now, we're going to need Elizabeth to be able to unmute.

Sydney Muhle (00:49:52):

Elizabeth, we've been finding that if you exit the meeting and then come back in, it seems to help, so hopefully, but I can go ahead and kick off the discussion while Elizabeth logs back in. So this is-

Sian Roberts (00:50:07):

Sorry, I was going to close the public comment. Sydney, if you-

Sydney Muhle (00:50:10):

Okay.

Sian Roberts (00:50:11):

While Elizabeth is logging on and off, I'm going to close public comment. There will be an opportunity at the end for more public comment, but regarding this particular issue, we are closing the public comment. Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (00:50:26):

Great. Thank you.

(00:50:29):

So this was an item that came out of the last board meeting that the board requested an agenda item for, and this was to discuss any potential opportunities for rulemaking concerning future mutual recognition agreements. This specifically came from the multitude of discussions that we had surrounding the mutual recognition agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom and concerns that many board members had about their meeting not being equitable requirements across the two jurisdictions. And the area that we ran into was that under the MRA, NCARB does provide and NCARB certificates to applicants from the United Kingdom, and the way that our rules are written currently, the NCARB certificate is what allows that license portability within the United States, and now additionally, under the mutual recognition agreement. So as long as somebody has that NCARB certificate, we really have to allow them to apply, almost regardless of agreeing to the mutual recognition agreements. And so because of those concerns, the board had requested an agenda item to see what areas there were for potential rulemaking.

(00:51:57):

And so that is where myself and Elizabeth have had a lot of conversations about this and I'm sure where Elizabeth can jump in and help fill in any blanks, but I think that really is the crux of the conversation and really the only area within the rules that we could make an adjustment regarding MRAs and the potential of adding additional requirements onto applicants who are applying via mutual recognition agreements, would be to change the acceptance of the NCARB certificate. And so I can ask if Elizabeth has anything to add, but I believe that was the general intro for this item.

Elizabeth (00:52:37):

Yeah. Excuse me. Yeah, you did a great job of explaining the situation, and it's really just one rule and even one sentence that is problematic for you in that... I mean, it's not problematic if you're okay with allowing anybody with an NCARB certificate to be licensed, but if you specifically want to be able to create your own requirements for the MRA or for anybody else that comes in with a certificate, you need to change. There's just one sentence that needs to be changed in the rules. It's not a hard change, but it depends on what you want.

Sydney Muhle (00:53:21):

And so then with that, we wanted to, because this had been a request from the board for a discussion item on this, wanting to get some direction from the board on where you want to go.

Sian Roberts (00:53:39):

So if you could clarify what sentence. So my understanding is that right now, we don't even need to sign on to any MRA. Basically, NCARB will approve... If NCARB signs the MRA and an applicant gets a certificate...

(00:54:03):

MRA and an applicant gets a certificate through NCARB, we just automatically, we will automatically, per our rules need to accept them as licensed architects here. That's correct.

Right? So we don't actually have to sign on to MRAs if we want to include folks. Is that right, Elizabeth?

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:54:04]

Elizabeth (00:54:21):

That's correct. Currently the rule 30812050 says if you have an NCARB certificate, the board recognizes NCARB certification to include certification through the broadly experienced architect and or broadly experienced foreign architect programs. So that is one way to automatically become licensed.

Sian Roberts (00:54:48):

So if we did want to have a, there's a number of ways of creating some type of approval process on our side for candidates and that would be either sort of... And so what I'm trying to find out is is there a proposed change that we would want to have? I think what I was hearing in the last meeting was the UK's experience requirement. To be honest, I actually don't have a concern about that. I think it's probably okay from my perspective, but I do understand and now this does have an impact on us because NCARB is pursuing more and more MRAs with more and more countries. And so I think going forward, do we want to put into place some type of, if you get an NCARB certificate through an MRE, there's an additional process from our side or are we okay? Are we trusting that NCARB through its due diligence and its comparison of programs is doing an adequate job for us in terms of vetting those candidates? Erica.

Erica Loynd (00:56:15):

This is [inaudible 00:56:18]. This is kind of a question of getting some clarification since I am new to the board. Prior to being on the board, I was the licensure advisor for the state of Washington on behalf of NCARB and AI Washington council. And at that time it was my understanding of clarifications that were made to the WAC and the RCW in recent years, before I became a board member, was to allow NCARB to be or allow it that we could manage more easily without creating new regulations or new verbiage every time. NCARB changed the criteria or a new endeavor came on. And so it was part of being more balanced of letting NCARB be the entity that made the regulation changes.

(00:57:17):

For example, the instance in particular that I know of at the time was if a board or if NCARB had changed the rolling clock or a reference of IDP versus AXP, which is the modern testing or apprenticeship, we didn't have to change our criteria because they changed their terminology. It feels like if we were to now go back and I'm making more regulations or changes to differentiate from NCARB, we're going back to where we were before. It's kind of a question, was that part of the direction we were trying to do through the board five years ago to be more consistent with NCARB?

Sydney Muhle (00:58:00):

So I will rely on the board members who have some more institutional knowledge, but yes, from the writing of the WAX as they are right now, it would appear that that was the goal.

Sian Roberts (00:58:13):

I think we're talking about two different things here. I think that the cleanup of the language that we did a while ago was, and the reference to NCARB programs was specific to AXP, making sure that NCARB's traditional programs as they evolved and rebranded or changed names or whatever, that we didn't have to change our rules as a result. So we referenced NCARB programs. I think specifically in terms of initial licensure.

(00:58:47):

I think this is a different question really because we're talking about a different set of candidates that are now coming through the pipeline at NCARB and coming through different education, different experience. Again, being involved in NCARB, I tend to trust that they do their due diligence and being involved in committees I understand what that looks like. So I tend to have a certain amount of confidence in their vetting ability and their ability to be able to work with these other jurisdictions to make sure that our programs are equivalent. But I can also understand that there may be some board members or there may be some concern that people coming with a different pathway. Again, we're talking about pathway, so licensure, a different pathway. We might want to have an additional check.

(00:59:47):

Personally, just from my perspective, I'm fine with this. I think if we end up with an MRA coming through that we don't feel comfortable with, we can have that discussion. But I also would like to hear other people's perspectives on this.

Erica Loynd (01:00:03):

To conclude with that, I agree with you that these being vetted and we've been participatory in them and it's not a blanket all MRAs will always be accepted. With the conversation we previously just had of our state is going to be losing a lot of licensed architects very soon, having more pathways to licensure is the goal of the board through allowing people to do it through apprenticeship rather than professional accreditation from universities. The more ways that we can have trusted entities bring candidates to our state, I think is going to be important.

Scott Harm (01:00:44):

Yeah, I'm fine with where we are now. I like the idea that we can in essence remain silent and have the processes we've currently approved it, relying on NCARB's vetting. I'm fine with that. I do agree that we don't necessarily need to imply or want to imply that this is going to be end all, be all for all MRAs and that we have the responsibility to review each one and make sure it's in keeping with our own objectives and goals but remaining silent at this point. I think aside from any wordsmithing, and I agree with Sian, I'd like to see maybe what sentence was the heartburn, but I am trusting in NCARB's due diligence in vetting candidates and going through the review process and getting verification of experiences. I think they spend a lot of calories and doing that. So I'm pretty comfortable with staying the course at this point.

Paul Wu (01:01:49):

Board member Wu here, I do concur and agree with all the statements made before by the other fellow board members. So I do agree that we should wait and see and in general agreement with what's going on.

Sian Roberts (01:02:10):

So now I'm kind of asking what it is we need to do because I believe, Elizabeth, that the language that you were talking about would be if we wanted to not accept MRA candidates. Is that correct? The sentence is okay as is if we are accepting MRA candidates?

Sydney Muhle (01:02:36):

So I think we lost Elizabeth on the call, but yes, if we are okay with accepting NCARB certificates at this moment, then the language that we have is fine. If we are wanting to move away from that, that's where we would need to change. So it sounds like we have a consensus from the board to go ahead and leave it as is right now. I can get together with Elizabeth and see if she can provide a little bit of additional clarification on that single sentence and what a potential change could be and we can provide that in a memo to the board just in case it does come up again in the future. We will at least have that legal analysis ready. For example the Taiwan MRA that has been put on hold, if that were to come back around in a year or so and the board were to have concerns, then we can have that analysis ready and see what we would need to be looking at if and when the board did want to make a change to that role.

Sian Roberts (01:03:39):

Okay. I am a little confused though because I'm seeing on the agenda now adoption of the MRAs and my understanding was we didn't need to adopt the MRAs.

Sydney Muhle (01:03:47):

So we do. We have too. And so I put those on the agenda. Technically it is not required. However, the practice for this board has still been to formally more or less adopt. You guys aren't really signing on to anything. There's not really a formal resolution or anything. It's just kind of been a formal agreement from the board that you guys are okay with accepting applicants from these countries. And I think that has kind of been a practice established from the NCARB level that they like to have that formal blessing from each jurisdiction rather than just feeling as though you guys have given NCARB a blank check for whatever they want to do at the MRA level.

Sian Roberts (01:04:39):

Okay. Okay. Yeah, my understanding was Elizabeth thought it was not a good idea for us to actually formally adopt, but at any rate.

Sydney Muhle (01:04:46):

It's not necessary for you to formally adopt, but there's really no risk in-

Sian Roberts (01:04:52):

There's nothing wrong with it. Okay. And it clarifies it for NCARB. I can understand that.

Sydney Muhle (01:04:58):

Yeah, it clarifies it for NCARB as well as any applicants who are looking. I know that's something that depending on the way the rules are written across different jurisdictions that a lot of applicants do look closely at.

Sian Roberts (01:05:12):

Okay. All right. Well in that case, I am looking for a motion to adopt the updated MRA with Australia and New Zealand.

Scott Harm (01:05:25):

This is board member Harm. I would like to move that we approve the MRA as revised and submitted for our consideration as presented in this meeting that we go ahead and approve that.

Erica Loynd (01:06:18):

Board member Loynd, I second the motion.

Sian Roberts (01:06:22):

Thank you. Any discussion? Okay, we'll move to a vote. All those in favor of adopting the MRA say aye.

Scott Harm (01:06:26):

Aye.

Erica Loynd (01:06:26):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (01:06:26):

Any opposed? Okay, thank you. We're going to move on to the next MRA, which is the amended MRA with Canada and Mexico. Can I have a motion to approve?

Erica Loynd (01:06:26):

Vice chair Loynd, I move to approve the MRA as amended and presented for Canada and Mexico.

Paul Wu (01:06:26):

Board member Wu, I will second the motion.

Sian Roberts (01:06:26):

Thank you. Any discussion? Okay, we'll move to the vote. All those in favor of adopting the amended MRA group Canada and Mexico, please say aye.

Paul Wu (01:06:32):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (01:06:35):

Any opposed? Okay. Thank you. Thank you everyone. Now we are going to move on to item number eight complaint cases for review. And it looks like the first one is board member Wu's.

Paul Wu (01:06:53):

Yes. Case number 2023/11/2533/ 00ARC. This is a complaint received by the Central Investigation and Audit Unit, which alleges that the respondent and respondents business were

engaged in unlicensed practice of architecture. The complainant alleged that neither the person nor the company were registered with the Washington State Department of Licensing either as an architecture firm or as an architect. The complainant states that the respondent were using several references under their company name, which allude to the company being an architecture firm and all the respondent being architects. And the finding is that response received by the respondent indicate that they do not represent themselves as architects, but rather as a project managers, business developers and overall company management. Respondent also say that the business utilizes the surface of two directives of architecture if surface require a license.

(01:08:15):

The respondent indicate that all architectural work was under the supervision of these individuals and that at no time was any architectural report or plan prepared without their knowing and approvals. Respondent also indicate that no architect work for the company was ever misled as to their role or future of it. It was verified by the investigator that the respondent's company obtained an architectural firm license on January 30th, 2024. Was also verified that the designated architects for the firm have current and active Washington state license. So the recommendation is to close with no further action. That's the end of my case.

Sian Roberts (01:09:15):

Okay. Do I have a motion regarding this complaint case?

Scott Harm (01:09:21):

This is board member Harm. I'll go move that we concur with the case manager's report and close this case of no further action.

Erica Loynd (01:09:31):

This is [inaudible 01:09:32] Loynd, I second motion.

Sian Roberts (01:09:35):

Do we have any discussion about this particular complaint case? Okay, I think we're ready to move to vote then. All those in favor of closing complaint case 2023/112533/00ARC with no further action please signify by saying aye.

Speaker 1 (01:09:59):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (01:10:00):

Any opposed? Okay, thank you. Case is closed. We'll move on to the next case, which might take a little bit of time. I believe this is board member Harm's case.

Scott Harm (01:10:17):

Oh, okay. I'm out of order

Sian Roberts (01:10:19):

Sorry, I missed one. I'm sorry I missed one. Sorry. Case 040961, board member Loynd.

Erica Loynd (01:10:30):

Yes. And mine shall not take that long. Mine was quite simple or straightforward as well. So the claim was related to verbiage on a website for the respondent referring to architectural services on the website. The website was reviewed, the state approached the respondent with the information of the violation. They quickly address the references on the website and have had them all removed in their entirety. So I recommend we close with no further action for this cause.

Sian Roberts (01:10:59):

Can I have a motion?

Paul Wu (01:11:01):

I move to approve the findings of the case number 2024040961/00ARC.

Scott Harm (01:11:09):

This is board member Harm. I second that motion.

Sian Roberts (01:11:16):

Any discussion? Hearing none. Can I have a vote for those in favor of closing case 2024040961/00ARC with no further action please say aye.

Speaker 1 (01:11:31):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (01:11:34):

Those opposed? Case is closed. Okay, we'll move on to the next one. 0097. Scott, you're on.

Scott Harm (01:11:45):

Yeah, and this is, I've been on the board for a pretty long time. I'm now the most senior member of the board and this is the largest filing I've ever seen. Several hundred pages of documents, exhibits. The complainant essentially alleges that through design and construction firm, I think, I don't know that I named them in my report.

Sian Roberts (01:12:09):

You did actually.

Scott Harm (01:12:09):

Oh, did I?

Sian Roberts (01:12:11):

Yeah.

Scott Harm (01:12:12):

Okay. I don't know if that's appropriate or not, but they are out of business. So since it is a matter of record in my report. Yeah, Katera Design Build architectural firm, I think it's Katera Architecture. PLLC was the original entity. And the complainant alleges a lot of allegations against the company and specific individuals who were named in the complaint. This got really complicated. You can tell by my report it's rather lengthy. It was originally filed in, I believe June. And then additional material was submitted in August by the complainant, which alleges that the firm itself conducted many violations of the Washington Administrative Code or the WAC as we refer to it, as well as the Securities and Exchange Commission in fraudulent behavior misrepresentation.

(01:13:12):

And ultimately there was incident where someone was killed on one of their job sites and there were complaints filed against wrongful death for an employee of the corporation. But just a large litany of accusations against the individuals in the company. I could find in my reading the copious amount of material, nothing that really substantiated specific architectural practice violations that were alleged in the complaint. I couldn't find the specific evidence of the allegations. And the allegations were filled with a lot of colorful language. You can tell that the complainant is very emphatic and passionate about this. But I found in my deliberation and review of the material couldn't find anything specifically. But it did garner my attention enough that I pulled in our attorney general's office because of the magnitude of the allegations. And it's like, well, if these are true, do we need to look at the broader case?

(01:14:19):

And so I've had several conversations with the Attorney General's office in their representation with Evelyn and Grace and others and was informed that well since the wrongful death case was dismissed by the King County courts, I'm trying to find the exact language. So I'm going through another email here real quick. Yeah. That the wrongful death case in which Katera was named as a defendant was dismissed with prejudice in the King County Superior Court. So we can take no action on that. And then the larger case, I was reminded by the Attorney General's Office what our jurisdiction as a board defines in it. And a lot of the allegations were way outside of our purview. So I could just limit my examination into the things of were they falsely representing themselves as architects, which wasn't the case, were they untruthful or deceptive in any professional reports or statement. Couldn't find really that.

(01:15:28):

So I've got five delineations of things that are under our [inaudible 01:15:35] and none of them really fit to a tee this complaint. And again, since Katera is not only bankrupt, but they've closed up shop, there's no action that can, through the board, don't get me wrong, through the board, that the board can take pursuant to the company. And I really didn't find any direct evidence of the allegations by the complainant to the individuals named in the complaint who are licensed architects. I think the complainant was really had a bad dealing or exchange with the company and the individuals. That's pretty evident. But couldn't find anything that was specifically substantial on the architects who were just practicing within the confines of a much larger corporation. So they were members of a corporation as employees. They weren't directors, they weren't presidents, they were employees. So despite the large amount of material and having counseled with our attorney general's office, I am actually recommending that we close this case with no further action. And I'm available for a lot of questions.

Sian Roberts (01:16:54):

Actually, why don't we ask, I'll ask for a motion and then we can discuss.

Paul Wu (01:16:58):

I move to close this case as proposed.

Erica Loynd (01:17:04):

I second the motion.

Sian Roberts (01:17:05):

Okay. Moving on to discussion. So I can appreciate, Scott, that you spent a lot of time going through this and appreciate your efforts and diligence to the task. I guess not having access to all of the information, my question is really about, I agree that the firm is the firm, but really this is a complaint about individual licensees. And I'll just say that often we need to be very careful that we're not protecting licensees in the industry and that we're holding licensees to the law. So my question is really about this sort of fraudulent activity and whether there was any evidence of fraudulent activity among the individual licensees. And you said there were five things. I kind of wonder what are those five things and how did you evaluate those five things against the information you had for the individual licensees?

Scott Harm (01:18:18):

So the five items were delineated by our attorney general's office and the allegations included some misuse of material that was produced by other companies incorporated into construction sets. But that was something done at the corporate level, not the individual level. And so when I'm told through the attorney general's office that we have these five areas. And Sydney, I don't know if I could share this email at this time or in the future for a board's discussion. Because I do think there's very valuable information in this email that I'm referring to from the attorney general's office. But I don't know what my freedom is to go ahead and share that with other board members. But I do think there's a value to it.

(01:19:08):

But with having said that, there were allegations, but Chair, what I found was a lack of real hard evidence that it tracked through the licensed architects. It was more of a violation conducted by the company as a corporation and their business dealings and nothing specifically pointed to the professionals, the licensed architects who were named, I think there were three or four of them, maybe more, couldn't find anything that was submitted that would prove that they were misrepresenting what they were doing as professionals. It was the business, I'm being redundant, I'm sorry, but this as much-

Sian Roberts (01:19:49):

You mentioned that none of the individual licensees were actually directors in the corporation, so they were not at a high level in the organization.

Scott Harm (01:19:59):

It's my understanding. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. They were not, yeah, it was more of a construction company than an architectural firm. And these were the architects working within the larger company.

Sydney Muhle (01:20:15):

Scott, in terms of that email, normally I would say forward it through Grace Hamilton and then she can remove any case specifics. But we still only have Grace on a part-time basis right now. So if you wanted to shoot her over to me, I can remove any case specifics and get it formatted properly.

Scott Harm (01:20:32):

Sure. You bet.

Sian Roberts (01:20:39):

Any other board member questions for-

Erica Loynd (01:20:41):

This is board member Loynd, Vice Chair, Loynd. I'll agree that reading through the summary that you provided, it did feel like it was more about the company than the people, but then as you discussed it, it seems like the people named and so it is adding a little bit of confusion to me of...

(01:21:03):

... it is adding a little bit of confusion to me of the people were named and they are aware that they were named specifically?

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Scott Harm (01:21:09):

Yes.

Erica Loynd (01:21:10):

But as you did the research, you found that the allegations were actually pointing to company operations, not individuals performing things?

Scott Harm (01:21:20):

Great question. Actually, it's a little bit of both, as I said, and the complainant was filled with very colorful language, so it's pretty evident that this individual who filed the complaint felt wronged by the company and these individuals. What I couldn't find was the evidence that said, "Under our auspice of the five things that were allowed to consider, and I've since for this to Sydney signing and permitting, permitting a seal to be affixed to a drawing that you didn't have involvement with." There were allegations of that, but there was nothing of evidence like, this drawing was submitted from a firm, let's say in another jurisdiction, and the very next day it was submitted. There was nothing that says that they didn't do their due diligence incorporating work of others through a sub-consultant agreement in many cases as the professionals. But wrapped

in that is also that this individual, the complainant, found that Katerra was just a horrible organization out to screw investors and all that.

(01:22:28):

And that's why we got into the WAC and SEC because were violations that they were misrepresenting themselves and stealing from shareholders. But since they've gone bankrupt, there's nothing that we can do specifically as a board, but even as a state against Katerra because they've closed up shop and they're all gone kind of a thing. But I did pay attention to the allegations of the individuals. I just didn't find the hard evidence of the specific allegations that the complainant made were substantiated in what was provided for me to review. So it's a little bit of both and the complainants not recognizing that these individuals were not members of the board of directors or presidents, officials of the corporations, that they were just simply employees who were acting in the course of their daily activities.

Sian Roberts (01:23:31):

Okay. Again, to try to just be a little bit... Make sure we're doing our due diligence, I appreciate the fact that the Attorney General's office has been involved and reviewed this and also concurred with this. So that gives me confidence.

Scott Harm (01:23:47):

And I'll pander. I did want to find something, trust me. Again, feeling the pain of the individual that filed the complaint. Just looking at it objectively, not trying to protect anybody's livelihood or their profession. I just couldn't find the evidence and I scanned through the people on this call. I thought maybe the complainant would be on it. And I do suspect that issuing the findings that we should close without further action. I fully suspect that we will hear from the complainant again.

(01:24:22):

I would be surprised if we don't, and so that would afford us the opportunity to revisit this maybe more specifically if they hear the reasons for my articulating. I believe this should be closed with no further action. I believe maybe that might kick the complaint in the rear end so that they give us a little bit more information if there is indeed something that is warranted. But I can't find anything at this point and I did want to find something, even though that really isn't my responsibility, but just couldn't find it. Especially in the five areas of where we are supposed to stay focused on.

Sian Roberts (01:24:59):

Appreciate that. Just one last question for me is just the, did you find anything... And I know you haven't checked this box, so the answer is no, but did you find anything specific enough for those specific individuals to warrant some sort of remediation or counseling?

Scott Harm (01:25:19):

No. No. I mean, allegations on face value is kind of like why I wanted to find something, but the items that were submitted as evidence just didn't make me come to the same conclusion. And what it might be is the complainant's first person observations in the moment, but not having the evidence to back up what was alleged. That is just they have first person knowledge of this stuff,

but there was no evidence of malfeasance or misbehavior by the licensed architects themselves. And I did want to find something. Yeah, I did.

Sian Roberts (01:26:04):

Any more discussion for board members? Okay. Well let's take a vote then on the motion that has been put forward to accept the case manager's recommendation to close case 2023010097OARC with no further action. Those in favor say aye. Aye. Those opposed? Okay. The case is closed with no further action. All right, Scott, it looks like you also have the last one.

Scott Harm (01:26:46):

Yeah, this fortunately is a little clear. This allegation was alleged that the respondent was in violation of the RCW related to business offering architectural services but not being licensed. What I did find was that a drafting service worked as a sub-consultant with a contract in place with an architectural firm and probably small means. So they're augmenting their production staff by hiring a drafting service. But it did follow the protocol of being a sub-consultant that was reviewed by the architect prior to incorporating into a larger package. It was very clear to me that the drafting service was representing themselves as a drafting service. There were, I believe, instances where they were using the architectural design and architectural drafting and kind of passive language on the homepage, but as soon as they were contacted that material and was removed.

(01:27:52):

But now it says that it's under construction. So I believe I'm asking staff to check back in... And yeah, there it is. In three months time because the homepage for the drafting services is under construction that we should make sure that they don't do a bait and switch and go back to using that protected language when they have the website back up. So I'm asking staff in the department to go ahead and do a check-in three months from the day to make sure that again, they haven't switched it back on and use the protected language. Other than that, it seems like contractually wise, it followed the normal protocol that I would expect in normal business dealings with someone who needed to augment their own production capabilities with contracted drafting services kind of a thing.

(01:28:44):

And that the architect did their due diligence in the review of the material made review comments and that the onus was on the drafting company for using that protected language, which, I believe will be amended. But again, I just want us to be sure and back check. So I'm recommending that again, we close this with no further action other than... I don't know if it's... I guess I have a question. I don't know if no further action or the action being do the check in three months. Sydney, I don't know if you can help me out on this. Do I want to make that part of... Amend my recommendation? Well, I guess it is part of my recommendation that we do that check in.

Sydney Muhle (01:29:25):

Yeah, that can be your full recommendation, but it's basically no formal action at this time.

Paul Wu (01:29:38):

I move to approve the recommendations with no action at this time.

Sian Roberts (01:29:45):

Can I second, can I move and second? Okay, I second. Okay. All those in favor of accepting the case manager's recommendation to close with no further action at this time for case 2023112534OOARC, please say aye. Aye. Oh, Scott, did you have something?

Scott Harm (01:30:11):

Well, yeah, again, I'm getting myself confused. We're saying no further action when I'm requesting that we check back in three months. So there is a further action.

Sydney Muhle (01:30:21):

I think the motion can just be motion to accept the case manager's recommendation.

Sian Roberts (01:30:27):

Absolutely, yes. Accept the case manager's recommendations, which is written with the additional note that Scott is talking about.

Scott Harm (01:30:35):

Thank you very much.

Sian Roberts (01:30:36):

Okay, those in favor?

Paul Wu (01:30:39):

Aye.

Sian Roberts (01:30:41):

Any opposed? Okay.

Scott Harm (01:30:46):

Thank you.

Sian Roberts (01:30:47):

We will move on to reports. We don't have any committee or task force reports this meeting. So I'm going to move on and turn this over to Sydney to give us the staff reports.

Sydney Muhle (01:31:03):

Thank you very much. So I will be providing the centralized investigation and audits unit report. Unfortunately, they are very, very short-staffed right now, so they ask me to provide that report for them. So as you guys can tell, a little bit of a busier quarter for you guys than what you typically see. So we do have nine that are currently in investigation status. Those have not even been assigned to a case manager yet, so I believe those are still in intake and being processed and we will be assigned to a case manager as they move through the process. We have five that have been in a management review, four of which you just closed, so those will be sliding

off. And then eight that were closed for grand total of 22 so far this year, which I think is quite the uptick for the architects. So are there any questions on the complaint?

Sian Roberts (01:32:01):

Yeah, I don't believe that I have anything under review, Sydney, so maybe I missed an email Anyway,

Sydney Muhle (01:32:09):

I can follow up with Grace.

Sian Roberts (01:32:12):

That'd be great. Appreciate it.

Sydney Muhle (01:32:12):

I'll share a message and just ask her to double check.

Sian Roberts (01:32:16):

Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (01:32:19):

All right, and then I will hand it off to Tanya Hessler, our program manager for the licensing customer support services unit to give you guys the licensee account report.

Tanya Hessler (01:32:30):

Good morning. So our licensee account report, it's in age classification, so we have 1,676 architects, 65 and above, 1,857, ages 55 to 64, 1,747 ages 45 to 54, 1,370 ages 35 to 44, and under 25 or 25 to 34 is 399 for a grand total of 7,049. And up to June, we have processed 212 new applications, 1,548 renewals. And then this shows the licensee count from 2020 at 6,433 coming into 224, which is the 7,049.

Sydney Muhle (01:33:42):

Were there any questions for Tanya on the licensee count report? And I do want to point out on this one that of our regulatory programs, this is the only one that has had a very steady increase, particularly coming through COVID. The rest of our regulatory programs definitely had a significant drop-off during COVID and have been slowly recovering. So that does give me hope for where you guys are at in terms of your licensees and that base continuing to grow, that you guys have continued that study in client, particularly through COVID when so much did shut down.

Sian Roberts (01:34:24):

It also tells me that people like to hold on to their licenses after they retire or architects never retire. Both of those things I think are true.

Sydney Muhle (01:34:34):

That's definitely been something we've kind of been scratching our heads over, particularly looking at those age demographics and understanding that the vast majority of you work in the private sector where retiring after 20, 25 years is still very much the norm versus public sector where it's nothing for people to be in their industries for 35 to 40 years. And so trying to gauge where the industry is at and kind of how your trends are going. So we may be seeking additional feedback from you guys on what you see.

Sian Roberts (01:35:12):

I think that being a licensed architect is more than just being able to practice architecture for architects. So there's an emotional identity piece of that that I'm sure people like to maintain but...

Erica Loynd (01:35:30):

Yes, Board Member Lauren. I was going to say the same thing. I think there's a unique thing about our profession that it becomes part of our identity and losing the license when you cannot call yourself an architect anymore is a very personal thing that people don't want to lose. And I've talked with some people who have that sentiment.

Sydney Muhle (01:35:49):

Makes sense.

Sian Roberts (01:35:52):

Good for us. Good for the board.

Scott Harm (01:35:54):

Yep. I don't think architects ever retire. Hold onto to their licenses, yeah.

Paul Wu (01:36:01):

I'm a prime example of that.

Sian Roberts (01:36:04):

Yes, you are.

Scott Harm (01:36:05):

My wife is that and is a dentist. She's been retired for four years, but she hasn't given up her license. It's pretty interesting to watch from the sidelines. Okay.

Sydney Muhle (01:36:21):

All right, well then from that I'll move on to the board commission outreach unit reports. So I did want to give one final update on the substitute hospital 1880. This was the rolling clock legislation that has now been completely implemented. All of the changes went live July 1st. We had a really amazing legislative team that helped with this implementation, including Tanya Hessler, who you just saw. She and her team were phenomenal doing a lot of the background work to make sure that this was ready to roll out on time. And arguably probably one of the easier implementations that we have had. This was a pretty straightforward one, but everything

has been updated. There were a lot of communications with licensees through NCARB as well as through us. I believe AIA may have even shared with applicants who were still in the process. So everybody has had a lot of communications on it, but just did want to provide that final update that yes, this has been fully implemented now and the rolling clock is officially off the books in Washington state.

Sian Roberts (01:37:38):

Yay. Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (01:37:41):

All right, and then our final report is just to review the master action item list. The model law committee, I believe Sian and Erica, are looking to provide a report on that in October. If that needs to get pushed out for whatever reason, please just let me know and I'll make that update

Erica Loynd (01:38:01):

Real quick. You have that noted as October '25. Did you mean October of '24?

Sydney Muhle (01:38:06):

I did. Thank you for catching that.

Sian Roberts (01:38:07):

So you're giving us another year?

Sydney Muhle (01:38:07):

I'm giving you another year. Oh my goodness, me and my typos this round. I'm so sorry. So yes, that is October of 24. The statistics for the law exam review. We are still waiting on the management analyst support on that. There have been a lot of changes and a lot of demands on their time and resources. So they just have not had that ability quite yet. The rolling clock has now been completed so after that last report, I get to take that off of the list. We already provided an update on outreach to the universities working with NCARB. We are still working with AIA on monitoring for any legislative impacts and we'll be providing those to the board.

(01:38:59):

I know that Tammy and her team have several items that they are wanting to look at. It's just in terms of timing and when they want to look at those. So Tammy and I are in contact pretty regularly and I'll make sure that any of those updates get provided to the board in a timely fashion. The Alternative Pathways school programs throughout Washington State, as Sian said she's been working on that. We already have a couple that Roch provided before he left the board as well. And we'll be working on getting that list built for you guys as a resource. And then we had to review on the potential changes for the rules on MRAs and that's been decided. So that'll be coming off of the list moving forward. That is it. Are there any questions? All right, thank you very much.

Scott Harm (01:39:56):

Thank you.

Sian Roberts (01:39:59):

Okay, we're going to move on to public comments beyond those that we asked for that particular agenda item. So the public may address the board on matters within the board's jurisdiction, either verbally during the meeting or by submitting written comments in advance. Verbal comments are limited to one three minute comment. Written comments are limited to no more than 500 words and must be emailed to board staff no less than two business days prior to the meeting. In response to all public comments, the board is limited to requesting that the matter be added to a future agenda for discussion or directing staff to study the matter further. Inflammatory comments and language will not be permitted. Sydney, have any comments been submitted in writing?

Sydney Muhle (01:40:41):

No, ma'am.

Sian Roberts (01:40:43):

Okay. Well, then we'll open it up. Open the meeting up to public comment. Do any members of the public have a comment?

Scott Harm (01:40:55):

Don't forget to come off mute if you're talking.

Tammy (01:41:00):

I do have one comment if that's all right, because it was a discussion earlier today. So AIA Washington Council is definitely interested in any opportunity that we might have to partner with this board in outreach to NCARB members, licensees, or anyone entering the profession. So we are open to that opportunity and are in the process of planning something that we hope the board will participate in. I think Sian, you'll be participating with us later in October.

Sian Roberts (01:41:35):

Thank you, Tammy. Any other public comments? Please get off mute or I will be closing. Okay, with that we will close public comments. All right, move on to item number 11, Sydney. Okay. Do any board members or staff have any announcements or additional reports they'd like to make at this time? Okay. Any additional future agenda items that we haven't discussed yet that board members would like to add? Scott.

Scott Harm (01:42:36):

Sydney, this is going to be coming at you with a sinking curveball. I think what I'm about to ask predates everybody on this call except for me. There was a hit that our specific architectural board budget was hit for. I think it was an updating of the primary website, internal website for the Department of Licensing. This was a couple of years ago and we were hit with our fair share of updating the program, but there was this dangling participle of we reserve the right to come back and take more money. And it was almost a take, not request. And so I don't know if you even know of what I'm speaking about, but I've always been curious of did it come in on budget or did we end up as a department within the department of license. Did we end up paying more for this administrative update? And I don't know if you know what I'm talking about or not, but...

Sydney Muhle (01:43:36):

That is not one of the pieces of information that Rick Storvik shared with me before he left. But I saw Deb came on camera so he might've shared it with her.

Scott Harm (01:43:46):

Yeah, admittedly, I got kind of pissy about the whole thing.

Sian Roberts (01:43:49):

I remember it.

Scott Harm (01:43:49):

Okay, good. Yeah.

Sian Roberts (01:43:49):

I remember it, Scott. Yes. It was like, "We're reaching into... You guys have this too many reserves and we have this big technology project that we have underway, and so we're going to dip into your pockets and take this money."

Scott Harm (01:44:07):

Right. Yeah. Yeah. You said that much nicer than I would have.

Sian Roberts (01:44:12):

No, I think I said it not as nice.

Scott Harm (01:44:14):

So yeah, I just like to know because I got pretty upset with, "You can go in and just take it without checking with us the next time." So if we could find out just to make my blood pressure go up a little bit more, I guess did it come in on budget or did it cost us more? And it's inconsequential, I'll admit, but it's one of those things that just [inaudible 01:44:35] in the back of my head. It just went quiet. I don't know what happened kind of a thing. So yeah.

Sydney Muhle (01:44:41):

I see Deb is ready to speak, so [inaudible 01:44:46].

Scott Harm (01:44:43):

Okay.

Deb (01:44:47):

Hello? Yeah. Hi Scott. Hi.

Scott Harm (01:44:48):

Hey, Deb.

Deb (01:44:49):

I hopped on. Yes. We came in on budget, we completed the project. Now we're at the point that it is maintenance mode. So what you were remembering was our new licensing system that the project started, probably first phases started in... Well, conversation started at least in 2018. By 2019, the project had started. We did all of our 39 programs that were in our legacy licensing system were moved into the new system. There was a percentage of costs that were spread out amongst all of the programs. It may not have been entirely equitable because if you had a better fund balance, we may have taken a little more than some of the other programs, which is maybe where your memory is coming into play, Scott. But yes, that project has done and paid for and at this point, your licensing fees help to support the maintenance on the program and the system only. So we're all good.

Scott Harm (01:45:57):

So we're good team players is what you're saying?

Deb (01:45:59):

You are excellent team players and as long as the technology is good for hopefully the next 10 to 15 years, no more big projects in our future.

Scott Harm (01:46:09):

Great. Okay. Well, thanks. Yeah. All right. Good.

Deb (01:46:10):

Okay.

Sian Roberts (01:46:13):

Thank you for that clarification. Anything else for future agenda items? Okay, so I believe that board staff now will be able to review the action items from today's meeting if there were any.

Sydney Muhle (01:46:32):

There were a few. So we'll be coordinating additional AIA outreach events with Tammy. Elizabeth [inaudible 01:46:43] and I will put together a memo regarding that potential change to the Washington Administrative Code for you guys. In the event that the board reaches a point where they feel like that needs to happen, we'll at least have that ready to go. I'll be going through and redacting that identifying information from that ag opinion that Scott forwarded to me and I'll share that with the board as well as I'll include the investigations team on that as well. I'll be reaching out to Grace regarding Sian's case that's in review. So we'll see what's going on with that. And then we'll be looking for the update to the [inaudible 01:47:31] committee at the next meeting. That is it.

Sian Roberts (01:47:35):

Excellent. Okay. Well, I think we've reached the end of our agenda here. So the time is now 11:50 and this meeting is adjourned. Thank you, all.

Paul Wu (01:47:46):

Bye.

Scott Harm (01:47:46):

Thank you.

Sian Roberts (01:47:47):

Thank you.

Scott Harm (01:47:51):

Great day.

Sian Roberts (01:47:51):

Hey Scott, just real quick.

Scott Harm (01:47:53):

Yes.

Sian Roberts (01:47:54):

I'm wondering if we should jump on-

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