

MARYLAND REAL ESTATE COMMISSION
500 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Mission: Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public
through examination, licensing, and regulatory activities regarding real estate

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
February 17, 2021 10:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Marla Johnson (Industry)
Commissioner Karen Baker (Consumer)
Commissioner Anne Cooke (Industry)
Commissioner Jeff Wright (Industry)
Commissioner J. Nicholas D'Ambrosia, Chair (Industry)
Commissioner Demetria Scott (Industry)
Commissioner Michelle Wilson (Consumer)
Commissioner Michael Lord (Consumer)
Charlene Faison, Education Director, Session Recorder
Michael Kasnic, Executive Director
Jillian Lord, Asst. Executive Director
Jessica Praley, AAG
Gregory Morgan, Labor Commissioner

ABSENT:

Commissioner Kambon Williams (Consumer)

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Susan Mitchell, MR
Jason Brand, AACAR
Kathie Connelly, Broker
Brenda Kasuva, MREEA
Gosha Bawiec
Barbara Maloney
Kim Caspari
Kimberly Goudy

CALL TO ORDER:

J. Nicholas D'Ambrosia, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM

REPORT OF COMPLAINTS/ADMINISTRATIVE DISMISSALS:

Motion (made by Karen Baker, seconded by Jeff Wright) **To approve the Administrative Dismissals for the month of February 2021. Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion (made by Jeff Wright, seconded by Marla Johnson) **To approve the minutes, with amendments, of the January 20, 2021 business meeting.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Education
 - For the month of January 2021, PSI administered 1123 salesperson and 60 broker exams, compared to 852 salesperson and 53 broker exams in January 2020.
 - Continuation of virtual CE – Commission believes it would be a plus; Commission does not want to make a decision on prelicensing courses at this time.
 - Chair D’Ambrosia would like to point out virtual prelicensing classes that MHEC did grant permission to, even before the pandemic, continue.
 - Remote PSI proctoring was discussed. The Commission believes it would benefit Marylanders.
 - Train the Trainer
 - This is an event to consider having in 2022.
 - Supervision course, once revisions are completed with happen this year.
 - Education meeting will be held February 22, 2021. The public is welcome to submit questions to Education Director, Charlene Faison and/or Executive Director Michael Kasnic.
 - Chair raises the issue of extensions – Not sure the Commission has been clear enough about testing. Commissioner Morgan points out the ending of the state of emergency and extension of licenses may differ. He recommends changing of wording on information on the website.
 - Chair recommends advising PSI to have blanket extension process, meaning extensions would be granted without candidates having to request from the Commission.

Motion (made by Marla Johnson, seconded by Demetria Scott) **To have counsel revise the language currently posted on the MREC’s website pertaining of extensions and for the Education Director to direct candidates to the website for guidance and for PSI to issue blanket extensions until further notice. Abstain: Michelle Wilson. Motion carried.**

- Supervision committee met and will meet again in the coming weeks.
- Legislative – Marla Johnson, Legislative Chair
 - Commissioner Johnson is following the property management bill.
 - Counsel is following several bills, among them
 - Property management bill which passed the house on February 12, 2021; Commissioner Morgan believes the bill will move forward
 - Education bill (SB584)
 - HB19 passed in the house
 - HB541 had a hearing yesterday
 - HB399 passed in the house
 - HB972 is being watched
 - Two general bills are also being followed

- Susan Mitchell, MR
 - Property management bill passes house unanimously; believes it is a good bill.
 - Maryland Realtors is following many of the same bill mentioned by counsel.
 - Also following HB1095 which redacts buyer info; believes bill could be problematic; MR's counsel is opposed to the bill, as currently written.

COMMENTS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Michael Kasnic

- There will be a Commission Check newsletter coming soon.
- Commissioner College should soon be completed by all as it is now virtual. Commissioners have been registered for one or both sessions.
- Current license count totals 50,625 of which 4,493 are brokers, 3,193 are associate brokers and 42,231 are salespersons, 155 are reciprocal brokers, 68 are reciprocal associate brokers, and 485 are reciprocal salesperson. Inactive total was not reported. There are 700 branch offices.
- Guaranty fund balance as of December 31, 2020 is 1,088,096.30.
- Complaints are remaining steady.
- One-click (COMAR 09.11.02.02.01) – Commissioners received text on where it currently stands; there were some loopholes previously noted.

Motion (made by Marla Johnson, seconded by Karen Baker) **To have Michael Kasnic to deliver a concept sheet to the Secretary's Office for approval to move forward with the changes. Motion carried.**

- PSI online testing – Education Chair would like to know if anyone is interested in allowing online testing.

Motion (made by Demetria Scott, seconded by Marla Johnson) **To move forward with allowing PSI to implement online testing for prospective test candidates. Motion carried.**

- Wholesaling – Mr. Kasnic reported on data collected from other states through ARELLO distribution email. It was found most states are silent on the subject. Counsel suggest creation of a task force to further discuss the topic and report back to the Commission.

Motion (made by Marla Johnson, seconded by Anne Cooke) **To authorize Chair D'Ambrosia to put together a task force to examine the topic of wholesaling and collect information for a recommendation to the Commission. Motion carried.**

- Commission meetings will continue, even in the event the State of Maryland closes because they are virtual.
- Mileage rate, for travel, decreased.
- Chair reminds all to complete financial statements before the April deadline.

COMMENTS FROM COUNSEL: Jessica Praley, AAG

- No additional comments.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR: J. Nicholas D'Ambrosia

- Chair D'Ambrosia testified about Secretary of State Office being self-funded.
- Distribution of payments (17-322(b)(21) – Chair requests a motion to reinforce what was previously stated and to have staff print in an upcoming issue of the Commission Check newsletter. Counsel reminds all open and closed sessions were held to discuss the subject. Previous discussion was regarding brokers being required to pay agents directly and that agents cannot be paid through title companies or other entities.

Motion (made by Demetria Scott, seconded by Marla Johnson) **To reinforce that the Commission did discuss distribution of funds, pursuant to 17-322(b)(21) and for staff to issue a reminder in the next Commission Check newsletter and a .pdf version be made available. Motion carried.**

- ARELLO – No information has been received as to if the next meeting will be in-person or virtual; Chair D'Ambrosia will reach out to a rep from the organization for information.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Commissioner Wright mentions Zillow purchased Showing Time, an app; concerned that Zillow's footprint in real estate is growing.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 P.M.. The next monthly business meeting is Wednesday, March 17, 2021.

APPROVED AS PRESENTED _____
J. Nicholas D'Ambrosia, Chairperson

APPROVED AS AMENDED _____
J. Nicholas D'Ambrosia, Chairperson