



**BOARD OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE**  
**MARCH 06, 2015**

**SUBJECT: BOARD & COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE PILOT PROGRAM  
UPDATE**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE UPDATE REGARDING THE  
TELECONFERENCE PILOT PROGRAM**

**4**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file status update regarding the Board teleconference pilot program.

**ISSUE**

This following is a status report on the progress of the Board teleconference pilot program to date.

**DISCUSSION**

The Board may recall that a BPM pilot program for testing the logistical and technological reliability of off-site Board member attendance at committee meetings via teleconference was authorized at the November 7, 2014, meeting of the Board. Further to that endeavor, the Executive Officer was directed to report back on the efficacy of the committee teleconferencing pilot effort at the first regularly scheduled full meeting of the Board in 2015.

The discussion below summarizes the teleconference pilot program activities undertaken by staff in the first run of BPM committee meetings in calendar year 2015.

As previously hypothesized, staff believes that the initial teleconferencing pilot effort served as an excellent method for testing the logistical and technological reliabilities, gauging public participation and the amounts of staff time and resources involved in addition to vetting any potential difficulties. Staff is also pleased to report that the first round of pilot testing at committee meetings was met with initial success.

Utilizing the DCA support services available within the Office of Information Services (OIS), staff was able to successfully initiate telephone Conference Bridges for each of BPM's four committees without difficulty. As part of the process, it was discovered that participants may experience some connection difficulties when attempting to telephonically connect to the scheduled conference bridge through webcasting lines rather than a land line. Apart from this minor technical issue, Committee members were

able to easily and conveniently attend the meetings successfully.

In addition to the above teleconferencing process, in an effort to achieve additional enhancements for the public to monitor and participate in the decision-making process by providing additional access points for public attendance, staff elected to test webcast one of BPM's committee meetings. Again, utilizing DCA OIS support services, staff was able to successfully initiate and webcast the Public Education Committee without difficulty. Staff believes that the initial run produced an excellent product that was professional and competently helmed by DCA OIS support staff.

This successful implementation of webcasting for the Public Education Committee of the Board has brought to light a few considerations that should be deliberated by the Board before further implementation on a wider scale.

To begin, in order to meet, honor and advance meaningful opportunities for public participation in agency decision-making processes to those who may be unable to physically attend BPM proceedings, it has been legally recommended that webcasting be implemented only at those locations where a committee member or members are present. In other words, webcasting does nothing to advance the values embodied by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (the "Act") if simply used to provide broadcasts of staff alone. It is the members of the body which guide and determine policy and it is therefore the members in whom the public have a vested interest in viewing.

Secondly, because webcasting is primarily driven in the interest of serving the public, implementation of technologies that offer maximum attendee participation at the lowest cost are the most effective for small agency budgets. DCA OIS services offer extremely effective webcasting services to BPM that are included as part of departmental pro-rata and available for BPM use as needed. Many privately available third-party services offering webcasting technologies, while very well-designed and advanced, are cost-prohibitive for use with average prices running at \$199 and above per event.

It is therefore recommended that BPM continue to use the vast array of DCA OIS support services in connection with future webcasting efforts as the technologies have been essentially tailored for Board and Bureau use.

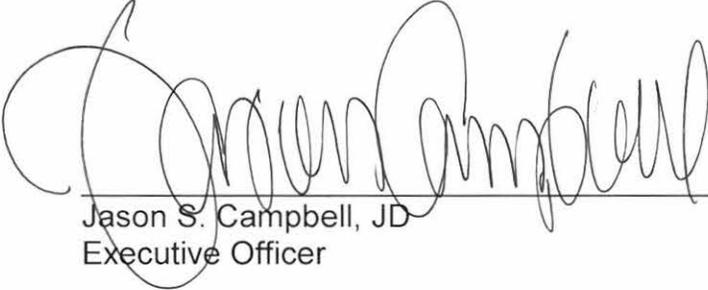
## **NEXT STEPS**

With continued support of the Board staff will continue to execute remote teleconferencing for regularly scheduled committee meetings and continue to pursue implementation of webcasting efforts.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

### A. Board & Committee Teleconference Options

Prepared by: Jason S. Campbell, JD



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**CALIFORNIA BOARD OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE  
 NOVEMBER 7, 2014**

**SUBJECT: BOARD & COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE OPTIONS**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. Authorize initiation of a Board of Podiatric Medicine pilot program for testing the logistical and technological reliability for off-site Board member attendance at committee meetings via teleconference;
- B. Direct the Executive Officer to report back on the efficacy of the committee teleconferencing pilot effort at the first regularly scheduled full Board meeting of 2015; and
- C. Authorize further study on the feasibility and cost associated with expansion and implementation of additional teleconference technology for use in committee and/or board meetings including webcasting and audio telecasting and recording for full implementation at future regular and/or special meetings of the board and committees for the benefit of the public and the Board.

**ISSUE**

The California Board of Podiatric Medicine (“BPM”) has not previously implemented a formal program of teleconferencing Board meetings. While there have been teleconferences held in order to facilitate off-site location attendance of BPM meetings by Board members in the past, teleconference meetings have not been held for nearly a decade and no current formal program exists for expanding the use of current technologies for the benefit of the public and the Board.

**DISCUSSION**

BPM meetings are required to operate in compliance with the provisions of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (the “Act”). The Act requires BPM, among other things, to conduct its meetings in public—unless otherwise specifically authorized to meet in closed session—in an effort to provide the people of California with the ability to participate in the decision-making process. Notwithstanding, the Act does permit audio or audio and visual teleconference meetings for the benefit of the public and the Board.

In the past, BPM has occasionally held remote teleconference meetings for the benefit of the Board which has permitted members to attend remotely. These previous teleconference efforts, which appear to have not been undertaken since at least 2005, have the tendency of significantly assisting to reduce travel and reimbursement expenses associated with holding Board and Committee meetings in a central location within the State. Remote teleconferencing can permit several Board members to participate from an appropriate site close to their respective addresses of record across the state and thus reduce budgetary expenses associated with long range travel costs. Because each site from which a member of the Board participates must also be accessible to the public, remote teleconferencing also has the added primary benefit of providing additional locations from where the public may choose to attend a meeting of the Board. This is especially helpful to those interested members of the public who may not necessarily be able to afford the costs associated with long distance travel in order to attend a meeting far from their home.

In order to achieve additional enhancements for the public to monitor and participate in the decision-making process by providing additional access points for public attendance, it is recommended that a pilot program for off-site Board member attendance at committee meetings via teleconference be authorized. Staff believes that piloting remote teleconferencing at a committee meeting or meetings is a good way to begin a remote teleconferencing program in order to test logistical and technological reliabilities, gauge public participation, and the amounts of staff time and resources that are required in addition to vetting any potential difficulties in order to ensure a smooth deployment before implementation on a larger scale. After implementation of the pilot program, the Executive Officer may report back on the efficacy of the committee teleconferencing pilot effort at the first regularly scheduled full Board meeting of 2015.

Finally, if the pilot program for remote teleconferencing is approved, staff believes that other technological options are yet still available for enabling additional meaningful participation by members of the public who may not necessarily be able to attend meetings of the Board in spite of increased physical access points. For example, those who are aged or infirmed or who may lack the physical capability to attend in-person in spite of a meeting locale close to their homes. These technologies include web-casting, audio telecasting and/or audio recording. Costs associated with each platform vary significantly as do the advantages and disadvantages. For this reason, staff recommends that further study on the feasibility, analysis of positive and negative effects and cost associated with expansion and implementation of the additional aforementioned technologies for use in committee and/or board meetings be authorized. Once research on the various available options and feasibility of each is completed a comprehensive report will be submitted.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The FY 14/15 Budget contains \$8,000 for board and committee meeting expenses.

#### **Impact to Budget**

Initiation of a pilot program for testing remote teleconferencing technologies at committee meetings is not expected to incur greater total expenditures than is currently

spent with the current practice of holding in-person meetings alone. Rather, it is expected to significantly reduce the travel and reimbursement expenses associated with in-person Board meetings. A more detailed financial impact assessment which also details the efficacy of the committee teleconferencing pilot effort will be provided by the Executive Officer at the first regularly scheduled full Board meeting of 2015.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommended action is fully consistent with the legislative value judgments embodied in the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. Provided that remote teleconferencing options comply with all other provisions of the Act, implementation of a pilot effort with an eye towards full implementation in future Board and Committee meetings both honors and advances meaningful opportunities for public participation in agency decision-making processes to those who may be unable to physically attend BPM proceedings.

**NEXT STEPS**

With approval staff will finalize preliminary planning efforts and begin preparation for remote teleconferencing of the next regularly scheduled committee meeting(s).

**ATTACHMENTS**

None.

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