Much ado about something

Delegates voted to adopt significant changes to the model law and bylaws—two foundation documents of the association

If delegates attending the 2015 annual meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, went home feeling like they had just helped set the course of history, there is good reason. Their deliberations at this meeting resulted in significant changes to two of the association’s foundation documents: the bylaws, which provide guidance into the governance of the association, and the Model Social Work Practice Act (or model law), which is a resource available to jurisdictional legislatures and boards to offer guidance in addressing social work regulation. Following two days of discussion and debate by the membership, the amendments proposed by the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee and the Regulation and Standards (RAS) Committee were considered, voted on, and overwhelmingly accepted. Only one proposed amendment to the bylaws, the elimination of nominations from the floor, was not adopted.

Voting on the proposed amendments to the bylaws and model law was done electronically by keypad. Voting proceeded smoothly and efficiently, with only one re-vote required on a bylaws amendment, following notification that one of the devices did not appear to record a delegate’s vote. In their evaluations, members expressed satisfaction with the voting process and appreciation for the speed of receiving the results.

The voting itself took less than an hour, but the preparation for the votes has been under way for the last three years. During that time, the Board of Directors charged both the RAS and Bylaws committees with completing a thorough review of the document for which they are the custodian. Although these committees review the association bylaws and the model law annually, best practices recommend that a deep dive into the content be undertaken every so often to ensure that these living documents remain current. This practice is very much like the process that the association follows with respect to its exam program: every six to eight years, ASWB conducts a practice analysis of the profession of social work to ensure that the exams are testing what is current practice. (See related story.)

Model Law

The RAS Committee began a review of the model law in 2013, breaking the document into sections and surveying membership each year about current practice in their jurisdictions related to the sections then under review. The committee met in person once each year to discuss the survey results.
and develop the recommended changes. In 2015, the third and final year, the committee also considered how to integrate the content from the Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice, which were developed in 2014 by the ASWB International Technology Task Force and published in 2015. All proposed amendments were held and presented to the delegates for consideration this year. The Board of Directors supported the changes proposed by the RAS Committee.

The committee report, including the proposed amendments indicated using strikeout for deletions and bold text for added language, was posted on ASWB’s website for review 60 days prior to the annual meeting, as provided by association policy. The October issue of the association newsletter also noticed membership about the report.

On Friday, November 6, Chair Lisa Crockwell of Newfoundland and Labrador presented the committee report to the assembly. As she reviewed the proposed changes and the rationales, membership was able to follow along using a copy of the report provided to each attendee. Because of the integrated nature of the proposed changes, all amendments were presented together for a single vote on Saturday.

**Bylaws**

The Bylaws Committee began its review of ASWB’s bylaws in 2014, as part of a governance review being conducted by the Board of Directors. The committee worked in collaboration with the Governance Task Force, which was also appointed in 2014. Committee members accepted a two-year appointment in order to ensure consistency in the process. Over the course of the two years, the committee met in person or virtually by conference call 13 times, including two meetings with the Governance Task Force.

In year one, the committee completed a high level review of the bylaws, creating a working document that included comments and questions for further discussion. This document was shared with the Governance Task Force, and no recommendations were brought to the delegate assembly.

In year two, the committee divided into three working groups to develop recommendations for assigned sections of the bylaws. The groups met individually and reconvened as a whole to come to consensus. Rationales were developed and a table format was adopted to present the changes in a uniform manner. These tables became the supporting documentation for discussion of the bylaws with membership.

Because the proposed changes were so extensive, the committee separated related amendments into groups and recommended that the groups be voted on separately. Wordsmithing changes were presented together for a single vote. Substantive changes were presented in seven voting groups. The committee’s report included the tables with the rationales, separated into the voting groups, as well as a copy of the bylaws with the revisions indicated in strikeout for deletion and bold text for added language. The Board of Directors supported all the proposed amendments to the bylaws.

As per association policy, the committee report was posted on ASWB’s website for review 60 days prior to the annual meeting. The October issue of the association newsletter also noticed membership about the report. In addition, the Board approved the committee’s request to hold two information sessions via conference
call prior to the annual meeting to help membership understand the proposed amendments, be able to discuss them in their jurisdictions, and allow delegates to vote knowledgeably at the meeting.

Members were invited to register for the sessions to bring questions and to get more information about the proposed changes and rationales. The sessions, hosted by Kristi Plotner of Mississippi, Bylaws Committee chair, and Richard Silver of Québec, Board liaison, were recorded. The recordings were posted on the ASWB website in addition to the committee report and the revised bylaws text. Fifteen member board members and staff participated in the sessions.

At the annual meeting, Plotner gave the committee report on Friday and responded to questions raised by members on Saturday as part of the voting process. As bylaws amendment voting groups were voted on, delegates were able to follow this complex process using a Bylaws Voting Summary document that presented the amendments by group with strikeouts indicating deletions, bold text indicating added language, and color blocks highlighting specific wording included in the voting group that was contained in a section with multiple changes.

Next steps

Following the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, the bylaws were updated and published on ASWB’s website. Revisions to the model law are under way. When that process is finished, the updated document will be published on the website and printed.

Voting and results

According to the bylaws, proposed amendments require a two-thirds majority vote to pass. The daily roll call established that there were 48 delegates present on both days of the annual meeting, which set the majority at 32 votes needed for amendments to pass.

Model Law amendments

- Vote: 45/3; all proposed changes passed

Bylaws amendments

The results of the eight bylaws votes are as follows:

- Wordsmithing changes: 48/0; passed
- Voting Group 1, Association Purpose: 35/13; passed
- Voting Group 2, Association Meetings: 47/0; passed
- Voting Group 3, Expanding the Board of Directors by three members; establishing the election cycle and qualifications for nomination and appointment of the added members; providing the Board with responsibility for removal of Board of Directors members: 46/2; passed
- Voting Group 4, Defining eligibility of seated Board members for nomination to other seats; and filling of vacancies: 41/7; passed
- Voting Group 5, Increasing the number of terms seated Board members may serve: 35/13; passed
- Voting Group 6, Eliminating nominations from the floor: 8/40; did not pass
- Voting Group 7, Increasing number of members on Nominating Committee by two: 48/0; passed

Kristi Plotner (MS), chair of the Bylaws Committee answers questions during voting.

As a result of the delegates’ positive response to the bylaws amendments to increase the size of the Board of Directors to 11 and the Nominating Committee to five members, there will be more opportunity for membership to become involved in leadership of the organization. The Nominating Committee has a particularly daunting task in this first year of implementation: They will need to slate candidates for nine positions on the Board of Directors and four positions on the Nominating Committee. Some of these positions will be for one-year terms to bridge the election cycles.

If you are interested in running for election, applications will be available in January.
Hello, again, hello!

It was great to see former DC social work regulator CARL ALGOOD at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting in Denver. Now a faculty member with Bowie State University’s department of social work in Maryland, CARL served on the District of Columbia social work board in the 1980s. He visited the ASWB booth at the Baccalaureate Program Directors (BPD) conference in Kansas City, Missouri, earlier this year. (Asides, March/April)

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Visitors to the ASWB booth...

Stopping by ASWB’s booth at the CSWE Annual Program Meeting in Denver: JO DEE GOTTLIEB, member of the West Virginia board and director of the BSW program at Marshall University; Stacy Kratz, a former student of ASWB CEO MARY JO MONAHAN when MARY JO was adjunct faculty at University of South Florida’s school of social work; and JIM AKIN, member of ASWB’s Mobility Task Force. Also visiting the booth: ADELE CRUDDEN, social work faculty member at Mississippi State University and colleague of MELINDA PILKINTON, a past member of ASWB’s Board of Directors; and PAUL KURZMAN, another early social work regulator in the state of New York, when ASWB was AASSWB.

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ASWB welcomes new jurisdictional staff members:

MARIE GALARNEAU, Québec
JENNIFER WENHOLD, Florida

Best wishes!

ASWB wishes ALISON MacDONALD of Saskatchewan good luck as she enters the next chapter of her life, wherever her adventures may take her. Best wishes also are extended to LIZ JONES of British Columbia, who attended her last ASWB delegate assembly as board chair.

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Retirements on the horizon

The Florida board will be saying farewell in 2016 to staff members SUE FOSTER, executive director, and DEE RAMER, regulatory supervisor. The good news: JENNIFER WENHOLD is already in place!

Manitoba Executive Director and Registrar Miriam Browne retires

At the end of December, MIRIAM BROWNE, executive director/registrar of the Manitoba College of Social Workers, will retire from her position. During her 18-year tenure, MIRIAM was part of significant change in the social work community in that province, which culminated in new legislation in April of 2015, and was actively involved in many aspects of the transition to mandatory regulation in Manitoba. MIRIAM participated in many ASWB activities and conferences over the years and writes that she appreciated the knowledge and support she found in her friendly relationships with the ASWB staff and members.

MIRIAM shared that it has been extremely gratifying to be part of the evolution of social work regulation in her jurisdiction. The transition of the Manitoba Institute of Registered Social Workers (MIRSW) into the Manitoba College of Social Workers is the culmination of the efforts of
many social workers over several decades. The growth and change in the profession under her leadership of the College (including the decision in 2002 that MIRSW join ASWB) has been both significant and positive for social workers and most importantly, for the protection of the public interest. Regulation of the social work profession has been a passion for MIRIAM and she has enjoyed the challenges of working toward that important goal.

We wish MIRIAM well in her future adventures.

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Cheering from the sidelines

GREG WINKLER of Wisconsin was at the Delegate Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale when he learned that his son’s high school soccer team made it to the state finals, which were held on Saturday during the meeting. Unfortunately, the team didn’t win, but GREG’s son did get time on the field.

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Happy birthday!/Joyeux Anniversaire!

CLAUDE SAVOIE of New Brunswick received best wishes from President DORINDA NOBLE on behalf of the Delegate Assembly on his birthday during ASWB’s Annual Meeting in Ft. Lauderdale.

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Timing is everything

MICKI LILLY’s daughter lives in Florida, but a mother-daughter get-together was not to be. While MICKI was in Ft. Lauderdale, her daughter was visiting MICKI’s state of North Carolina.

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Taking the long way ’round

One of the few direct flights offered to Ft. Lauderdale was from Montreal. Unfortunately, CLAUDE LEBLOND of Québec was not able to take advantage: He was traveling from a meeting in Vancouver.

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Side trips

HAROLD DEAN of Arkansas and STAN WEINSTEIN of Maryland both visited the art museum in Ft. Lauderdale and were impressed with local artists’ work.

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Shared experiences

New regulator MELISSA CHAR-GUALAF from Guam sat next to experienced regulator BRAHNA WILCZYNSKI of New Mexico (formerly of New York and also the third ASWB president) during the meeting.

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The Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly marked a change in leadership as outgoing president DORINDA NOBLE passed the gavel to incoming President M. JENISE COMER to begin her two-year term in office. DORINDA will serve in 2016 as immediate past president.
As seen at the Annual Meeting Welcome Reception

New Board Member Training goes international

The last session of New Board Member Training in 2015 was held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, for members and staff from that province and from Newfoundland and Labrador. Attending from Nova Scotia: JUSTIN ADAMS, SHERRY BATTISTE, CHRIS BOURQUE, MARION BROWN, SHELINA GORDON, JAMES GOUTHRO, TONYA GRANT, LORNA GRIFFIN-FILLIER, GEOFF HOOD, WENDY KEEN, CATHERINE KEHOE, JACK LANDREVILLE, JUDY MacDONALD, KEVIN MacDOUGALL, DAVID MacIVER, SHEILA McKINNON-OKE, BRIAN MOORE, JANET POTHIER, MICHELE RIGBY, MARK SCALES, NANCY VINER, and ANEMIEKE VINK. Attending from Newfoundland and Labrador were: ADRIENNE FOLEY and ANNETTE JOHNS.

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ROSEMARY CARMAN of Guam (center) found others with ties to Guam within ASWB: KIM FRAKES of Nevada (left) and ASWB Conference and Events Manager KAREN FRANCISCO (right). KIM’s husband of 27 years, TONY, is from Guam, and KAREN lived in Guam as a civilian and during her military service.

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ASWB philanthropy outreach

Throughout the year, ASWB makes donations to local Culpeper, Va., charitable organizations selected by the ASWB Philanthropy Team based on suggestions and requests from staff members. Some of the organizations receiving support in the last few months are pictured here. The Philanthropy Team includes staff members TESSA BOWERS, chair; SYLVIA CHRISTIAN, CINDY GROTZ, JESSICA JOHNSON, and PATRICIA OLINGER, liaison.

Your name could be featured here! Send all news and pictures to Jayne Wood, newsletter editor, at jwood@aswb.org or call Jayne at 800.225.6880, ext. 3075. We need your input!

Members of the UVA Culpeper Hospital accepted a donation to the Pamper Me Pink Mammogram Fund, which ASWB has supported for three years.

Gifts of clothing, food, and miscellaneous items were donated to Culpeper Human Services’ Angel Tree program, filling wish lists provided by seven underprivileged elderly individuals.

Services to Abused Families, Inc. (SAFE) interim director Karen Brown accepts a donation from ASWB CEO MARY JO MONAHAN.
ASWB recognizes outstanding commitment to social work regulatory board service with two awards, one given to a member of a member board or college and the other given to a staff member or administrator. Up to two awards may be presented in each category.

This year, Anwar Najor-Durack, chair of the Michigan Board of Social Work, and Barbara Whitenect of the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers (NBASW), were both honored with the 2015 Sunny Andrews Award for Outstanding Commitment to Social Work Regulatory Board Service. Lisa Crockwell, executive director and registrar of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers (NLASW), was awarded the 2015 Board Administrator Award for Outstanding Commitment to Social Work Regulatory Board Service.

At the awards luncheon held during the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, attendees celebrated the winners and their accomplishments.

“Whether Anwar is addressing an individual, conducting a conferee meeting, addressing the due process in a board meeting, or simply conducting day to day business, she has consistently done so with a level of integrity and compassion that is exemplary,” said Brian Philson, a member of the Michigan Board of Social Work who nominated Najor-Durack for the award.

Philson cited a public comment period at a board meeting when a commenter became “very demanding and emotional” about the subject at hand. Najor-Durack defused the situation, he said, while upholding the integrity of the meeting. In addition to nominating Najor-Durack, Philson attended the 2015 Delegate Assembly and presented the award.

Barb Whitenect “has been extraordinary committed to the regulation of social work practice in New Brunswick,” said Claudette Landry,
who nominated Whitenect for the award. “She has actively engaged with members from all across the province to ensure the [New Brunswick College of Social Workers] was meeting the needs of not only members but also the population which social work impacts.”

In her nomination, Landry also pointed out that Whitenect was involved in leading the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers to adopt its first scope of practice and has “given countless hours to ensuring the Board functions ethically, in a responsible manner, and manages the dual role of regulation and promotion of the profession.”

Merri-Lee Hanson of the NBASW attended the 2015 Delegate Assembly and presented the award to Whitenect during the awards luncheon.

Lisa Crockwell was nominated by Mona Romaine Elliott, who said, “Under [Crockwell’s] leadership, the NLASW has celebrated many successes, including the transition to new social work legislation with the proclamation of the Social Workers Act in 2010.” This transition, Elliott said, “required extensive training for board members as they assumed responsibilities for complaints authorization.” Crockwell ensured that all the board members had the information and resources they needed to take on the regulatory functions required by the act.

Elliott also presented the award to Crockwell at the 2015 Delegate Assembly.

Both awards are given annually by ASWB. At the awards ceremony in Ft. Lauderdale, the association announced that beginning in 2016, the Board Administrator Award for Outstanding Commitment to Social Work Regulatory Board Service would be named the Glenda McDonald Administrator Award for Outstanding Commitment to Social Work Regulatory Board Service, in memory of Glenda McDonald, who served as registrar and CEO of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and was active on many ASWB committees.
One for the books

Pat Olinger, director of Examination Services, has spent 18 years leading the candidate registration process at ASWB. She’s worked with two test vendors, dozens of call center representatives, multiple software and phone systems, and in offices in two different buildings. Her department has added more functions in the last few years, as product sales, fulfillment, and support were folded into their work.

Exam Services also went through a restructuring internally this year, with two experienced Candidate Services representatives promoted to mentor fellow representatives. The mentors have “helped alleviate some of the day-to-day duties of the supervisors,” Olinger says. “They give the representatives someone readily available to answer their questions that they need a quick answer for.” This frees up supervisors to manage the “back-end” functions of the Candidate Services Center, from processing online registrations to providing contact and support for member boards.

This fall, Olinger had a “first,” for her and for every representative in the Candidate Services Center. Following the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in November, Candidate Services staff members were called into the conference room at ASWB and presented with a formal commendation letter from the ASWB Board of Directors. The letter cited some remarkable statistics. During the first three quarters of 2015, the Candidate Services Center (CSC) processed 37,715 exam registrations and fielded 66,357 calls. Board of Directors President M. Jenise Comer praised the Candidate Services Center employees for their “exceptional work” during that period.

These numbers “look like a continuation of upward trends” ASWB has seen in the past, Olinger says. “But there are clear jumps, as well, with a 46 percent increase in registrations in May and June of this year compared to May and June of last year.” That jump in particular, Olinger points out, is attributable to two July 1 deadlines this year: requirements for licensure for Massachusetts Department of Children and Families social workers who had been previously exempt, and the introduction of DSM-5 content onto the ASWB exams. Many social workers either needed or wanted to test before that date, which caused a bump in registrations and call volume.

Unlike a lot of call centers, ASWB does not have a lengthy automated menu for callers. When calling the CSC directly (888.579.3926),
customers hear a recorded message initially, but they are sent immediately to the call queue where representatives respond as soon as possible. Callers to the general number (800.225.6880) hear one phone menu to help them determine where they should be routed, then are put into the right queue for a response. Average hold time is less than 30 seconds.

With an average of 72 percent of exam registrations being processed online, it might seem logical that call volume would drop. That hasn’t been the case, Olinger says. Candidate Services representatives field calls from exam candidates who have detailed questions about registration or licensing. “People call with questions about licensing,” Olinger says, “more to get information than to register.”

Candidate Services, by the numbers
January-November 2015:

- 41,166 exams administered
- 43,554 exam registrations
- 78,866 phone calls answered
- Practice exam sales up by 13.6%
- Score transfers up by 16.2%
Thank you, Dorinda, and Good Morning, Everyone!

It is great to see all of you this morning—I hope you had a good time last night. It’s hard not to be happy with such great weather... unless of course you live in the other “sunshine state” on the west coast—California! “Welcome Back” to our colleagues from the west coast—Kim Madsen [executive officer of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences], we look forward to being in beautiful San Diego next year.

I think it is very fitting that we are having our 2015 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in beautiful Fort Lauderdale, especially during speed boat time, because “Full Speed Ahead” accurately describes this year of accomplishments and results for ASWB, our organization. I have chosen “Full Speed Ahead” as the theme for 2015 and I am pleased to share my Leadership Report to kick off this historic meeting.

But first, I want to share a story with you. Last Friday, I had the honor of attending NASW’s 60th anniversary and was invited to serve on the panel celebrating the 55th Anniversary of the Code of Ethics. Other panelists included Allan Barsky from Florida Atlantic University, JoAnn Regan from CSWE, and, of course, Rick Reamer from Rhode Island College and our favorite “ethics guru.”

You may recognize the names of two of these social workers because they served on the ASWB International Technology Task Force that published the Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice earlier this year—one of our great 2015 accomplishments….and now all three of these colleagues are collaborating with ASWB, NASW, and CSWE in writing practice standards for technology and social work practice. The panel was asked to discuss the evolution of the Code of Ethics, and my part was to focus on the code’s impact on regulation. We had a lively discussion, and afterward I was able to chat with various NASW colleagues from my past.

As I was proudly talking about all of the regulatory innovations that ASWB was currently leading, one colleague asked me how many staff are employed at ASWB. When I told her 42, she was amazed and wondered how we were able to get all of this important work done. This gave me the opportunity to explain what I believe is the very creative and unique business and leadership model that we have developed at ASWB.
This business and leadership model depends on three interrelated groups of professionals driven by the mission of our organization. Each working group is critical to our success, and all are integrated around the operating principles of mission, engagement, respect, results, and celebration. The leadership staff, Board of Directors, and all of our volunteers are ASWB’s most valuable resources.

The first group is our excellent **ASWB staff**—please stand and be recognized—you have done an incredible job of working interdepartmentally this year… and traveling the globe! Thanks to each of you….and to your families for supporting you and the organization.

The second group is our dedicated and knowledgeable **Board of Directors** whom you have just met….each of whom has embraced their governance responsibilities to guide the association in a mutually respectful partnership with staff. It has been my privilege to learn, stretch, and grow with you this past year.

And the third group is all of our members, but especially those who have served in a volunteer capacity for ASWB this year. I am so grateful, because I know that most of you are already volunteering your precious time by serving on your jurisdictional board or college, so we truly thank you for digging deep and finding the time to say “Yes” to ASWB’s further requests for your time and expertise.

This has been the most active volunteer year in memory—we can all be heartened by the significant work of the various committees and task forces—you will be hearing of their work over the next two days. You are all exceptional leadership resources for ASWB and we are stronger because of you. And I thank you!

**2015: The year in review**

Today, we are celebrating our successful 2015 results, recognizing the best practices and processes we have utilized to get us to where we are today: a solid, sustainable association that can and will achieve social work practice mobility in our Lifetime!

We put mobility in the Strategic Plan in 2013, set the stage for more consistency across jurisdictions in 2014, and in 2015 we bumped this major effort up to the association’s strategic priority. This will require planning, “agility,” cooperation, and TRUST among our members, ASWB, and our many stakeholders; but I truly believe we are positioned to be successful.

After three years as your CEO, I believe the following three observations are accurate:

- **ASWB is acknowledged as a respected leader in both the social work profession and the field of professional regulation.** We have improved our organizational leadership structure and increased our governance knowledge and capacity so that we are more sophisticated and effective in our organizational outreach and influence. We have the depth and confidence to be the leaders that we are.

- **The social work profession is coming to terms with being a regulated profession, embracing it, normalizing it, and recognizing the importance of regulation to solidifying its future in the health care, social services, and social policy arenas.** ASWB has extended the definition of the social work regulatory community to include regulators, educators, students, practitioners, and employers—and these stakeholders are joining together in new and creative ways. We have made good progress, but there is still more work to be done here.

- And finally, social work regulation, with public protection as its core mission, is consistent with the core values of the social work profession, particularly the values of service, competence, and social justice. The clients whom social workers serve deserve services provided by safe, ethical, and competent practitioners; if practitioners fall below standards and do harm, their clients have recourse for relief under the law. This is the social justice value of regulation. Regulation takes the Code of Ethics and turns a professional behavioral obligation into a legal duty. That is the power of regulation: Public Protection. We’re all in this together, so Full Speed Ahead!

I want to start my review our results for 2015 by highlighting accomplishments from each department.

First, the Examination Services Department. New York and Massachusetts are eliminating exemptions, especially for government agencies and private nonprofits; Pennsylvania is adding the BSW category of licensure. Other changes: Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements; acceptance of
regulation as good for the social worker, public, and profession.

It’s Back! The Practice Analysis is a big undertaking and a major commitment every five to seven years to keep the content of our exams current, relevant, and accurate reflections of current practice. Dwight Hymans and Lavina Harless will discuss this tomorrow.

Internally, there was a reorganization of staff and functions within the department. It is ASWB’s largest department and it needed a different “path to leadership.” Dwight and I worked closely with Exam Services Director Pat Olinger to establish appropriate supervisory levels and divide responsibilities according to talents and needed functions. An accountability training with this team was conducted by our new training senior manager, Jan Fitts, and the training will be rolled out to rest of staff in this final quarter of 2015.

Next, the Communications and Marketing Department. MarCom underwent a staffing transition as two members left earlier this year. Director Jayne Wood and Bobbie Hartman regrouped and now are joined by Kim Phillips, digital content coordinator. You can see the visible results of their collaborative work in the Members website redesign, which Bobbie shared at the Administrators Forum and Board Member Exchange meetings yesterday; our beautiful 2014 Annual Report; the distinctive logo branding for this annual business meeting (turning the ASWB logo design into working gears); and the incredible Mobility Report from the Spring Education Meeting. Our social media presence continues to grow, so please join us on Facebook and Twitter.

Highlights from the Member Services Department are in three areas of service to you, our members:

1) There was a reorganization of the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program & New Jersey course approval into a Continuing Competency program. Continuing competency is emerging as THE regulatory issue; it is bigger than CE only, and professions are grappling with how to measure it. Our ACE program is exemplary and will continue under Lisa Casler’s direction with support from Donna Edwards. Lisa Casler is ASWB’s newest MSW hire—bringing us to six MSW subject matter experts on staff. Her charge is to work with Member Services Director Jennifer Henkel to chart a course for Continuing Competency for social work regulation. Stay tuned.

2) Contract Services has outgrown the building it moved into two years ago, for goodness’ sakes! Dave Ryczko and his team moved into rented space—affectionately named the MSW building—for Member Services West. They handle application processing, the Social Work Registry, and CE audits.

3) There is a new look for Meetings and New Board Member Trainings. It is strategic in getting more work done collectively, with increased engagement of membership, and a fiscally smart approach that offers multiple meetings simultaneously, and we now have the capacity to staff them. Essentially we have added a full day of pre-meeting meetings to facilitate committee work and a higher level of collaboration among membership with the Administrators Forum and the Board Member Exchange. You asked for more training and networking, and these are your opportunities.

Our newest department is Education and Training Services, also known as “ET.” Senior Manager Jan Fitts and Jennifer Ward are forging a great team to serve regulatory training needs of three constituencies: educators and students; our members; and our staff.

In Operations, Director Christine Breeden celebrated 25 years this year! That is staying power. ASWB Treasurer Carole Bryant will give a detailed report on ASWB’s finances tomorrow.

2016: Full Speed Ahead! What is our focus?

A new headquarters!

Due to our continuing growth spurt, we have outgrown all of our owned space and are currently renting space. Earlier this year, your Board, after at least 18 months of study, research, and deliberation, gave staff the go-ahead to build a new headquarters for ASWB in Culpeper, Va. Dwight is our building project manager and will discuss this initiative after lunch. I want to share a few thoughts though, about what this bold initiative means for ASWB. I believe having the honor to build our working space to support achievement of the Strategic Plan and to design our space to fit our business plan will position ASWB to reach even higher goals.

We will not have to adjust, accommodate, or fit how we work into the space available, but we will be in charge. Our new building will change how we look to the Culpeper community but also how we are able to work with members, stakeholders, and partners. We will
be able to relieve even more of your burdens.

Another exciting benefit: Staff is engaged and thinking about their own space and how they work. There is a sense of ownership and pride in the organization. For example, during October, which is Breast Cancer awareness month, the Philanthropy Team made a display in our reception area with the oversized presentation check from the Pamper Me Pink Mammogram Fund donation, homemade awareness ribbons, and information sheets with research on the topic. This month, November, is Domestic Violence Awareness month and now we have the purple awareness ribbons and research. I was touched when the FedEx driver picked up a ribbon and bracelet to take with her, and I was impressed by staff’s desire to inform other staff members of these important issues that touch our lives.

Mobility and Portability moving forward with more speed and force

Where we are after the first face-to-face meeting of the ASWB Mobility Task Force? A major focus is how we will include our membership. Also, the task force will supply clear answers to the key questions “Why?” “What are we trying to solve/achieve?” and “How are we gonna do it?”

Changes to ASWB will be seen in how our members relate to each other. There must be a larger focus and even more supportive and “organizing” relationship with ASWB. Finally, it’s a Matter of Trust—and we will be a better organization and system of regulation as a result.

Closing thoughts

I’d like to say something to two of the more important women in my life—Dorinda and Jenise, my current Board President and Board President to be.

According to BoardSource, one of the most critical responsibilities of both the CEO and the Board President is to forge a mutually respectful and strategic partnership to manage and govern the organization.

I believe that you and I, Dorinda, could write an interesting chapter about doing just that in a time of leadership transition. I thank you for your leadership, your courage to try out new ideas and processes, your keen strategic mind, your availability when I needed you… the enormous amount of time that you have given to ASWB over the years, and of course your sense of humor and never-ending stash of “My Daddy” stories. It’s been a blast. Thanks, Dorinda.

And welcome, Jenise. So far, we are off to a good start and I look forward to our training together in D.C. later this month where we will have two full days to get this collaborative partnership grounded in what is right for our members and ASWB. I look forward to all the great ideas and actions we will create together over the next two years.

So, let’s all Go Full Speed Ahead! Into our next two days together!!
Counsel’s Column

The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) has evolved over the course of its 36-year existence. This evolution has resulted in a maturation of the association and has been inspiring to observe. I attended my first ASWB Annual Meeting in the early 1990s. The topics of that meeting were quite controversial, resulting in numerous disputes and disagreements from the delegates. Such evolutionary discord is to be expected, although sometimes it is hard to accept in the moment. At that time, ASWB experienced widespread opinions and debates related to governance structures, examination programs, uniformity, and states’ rights.

Incorporated in 1979, ASWB has experienced significant growth over its 36-year existence. Growth can be measured in many different ways that far exceed a limited focus on financial worth. This growth has included development, implementation, and expansion of programs and services related to the licensure and renewal of licensure of social workers. To meet the continued needs of the member boards,
ASWB staff has also expanded. Continued ASWB evolution and decision-making at the various association meetings involves informed attendees who engage in lively and respectful interactions. Never has such informed and calculated discussions and debate been more evident than at the ASWB Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in November 2015, in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

The ASWB 2015 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly included an ambitious agenda of task force meetings, orientation sessions for new attendees, and leadership training, along with the important business sessions related to the operation of the association. The delegates were provided with significant materials in advance of the meeting, and their dedication to preparedness was obvious. Prepared delegates and attendees resulted in stimulating and constructive debate contributing to an efficient and productive use of time.

In particular, the membership was faced with decisions addressing a complete overhaul of the bylaws. Bylaws are an essential link between the membership and the operational aspects of the association. Through bylaws, the membership is empowered to participate in determining the governance structure, especially related to the number, qualifications, and terms of the Board of Directors. On behalf of the membership, the Board of Directors assists in setting policies in furtherance of the mission, vision, and values. These policies are carried out by ASWB staff.

The bylaws overhaul reflected a recognition of the growth of the association and involved both significant changes and a lengthy report to accurately portray the proposed modifications. The quality of the report and the preparedness of the delegates resulted in an efficient process to discuss and determine the fate of the suggested changes. The process was a pleasure to watch unfold. Regardless of the outcome of the votes, the pointed and constructive discussions reflected an informed delegate body. ASWB has matured to be an influential association that acts as a collective voice for regulation and reflects the wishes of its membership.

The electronic voting process further enhanced the efficiencies of the annual meeting. ASWB engaged in a process to allow for accurate and, when required, confidential voting with immediate results and storage in perpetuity. These electronic processes at the annual meetings parallel the evolution of practice modalities in virtually all regulated professions. Electronic and “tele” practice issues will challenge the regulatory community as the antiquated practice acts are enforced in these technologically advancing times.

Member boards are encouraged to continue to explore opportunities facilitated by membership and active participation in ASWB. Access to accurate and current information will be crucial to member boards facing sunset and legislative changes in a time of regulatory challenges. Stimulating these regulatory challenges are special interest groups promoting reduction, consolidation, or elimination of boards. The regulatory community, and social work boards in particular, will be challenged by mobility and portability issues related to technology in pursuit of an efficient licensure platform.

Member boards are encouraged to take advantage of ASWB programs and services designed to facilitate information exchange and promote uniformity among social work regulatory boards. The maturation of the association, increased communications, and enhanced trust of member boards will prove to be a valuable resource during these evolving and challenging times. Be proud of your work as regulators. Thank you for your service to public protection.

Janice James (KY), an ASWB president during the 1990s, provides historical perspective during the bylaws discussion.
This year’s election brings new leaders to both the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. Most have served on ASWB committees or task forces over the years and are familiar names to many. All will serve two-year terms.

In an unexpected turn of events, candidate Denise Pratt of Texas withdrew from the contest for the position of Director at Large Public Member. The vacancy was not filled by nominations from the floor, and so candidate Meenakshi Budhraja, M.D., of Arkansas ran unopposed. Despite being the only candidate for election to the position, Dr. Budhraja had to receive a majority of the votes for the election to be valid.

**Board of Directors**

**Treasurer**

Winning election as treasurer, Mel Harrington of South Dakota campaigned as a returning candidate. He ran for office in 2013 against incumbent Carole Bryant of Saskatchewan. In 2014 and 2015, he served on the Finance Committee. As a direct service practitioner and manager of social service programs, Harrington also brings experience in developing budgets. He is licensed as a Certified Social Worker in Private Practice.

Congratulations and welcome!
Independent Practice in the state of South Dakota and recently retired as director of counseling programs at Lutheran Social Services (LSS). He now works part time as director of the fatherhood programs at LSS and part time as a recovery coach for Face It Together Sioux Falls.

**Directors at Large**

Anna Lyn Whitt of Mississippi and Dr. Meenakshi Budhraja of Arkansas won election to the director at large positions on the Board of Directors.

Whitt, a Licensed Master’s Social Worker in Mississippi, works as director of field operations for the Mississippi Division of Family and Children’s Services. She served four years on ASWB’s Program and Education Committee and was appointed in 2015 to the Regulatory Education and Leadership (REAL) Committee.

Budhraja is a gastroenterologist in private practice at The Digestive Wellness Clinic in Little Rock. She is adjunct faculty at the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Institute. She was appointed as public member to the Arkansas Social Work Licensing Board in 2013.

**Nominating Committee**

Anwar Najor-Durack of Michigan was elected to the Nominating Committee. She serves as chair of the Michigan Board of Social Work and was honored with the 2015 Sunny Andrews Award for Outstanding Commitment to Social Work Regulatory Board Service. (See related story.) Najor-Durack, a Licensed Master Social Worker, clinical and macro designation, is the director of field education at Wayne State University. She has chaired the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) Committee for the last four years.
During the Examination Committee report at the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly in Ft. Lauderdale, more than 120 attendees had many of their questions answered about the exam program that is the reason for ASWB’s existence. Exam Committee co-chairs Greg Winkler of Wisconsin (Clinical exam committee), Mary Stebbins of Virginia (Bachelors exam committee), and Brent Meyer of Georgia (Masters exam committee) shared the stage, presenting a comprehensive explanation of the role and purpose of the committee, reviewing the past year’s performance, and having some interactive fun with the audience, who were asked to help critique some sample questions.

Leading the co-chairs into their discussion, ASWB Executive Vice President Dwight Hymans covered some of the basic “nuts and bolts” of the exam program, including the structure of the exams and how they are administered to maintain security. He also offered some highlights of the year and concluded by providing an explanation and timeline of one of the most critical review processes that ASWB undertakes to ensure the exams reflect current social work practice: the practice analysis. (See related story.)

Co-chair Greg Winkler answered the “who” and “what” questions, noting that in 2015 there were 17 subject matter experts serving on the committee. Committee members are selected to reflect

The who, what, when, and how of exam development

The first exams given, in March 1983, were administered to 464 candidates. At the end of 2014, the number of exams administered was 39,778.
demographic, geographic, and practice area diversity, and all are former item writers. Committee members serve one-year terms, which are renewable up to three years. In 2015, seven new committee members joined those already serving, and five committee members completed their appointments. Winkler then reviewed the responsibilities of the committee, what it does and what it is responsible for. The primary focus is reviewing, editing, and approving questions that will be tested to see if they perform well enough to be added to the banks of scored items after psychometric statistics are gathered and analyzed.

Answering the “how” and “when” questions was co-chair Brent Meyer. He described the meeting process and what the committee does when it reviews items. In 2015, Exam Committee members met four times and reviewed a total of 1,149 new test questions. They approved 829 for pretest, returned 29 to writers for revision, deleted 26 items, moved 3 items to a different exam, and reviewed in pairs 205 items, which will be considered by the committee as a group in the future. The committee also reviewed 594 test questions that had been flagged for statistical concerns or content reasons. Of those items, 112 were approved as is; 352 were revised and approved to be pretested again; and 130 were archived.

Co-chair Mary Stebbins explained how the items get selected for the exams, or forms, a process that is managed by former Exam Committee members who are called form reviewers. These veteran volunteers review and approve the forms, which include the 150 scored and 20 pretest items. Form reviewers met four times in 2015 and approved 13 forms for release (one each quarter for Bachelor’s, Masters, and Clinical exams, and one exam form for Advanced Generalist). They reviewed 1,950 scored items and 1,297 pretest items during the year.

Closing out the report, Lavina Harless, ASWB exam development manager, gave an overview of the exam program in 2014, going into greater detail about the whole program and the year-end statistics. More information about the 2015 Exam Committee and other volunteers and consultants can be found in the Exam Program Yearbook.
**Name of jurisdiction:** Ontario

**Name of board:** Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

**Number of board members:** 21 (7 elected social workers, 7 elected social service workers, and 7 publicly appointed members)

**Licensure categories offered:**

Social Work – minimum level of education required is a BSW from a social work program accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE)

Social Service Work – minimum level of education required is a diploma in social service work from a social service work program offered in Ontario at a College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT)

Those with a combination of academic qualifications and experience performing the role of a social worker or a social service worker that is determined to be substantially equivalent to a degree in social work accredited by CASWE (in the case of social work) or a diploma in social service work from a CAAT (in the case of social service work) may also be eligible for registration.

**Number of licensees:** 18,174 (16,151 social workers and 2,194 social service workers)

**Biggest achievement in the past 12 months:**

Our Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED) is always a very successful event. With the Annual Meeting portion followed by a keynote speaker in the morning, and an afternoon of breakout sessions, it is always extremely well received by the approximately 550 members who attend in person each year. The theme of AMED 2015 was Building Capacity Across the Spectrum. This year we included an in memoriam tribute to Glenda McDonald, our founding Registrar and CEO. We were very pleased by the fact that there was a huge increase in the number of members participating via webcast. We hope that this number will continue to increase in 2016 when we are able to webcast the afternoon breakout sessions as well as the keynote and Annual Meeting portions of the day.

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**Useless tidbits about Ontario from the editors:**

- Ontario has more than 250,000 lakes. One-sixth of the total province area of Ontario is covered with water.

- Toronto is the capital city of Ontario. Toronto has a large financial district and is where the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSE) is located.

- In 1891, James Naismith invented the game of basketball. He used peach baskets at first.

- Canada stopped delivering mail on Saturdays 35 years ago.

- Some famous celebrities from Ontario include: Jim Carrey, Mike Myers, Shania Twain, Ryan Gosling, and Justin Beiber.

- Ontario is the home of Niagara Falls.

- Canada Dry Ginger Ale was invented by John J. McLaughlin in 1907.
Biggest lesson learned in the past 12 months:

Communication – whether with members, external stakeholders, Council, or staff - is an ongoing challenge. This year has highlighted the important role that technology can play in enhancing our communications. We continue to learn and develop in this important area.

Biggest challenge facing the board:

In this year of huge change and challenge, it is difficult to choose just one. Most importantly, we lost our founding Registrar and CEO Glenda McDonald. We also faced a number of other challenges, including changes in leadership and significant and unforeseen developments with respect to the regulation of psychotherapy. We are proud of the fact that the College continued to run efficiently and effectively during this difficult time.

(complete the sentence) “I would really love to hear about how other jurisdictions... educate the public about regulation and the important role played by the regulator.

Completed by:
Lise Betteridge, MSW, RSW
Registrar
In many ways, the ASWB licensing exams are updated continually—new questions are written and put into the pretest pool, their stats are collected and reviewed, and those with good enough numbers make the cut into the bank of scored questions. In July, the exams were updated to reflect the changes in the DSM-5. But in order to make sure that the entire exam program reflects current social work practice, ASWB has a much longer, more complex process: the practice analysis.

Since ASWB’s founding in the late 1970s, there have been five practice analyses, with the last one completed in 2010. That practice analysis began in 2008 and resulted in new blueprints that were launched in 2011.

This year, ASWB is starting its sixth practice analysis, and took the first steps at a meeting of the Practice Analysis Task Force in late November. Late this summer, the Board of Directors appointed the task force, comprising 20 licensed volunteers, staff, and consultants take first steps toward revised exam content
social workers from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Members of the task force were selected to represent diversity in racial, ethnic, and practice demographics. The meeting was held at the offices of Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), ASWB’s psychometric contractor. At that meeting, ASWB staff and consultants from HumRRO provided task force members with an overview of the process and asked the SMEs to review the task list to be included in the pilot survey.

SMEs? Task list? Pilot survey? The practice analysis starts with a list of social work tasks. Subject matter experts (SMEs) review these tasks to ensure that the tasks are appropriate for entry-level social workers. The pilot survey gives the task force a chance to test out the task list in surveys with licensed social workers. Once the survey is developed (in both English and French, to include a representative sample in the U.S. and Canada), it will be sent to a representative sample of social workers who have become licensed in the last three to five years.

Once the pilot survey is complete, HumRRO and ASWB will make any necessary adjustments to the survey instrument and send it to at least 16,000 social workers in all ASWB member jurisdictions. Once the survey results are in, task force members will dig into the data to link each task to KSAs (knowledge, skill and ability statements) that form the building blocks of the exams. Connection between survey responses and KSAs will help develop the test content outlines late in 2016.

At that point, there is a great deal of work to be done before the content outlines become an exam. The next steps will include reclassifying existing test questions, developing a benchmark exam form, and conducting a passing score study that sets the pass point on the exams under the new content outlines. All this work will continue until the end of 2017. ASWB anticipates the new test content outlines to appear on live exams in January 2018.
Before the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly formally convened on Friday, November 6, there were opportunities for more than 70 administrative staff and members of regulatory boards and colleges to gather to share ideas and learn more about each other at two preconference meetings: the Administrators Forum and the Board Member Exchange.

**Administrators Forum**

This year’s annual meeting marked many transitions for the Administrators Forum, which has been meeting twice annually for many years. While there were five new attendees and one new member jurisdiction, there were also a few administrators who were attending their last forum because of their upcoming retirements. Leadership of the forum was also in transition, as Kate Zacher-Pate of Minnesota completed her term as chair.

As the 32 administrators in attendance introduced themselves and their jurisdictions, several common threads emerged. Many were dealing with sunsetting, fund sweeps, and jumps in the number of complaints and disciplinary actions. In addition to the usual introductions and conversations about the day-to-day demands of social work regulation, administrators heard from several ASWB staff members who provided detailed information about ASWB’s exam services, the Public Protection Database, and the newly launched members.aswb.org.

With Kim Frakes of Nevada stepping up as the new chair in 2016, administrators also spent some of their time discussing how the meeting operates. “The group itself came up with some really good ideas for the future of the forum,” ASWB Director of Member Services Jennifer Henkel said. “Even though ASWB hosts the forum, it’s their meeting.”

Forum attendees are eager to make the most of their time together and establish more formal structure to the meetings going forward. Chairpersons will serve a maximum of three years (six meetings), and the group will focus on discussion topics selected in advance of upcoming forums. The group will also spend less time on introductions than in the past. “There are so many interesting topics,” Henkel said. “They’re going to be able to get into deeper discussions and really make the best use of their time.”

**Board Member Exchange**

Concurrent with the Administrators Forum, a group of 40 board members from dozens of
jurisdictions gathered elsewhere at the Riverside Hotel as part of the newly christened Board Member Exchange. This gathering was inaugurated at the 2015 Spring Education Meeting in Seattle as the Board Member Colloquium. The new name reflects a more interactive session, with both large-group and small-group conversations about a variety of topics.

Facilitated by Mark Gianino of Massachusetts and Barb Whitenect of New Brunswick, the Board Member Exchange gave social work regulators a chance to get to know one another and understand the challenges of regulating social work all over the U.S. and Canada. The spring session had resulted in a list of possible topics for discussion, and attendees in Ft. Lauderdale were given colored stickers to vote on that list, allowing several subjects to bubble to the top. Participants who had attended the spring session appreciated the chance to follow up on subjects that had been raised in the spring, when the gathering was shorter and there was less time for deeper discussions.

Late in the day, the group broke into smaller conversational groups to cover a range of issues, from the pros and cons of composite boards to planning for board leadership transitions. These smaller groups then reported back to the entire exchange, allowing all participants to hear about common concerns and new approaches to the issues. “Participants enjoyed time to delve into what their own jurisdiction is dealing with,” said ASWB Education and Training Senior Manager Jan Fitts. “They also like hearing how others are handling practice issues.”

Gianino and Whitenect’s facilitation of the daylong meeting received very high marks from participants in the evaluations. “They gave [attendees] time to discuss topics,” says Fitts, “but kept things moving so that we had time to address the key issues that came up.”

As this fall’s attendance indicates, the Board Member Exchange is becoming a valuable resource for social work regulators, giving them an opportunity to share concerns and ask questions of their colleagues from throughout ASWB’s membership.
Your board in action

A summary of the work of ASWB’s Board of Directors at its meetings in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., November 5 and November 7, 2015.

The ASWB Board of Directors met in person on Thursday, November 5, and Saturday, November 7, at the Riverside Hotel in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, in sessions before and after the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly. Here is a recap of the activities of the Board at those meetings.

From the November 5 meeting

Consent agenda: Reports approved via consent agenda included: Executive Vice President’s report, Examination Services report, the Practice Analysis Task Force Report, New Board Member Training evaluations, and the 2016 calendar for internal meetings.

Approval of minutes and confirmation of decisions made in email meetings: The Board approved the minutes and confirmed the decisions made in email meetings conducted on August 8, September 3, and October 8.

Letter of commendation: The Board of Directors approved sending a letter of commendation to the Examination Services department recognizing the staff for handling a record number of exam registrations and calls. (See related story.)

Leadership reports: ASWB CEO Mary Jo Monahan provided the CEO report, which included a review of work completed during the third quarter in support of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. A report of the activities of the Mobility Task Force was presented.

ASWB President Dorinda Noble provided the President’s report and gave the final report of the work of the Governance Task Force, noting that it had completed its charge and given its input to the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee for consideration. She also commented on the success of the information sessions conducted prior to the Annual Meeting to review the proposed bylaws amendments.

Treasurer’s report: Board members reviewed financial statements through September 30, 2015, and received an update on investments. Treasurer Carole Bryant closed the report noting the two accomplishments during her tenure were the decision to hire an investment firm that helped ASWB develop a solid investment policy and continues to manage the investments, and the decision to hire Jacqueline Ashby, CPA, as a staff member.

Delegate Assembly discussion: The Board held a discussion about
the upcoming delegate assembly logistics and activities.

New Building report: The Board received a report from Executive Vice President Dwight Hymans about progress on the new headquarters.

Committee/Task Force/Meetings reports: The Board heard reports from Board liaisons of the Regulatory Education and Leadership (REAL) Committee, the Regulation and Standards Committee, and the Nominating Committee. The Board also heard reports from Board members attending the Federation of Associations of Regulatory Boards (FARB) Regulatory Law Seminar, the Council on Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation (CLEAR), and the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting.

Renaming the Board Administrator Award: The Board approved renaming the Board Administrator Award in honor of Glenda McDonald, Registrar and CEO of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, who passed away in May. The award recognizes the contributions of a staff member to a social work regulatory board in ASWB’s member jurisdictions and is a fitting tribute to Glenda’s accomplishments and professional legacy in support of regulation of the profession to protect the public.

From the November 7 meeting

Review of 2015 Annual Meeting: Board members discussed their impressions of the 2015 Annual Meeting and possible additions or changes for the 2016 meeting.

Introductions of Board members: Board members introduced themselves by discussing the special skills and strengths they bring to the Board.

Orientation of new Board members: New Board members were given information about materials that they will receive in preparation for the January 2016 Board meeting and their governance responsibilities.

Review of Exam Committee appointments: The Board approved appointments of 2016 Exam Committee members proposed by the president.