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**MINUTES**

**Board of Veterinary Medicine  
General Business Meeting**

**Friday, March 13, 2026, at 9 A.M.  
Hilton University of Florida Conference Center Gainesville  
1714 SW 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gainesville, FL 32607**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Leonard, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dr. Robert Leonard, Chair  
Dr. Rudd Nelson, Vice Chair  
Ms. Connie Johnson  
Dr. Christopher Smith  
Dr. Sharon Powell

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Dr. Mario Cabrera - excused

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Ruthanne Christie, Executive Director  
Ed Tellechea, Board Counsel  
Elizabeth Henderson, Prosecuting Attorney  
Dina Oliveto, Government Analyst II  
Lexitas Court Reporter – 888-811-3408

**PROBATION ROLL CALL**

Dr. Leonard asked Ms. Oliveto to call the roll.

The following probationers were present:

Valerie Biehl, DVM  
Bruce Bierbaum, DVM  
Rochelle DesChamps, DVM  
Alfonso Paredes, DVM  
James Segota, DVM

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**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 12, 2025 MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Dr. Powell made a motion to approve the minutes.

**SECOND:** Ms. Johnson.

Motion passed unanimously.

**APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW**

**Maavrik Leitch – Initial by Exam**

Dr. Rusch was present with Attorney Ed Bayo.

After discussion by the board, the following motion was made:

**MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to approve the application.

**SECOND:** Dr. Smith.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Space Coast Animal Hospital – Premise Permit**

Dr. Pearson, owner, was present with Attorney Ed Bayo.

After discussion by the board the following motion was made:

**MOTION:** Dr. Leonard made a motion to approve the application without conditions.

**SECOND:** Dr. Nelson.

Motion passed unanimously.

**RECONSIDERATION OF FINAL ORDER**

87 **Margo Ruth Roman – 2024-057110**

88

89 Dr. Roman was not present but sent in a letter addressing the board.

90

91 After discussion by the board the following motions were made:

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93 **MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to reconsider the conditions of the final order.

94

95 **SECOND:** Ms. Johnson.

96

97 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).

98

99 **MOTION:** Dr. Leonard made a motion to eliminate the \$2,000 for failure to report from  
100 her total fines.

101

102 **SECOND:** Dr. Smith.

103

104 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).

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## 108 **DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS**

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### 111 **Settlement Stipulations**

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113 **Steven C. Lewis, DVM**

114 **Case No. 2024-054855**

115 **PC: Dr. K. Jones and Dr. S. Powell**

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117 Dr. Lewis was present with Attorney Wes Reynolds. Dr. Lewis was sworn in by the court  
118 reporter.

119

120 Dr. Lewis was charged with violation of 474.214(1)(r), Being guilty of incompetence or  
121 negligence by failing to practice medicine with that level of care, skill, and treatment  
122 which is recognized by a reasonably prudent veterinarian as being acceptable under  
123 similar conditions and circumstances, and 474.214(1)(ee) Failing to keep  
124 contemporaneously written medical records as required by rule of the board.,  
125 incompetency, or misconduct, in or related to the practice of veterinary medicine.

126

127 After discussion by the board the following motion was made:

128

129 **MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to accept the settlement stipulation as  
130 presented imposing costs of \$209.08 and fines of \$4000 to be paid within 30 days of the  
131 filing of the final order, 4 hours of continuing education (2 hours of medical record  
132 keeping and 2 hours administration of anesthesia/analgesia) within 6 months of the  
133 filing of the final order and 1 year of non-reporting probation with appearances at first  
134 and last meeting of probation. This meeting counts as first appearance.

135  
136 **SECOND:** Dr. Smith.

137  
138 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).

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141 **Sheila Lomas Santiago, DVM**  
142 **Case No. 2024-071721**  
143 **PC: Dr. K. Jones and Dr. S. Powell**

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146 Dr. Santiago was not present.

147  
148 Dr. Santiago was charged with violation of 474.214(1)(r), Being guilty of incompetence  
149 or negligence by failing to practice medicine with that level of care, skill, and treatment  
150 which is recognized by a reasonably prudent veterinarian as being acceptable under  
151 similar conditions and circumstances, and 474.214(1)(ee) Failing to keep  
152 contemporaneously written medical records as required by rule of the board.

153  
154 After discussion by the board the following motion was made:

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156 **MOTION:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to continue case to the next meeting.

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158 **SECOND:** Dr. Smith.

159  
160 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).

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163 **Motion For Waiver of Rights and Final Order**

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166 **Michael H. Elpert, DVM**  
167 **Case No. 2024-031157**  
168 **PC: Dr. K. Jones and Dr. S. Powell**

169  
170 Dr. Elpert was not present.

171

172 Dr. Elpert was charged with violation of 474.214(1)(r), Being guilty of incompetence or  
173 negligence by failing to practice medicine with that level of care, skill, and treatment  
174 which is recognized by a reasonably prudent veterinarian as being acceptable under  
175 similar conditions and circumstances, and 474.214(1)(ee) Failing to keep  
176 contemporaneously written medical records as required by rule of the board.  
177

178 After discussion by the board the following motions were made:  
179

180 **MOTION:** Dr. Leonard motion that the respondent was properly served and waived  
181 his right to a hearing.  
182

183 **SECOND:** Dr. Nelson.  
184

185 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).  
186

187 **MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to adopt Findings of Fact and Conclusions of  
188 Law.  
189

190 **SECOND:** Dr. Smith.  
191

192 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).  
193

194 **MOTION:** Dr. Leonard made a motion to impose fines of \$5,000 for each count and  
195 costs of \$300.56 in costs to be paid within 30 days of the filing of this order.  
196

197 **SECOND:** Ms. Johnson.  
198

199 Motion passed unanimously (Dr. Powell was recused).  
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## 203 **PROBATION**

204  
205 **Valerie Biehl, DVM**

**2022-022219**

206  
207 Dr. Biehl was present with Attorney Ed Bayo.  
208

209 After discussion by the board, the following motion was made:  
210

211 **MOTION:** Dr. Powell made a motion to accept final appearance and medical records.  
212

213 **SECOND:** Ms. Johnson  
214

215  
216 **Bruce Bierbaum, DVM** **2024-045690**

217  
218 Dr. Bierbaum was present and sworn in by the court reporter.

219  
220 After discussion by the board, the following motion was made:

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222 **MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to accept appearance.

223  
224 **SECOND:** Dr. Powell.

225  
226 Motion passed unanimously.

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229 **Rochelle DesChamps, DVM** **2023-036625**

230  
231 Dr. DesChamps was present and sworn in by the court reporter.

232  
233 After discussion by the board, the following motions were made:

234  
235 **MOTION:** Ms. Johnson made a motion to accept appearance.

236  
237 **SECOND:** Dr. Smith

238  
239 Motion passed unanimously.

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242 **Alfonso Parades, DVM** **2023-001514**

243  
244 Dr. Paredes was present and sworn in by the court reporter.

245  
246 After discussion by the board, it was decided that Dr. Paredes would need to attend June  
247 and September meetings to catch up on appearances and the following motion was  
248 made:

249  
250 **MOTION:** Dr. Powell made a motion to accept appearance.

251  
252 **SECOND:** Dr. Nelson.

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255 **James Segota, DVM** **2024-028834**

256  
257 Dr. Segota was present and sworn in by the court reporter.

258  
259 After discussion by the board, the following motion was made:  
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261 **MOTION:** Dr. Smith made a motion to accept appearance.

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263 **SECOND:** Ms. Johnson

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265 Motion passed unanimously.  
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268 **REPORTS**

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271 **Executive Director – Ruthanne Christie**

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273 Executive Director Christie updated the board on financial and enforcement reports.  
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276 **Board Counsel Report- Ed Tellechea**

277  
278 Attorney Tellechea had nothing new to report.  
279

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281 **Prosecuting Attorney – Elizabeth Henderson**

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283 Attorney Henderson discussed the Public Case Report.  
284

285 **MOTION:** Dr. Powell made a motion to continue prosecution of year-old cases.  
286

287 **SECOND:** Dr. Nelson.  
288

289 Motion passed unanimously.  
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292 **Ratification of Applications**

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294 **Licenses**

295  
296 **MOTION:** Dr. Powell made a motion to approve the licenses.  
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298 **SECOND:** Ms. Johnson.  
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300 Motion passed unanimously.

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**Continuing Education**

**MOTION:** Dr. Nelson made a motion to approve the courses.

**SECOND:** Dr. Powell.

Motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Discussed the ICVA retake policy and the Cuban/Venezuelans in exile letters to the Board. No action can be taken by the Board as this requires a statutory change. Attorney Tellechea will draft a response.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Pulido request was discussed. Attorney Tellechea will draft a response.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dewey Maddox from FVTA gave legislative update. Dr. Sutliff and Jim Naugle from FVMA discussed bills going through legislation.

**PROBATION ROLL CALL**

Ms. Oliveto called the probation roll.

The following probationers were present:

- Valerie Biehl, DVM
- Bruce Bierbaum, DVM
- Rochelle DesChamps, DVM
- Alfonso Paredes, DVM
- James Segota, DVM
- Steven Lewis, DVM

The following probationers were absent:

344 None

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347 **NEXT MEETING**

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349 June 12, 2026 – Daytona Beach Shores.

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351

352 **ADJOURN**

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354 The meeting adjourned at 11:23 P.M.

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DRAFT