DOCKET NO. 2014-177

IN THE MATTER OF § TEXAS BOARD OF
THE LICENSE OF § VETERINARY
BETHANY HARRIS, D.V.M. § MEDICAL EXAMINERS

AGREED ORDER

On this, the 21st day of October, 2014, came on to be considered by the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ("Board") the matter of the license of Bethany Harris, D.V.M. ("Respondent"). Pursuant to Section 801.408, Texas Occupations Code and Board Rule 575.29, an informal conference was held on May 5, 2014. Respondent did not appear and was not represented by counsel. The Board was represented at the conference by the Board’s Enforcement Committee.

Respondent, without admitting the truth of the findings and conclusions set out in this Agreed Order, wishes to waive a conference under Section 801.2056, and thereby dispose of the compliance issues set out below. Respondent agrees to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in this Order. In waiving the right to a conference, Respondent acknowledges her understanding of the alleged violations and the adequacy and sufficiency of the notice mailed to her.

Upon the recommendation of the Enforcement Committee and with Respondent’s consent, the Board makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and enters this Agreed Order as set forth below.

Findings of Fact

1. Respondent, Bethany Harris, D.V.M. of Slaton, Texas, holds Texas veterinary license 12342.

2. The Board has jurisdiction over the subject matter and Respondent. Respondent received notice, which may be required by law and by the rules of the Board. All jurisdictional requirements have been satisfied under Tex. Occ. Code Ann. Title 4 (Act). By entering into this Agreed Order, Respondent waives any defect in the notice and any further right to notice and hearing under the Act; Tex. Gov’t Code Ann. §§ 2001.051-.054; and the Rules of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (Board Rules) (22 Tex. Admin. Code, Chapter 575).

3. On July 1, 2013, Respondent entered into an agreement for monitoring with the Peer Recovery Network ("PRN") for substance abuse. Respondent entered into the agreement with PRN after her employer discovered her self-medicating her Crohn’s disease at his veterinary clinic due to discrepancies in the controlled substance log of the clinic.

RECEIVED
JUN. 1 2014
TBVME
LEGAL DEPT.
4. Respondent’s agreement with PRN required, among other things, that Respondent pay dues to PRN, pay for random drug screens, attend sessions with a therapist, attend sessions with a psychiatrist, and attend appointments with a GI doctor. Respondent attended a psychological evaluation on April 8 and 17, 2013 which stated that Respondent is dependent on opioids for pain management. The assessment also stated that only “with proper monitoring, good support, and mental healthcare involvement” Respondent could practice veterinary medicine safely.

5. However after that assessment, Respondent refused to fulfill her other requirements under the PRN agreement due to financial constraints and as such, Respondent does not have the “proper monitoring, good support, and mental healthcare involvement” that is required for her safe practice.

Conclusions of Law

1. Respondent is required to comply with the provisions of the Veterinary Licensing Act, Chapter 801, Texas Occupations Code, and with the Board’s Rules.

2. Based on the above Findings of Fact, Respondent has violated Section 801.402 (3) of the Veterinary Licensing Act, Texas Occupations Code, by being chronically or habitually intoxicated, chemically dependent, or addicted to drugs.

3. Based on Conclusions of Law 1 and 2, Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Section 801.401 of the Veterinary Licensing Act, Texas Occupations Code:

   801.401. DISCIPLINARY POWERS OF BOARD. (a) If an applicant or license holder is subject to denial of a license or to disciplinary action under Section 801.402, the Board may:

   (1) refuse to examine an applicant or to issue or renew a license;
   (2) revoke or suspend a license;
   (3) place on probation a license holder or person whose license has been suspended;
   (4) reprimand a license holder; or
   (5) impose an administrative penalty.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD AND RESPONDENT AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

Based on the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Board ORDERS that Respondent receive a FORMAL REPRIMAND.

The Board ORDERS that the license of Bethany Harris, D.V.M., be SUSPENDED for TWO YEARS and Respondent placed on PROBATION for the entire period of the SUSPENSION.
The Board further ORDERS that Respondent continue her Peer Assistance Contract under the Board’s Peer Assistance Program for FIVE YEARS. Respondent must follow all recommendations of the Board’s Peer Assistance Program and that Respondent is required to follow under Respondent’s Peer Assistance Contract. Any failure to abide by those recommendations or that contract and further and immediate disciplinary action may be taken by the Board and as it is considered a violation of this Board Order.

The Board ORDERS Respondent to notify her employer(s) of this Order. Respondent shall provide the Board with a signed acknowledgment from her employer within 30 days of the date of this Order acknowledging that she or he has read and understands this Order.

The Board further ORDERS that:

1. Respondent shall abide by the Rules of Professional Conduct, the Texas Veterinary Licensing Act and the laws of the State of Texas and the United States.

2. Respondent shall cooperate with the Board’s attorneys, investigators, compliance officers and other employees and agents investigating Respondent's compliance with this order.

3. Failure by Respondent to comply with the terms of this Agreed Order or with any other provision of the Act or the Board Rules, may result in further disciplinary action.

Respondent, by signing this Agreed Order, acknowledges her understanding of the Agreed Order, the notice, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law herein set forth, and agrees that she will satisfactorily comply with the mandates of the Agreed Order in a timely manner or be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the Board.

Respondent, by signing this Agreed Order, waives her right to a hearing and any right to seek judicial review of this Order. Respondent acknowledges that she is entitled to be represented by an attorney of Respondent’s choice at her expense in any hearing before the Board.

**RESPONDENT WAIVES ANY FURTHER HEARINGS OR APPEALS TO THE BOARD OR TO ANY COURT IN REGARD TO ALL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS AGREED ORDER. RESPONDENT AGREES THAT THIS IS A FINAL ORDER.**

The date of this Agreed Order shall be the date it is adopted by the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.
I, BETHANY HARRIS, D.V.M., HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE FOREGOING AGREED ORDER. I UNDERSTAND THAT BY SIGNING IT, I WAIVE CERTAIN RIGHTS. I SIGN IT VOLUNTARILY. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS ORDER CONTAINS THE ENTIRE AGREEMENT AND THERE IS NO OTHER AGREEMENT OF ANY KIND, VERBAL, WRITTEN OR OTHERWISE.

Bethany Harris, D.V.M.  

DATE  

STATE OF TEXAS  

COUNTY OF Lubbock  

BEFORE ME, on this day, personally appeared Bethany Harris, D.V.M., known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing Agreed Order, and acknowledged to me that she executed the same for the purposes stated therein.

Given under the hand and seal of office this 10 day of June, 2014

Notary Public

SIGNED AND ENTERED by the TEXAS STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS on this the 21 day of October, 20__.

Bud E. Alldredge, Jr., D.V.M.  
President