



STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, October 15, 2020 At 10:00 A.M
Virtual Video Conference Meeting via Google Hangouts

MISSION OF THE MARYLAND BOARD OF WATERWORKS & WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS

The Treatment Systems that provide drinking water for our citizens and handle the wastes generated by our daily activities play an important role in protecting Public Health and the Environment of Maryland. Through the Certification Program established by State Law, the “Board of Waterworks and Waste Systems Operators” sets the education, experience and examination standards for Operators and Superintendents who work in these vital systems.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

William Shreve	Hiram Tanner
Jay Price	Bruce Darner
Scott Harmon	

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Dominic Deludos	Joe Johnson
Partha Tallapragada	

LIASONS, GUEST & STAFF PRESENT

Dee Settar	Acting Board Secretary
Martin Fuhr	Board Staff
Pam Franks	Board Staff
Victoria Arbaugh	Board Staff
Jennifer Bowman	Board Counsel
Ben Thompson	Board Member Appointee
Karen Brandt	MCET Liaison
Sue Houghton	MRWA Liaison
Clark Howells	CWEA Liason

GUESTS PRESENT

Monte Triggs	Guest Washington County Dept. of Water Quality
Davina Yutts	Guest Washington County Dept. of Water Quality
Scott Nipps	Guest Operator RC Willson WTP
Laura Raish	Guest 360 Water
Laura Tegehoff	Guest 360 Water
Gordon Baugh	Guest 360 Water
Monica Simpson	Guest 360 Water

01. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM.

Roll Call was done by Victoria Arbaugh.

The Board meeting was conducted virtually via Video conference in lieu of the State of emergency proclaimed by Governor Larry Hogan due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

02. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

It was moved by Scott Harmon and seconded by Jay Price to adopt the amended proposed meeting agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

03. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Board Members reviewed the September 17, 2020 draft meeting minutes, it was moved by Jay Price and seconded by Scott Harmon to adopt the minutes as amended with corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

04. BOARD CHAIR'S COMMENTS

The Board Chairman welcomed and thanked Board Members, Liaisons and Guests for attending today's meeting. The Board Chairman invited the guests to speak prior to discussing ongoing Board business. At this time, the Board Chairman specifically welcomed Board Member Appointee Ben Thompson to the Board. Mr. Thompson introduced himself and gave a brief background of his interests and experience.

The Board Chairman invited the guests from 360 Water to introduce themselves. Laura Raish, President of 360 Water introduced herself and supporting staff and explained that they were present for guidance on how best to submit courses for approval. She specifically asked for input on how to best complete the TRE Application process since many courses are both site and employer specific. The Board Chair suggested possibly using the conference rule instead of having submitting dozens of 1 hour classes for review. After a lively discussion, it was determined that the classes shouldn't be bundled but must be submitted individually. Laura Raish expressed her understanding and confirmed that going forward all 1 hour classes would be submitted individually.

The Board Chairman then welcomed Monte Triggs and Davina Yutts from the Washington County Department of Water Quality. Both guests provided professional backgrounds and advised they were present to discuss plant and operator certification concerns. There was a discussion on experience credit for circuit rider operators who work in several different plants performing varying duties. The Board Chairman clarified that an operator with a higher certification does not need to maintain a lower certification in order to be in compliance. For example, a circuit rider with a T3 Certificate does not need to maintain a T2 Certificate in order to work both in the T2 and T3 capacity at different facilities

At 11:20, the Board Chairman called for a 5 minute break. The meeting resumed at 11:25 am. At this time, Scott Harmon advised that he was moving to Texas but would be in Maryland for work purposes at least once a month. He regretfully advised the Board that he would need to resign his position since he would no longer be a Maryland resident but confirmed that he will still attend meetings as a liason. Karen Brandt

also advised that she will be resigning from the Board since she is retiring from MCET as of Thanksgiving.

05. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Report on Board Administrative Activities (Revenue & Expenditures)

Acting Secretary Dee Settar provided the Board with the revenue and expenditures for both August and September of 2020. As of August 31, 2020: the Revenue was \$11,740.00, the Expense were \$12,350.00 and the Encumbrance was \$41,063.00. The Acting Secretary noted that the numbers for September 30, 2020 would not be provided by MDE – Fiscal until October 23, 2020. It was again noted by the Acting Secretary that the encumbrance for ABC exams decreases as money is spent on that service and expenses included operating cost and staff salaries.

B. Exam Updates

Martin Fuhr presented the examination pass / fail statistics by month and class which resulted in total of 1,151 exams given over the past twelve (12) months an overall pass rate of 42.86% in September. Martin explained, in detail, recent testing limitations. In addition, Martin Fuhr continued to ask the Board to contribute any ideas for how to improve the pass / fail rate for all classifications.

C. Board Staff Initiatives – (Superintendent Training Course & Website Updates)

Acting Secretary Dee Settar updated the Board on initiatives to update the website and walked them through plans to post operator license testing sites on the webpage. Karen Brandt indicated that MCET would like to be apprised of that information and regularly updates so they could also post the alternative testing locations. The Acting Secretary advised the Board that virtual, on-line Superintendent Training had 38 registrants confirmed and she believed it would be a great success. She also addressed the fact that all future meetings for the first 6 months of 2021 will be scheduled as virtual events.

06. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

- 1.) Brian Persing – Requesting both Education and Experience toward the required minimum time Substitution for his class 5A Wastewater Treatment Certification. He is currently employed with WSSC at the Piscataway Water Reclamation Facility. Mr. Persing successfully completed the WasteWater 5A Examination on July 16, 2020 with a score of 86%. He graduated from the State University of New York at Genesee on May 14, 1994 with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry earning 80 credits of math, biology and science. In addition, he earned his Master's in Business Administration from State University of New York's Empire State College on June 1, 2013 earning 41 credits in Business Management, Economics and Finance. He previously worked for the City of Schenectady, New York where he accrued just under 6000 hours experience and treated wastewater utilizing primary and secondary clarifiers, chlorine contact, effluent pumping, gravity belt

thickener, anaerobic digestion and centrifuge (plant flow schematic attached.) Based upon his educational background and experience, the Board Staff recommends that Mr. Person be granted a 1 year Experience Credit and a 1 year Education Substitution making him eligible for his Wastwater 5A Certification on February 1, 2021. Scott Harmon made a motion to approve the Board Staff's recommendation which was seconded by Bruce Darner. The Motion was carried with Jay Price abstaining.

07. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Training Review and Evaluation (TRE) Committee Policy Changes

The Board reviewed the recommended policy changes that were approved by the TRE Committee and forwarded to the Board for approval. There was a brief discussion of the proposed changes. Jay Price made a motion to approve the policy changes as submitted, Bruce Darner seconded the motion. The Motion was carried with Scott Harmon abstaining from voting on portions which applied to the regulation of his employer.

B. Training Review and Evaluation (TRE) Recommendations

There were no recommendations for course approval submitted by the TRE for this Board meeting.

08. ON-GOING BUSINESS

A. TRE Policy Update – Discuss Previously Distributed Document

The Acting Secretary advised the Board that she would be further amending the policy to fully clarify the TRE voting process. Karen Brandt reminded the Board of the need to properly execute a privacy release if training providers would be required to provide training information on any individual. At this point, a lengthy discussion of the TRE process and policy ensued. The Board chair suggested that MDE's Compliance Division provide technical input into the training regulations to ensure adequacy. Karen Brandt suggested that the policy require on-line / virtual trainers provide applicants with a "JOT" form which emails receipt of completion of a course / exam. In the interest of time, the Board Chair suggested this topic be revisited and that the Board also revisit the "matrix" chart requirements prior to making recommendations

B. Late Fee Letter Update

The Acting Secretary updated the Board on the letter enumerating the practical impact of the Governor's Executive Order. She explained that a copy of the letter was sent out with all of the November renewals and would be included with every renewal going forward. She also confirmed that the letter was emailed to all utilities for which MDE possessed an email contact.

10. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS

A. Karen Brandt – Advised that MCET currently has two (2) Waste Water Operator Classes

with 65 operators enrolled and there will be additional training classes coming in January. She did caution that many participants are still struggling with the learning curve for virtual and on-line classes. She also expressed gratitude for Scott's service to the Board/

- B. Scott Harmon** – Advised that he and MRWA extended sincere gratitude to Karen for her exceptional service to the Board. Ben Thomas asked about any updates / improvement to the Sampler Certification process. Scott advised that a new page with instructions was posted to the website.
- C. Bruce Darner** – Wished both Karen and Scott the best in their future endeavors and expressed thanks for all of their work over the years.
- D. Jay Price** – Expressed best wishes and thanks to both Scott and Karen. Advised that WSSC is considering three options for training: in person, virtual and hybrid training. They are leaning towards live video training and are waiting for results to analyze before determining how successful and effective each option works out.
- E. Clark Howells** – Expressed thanks for the service to the Board for both Karen and Scott. Also with them the best in future endeavors.
- F. Sue Houghton** – Wished happiness for both Karen and Scott and thanked them for their service to the Board. Advised that MRWA is working on new water classes and is now conducting on-line training while adding as many classes as possible. They are making every effort to expand both remote training and testing.
- G. Final Comments** – The Board Chair expressed his gratitude to both Karen and Scott for their service to the Board. Also with them the best in future endeavors.

11. Board Vote to Move into Closed Session

Pursuant to General Provisions Article (“GP”) § 3-305(b), on a motion made by Scott Harmon and seconded by Hiram Tanner, the following Board members voted in favor to move into closed session on October 15, 2020 at 1:07 PM via Google Hangouts video/ teleconference for the purpose of complying with certain provisions of the Open Meetings Act: Scott Harmon, Bruce Darner, Jay Price, and Hiram Tanner; Chairman Bill Shreve abstained. The motion carried.

Specifically, the Board discussed the adoption of the minutes for the prior closed session held on September 17, 2020. After discussion and grammatical changes Jay Price made a motion to adopt the amended minutes and Bruce Darner seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

A motion to conclude the closed session was made by Jay Price and seconded by Scott Harmon. The following Board members voted in favor: Scott Harmon, Bruce Darner, Hiram Tanner, Jay Price and Chairman Bill Shreve abstained. The motion carried. The closed session was concluded at 1:17 PM and the Board returned to open session.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Scott Harmon moved to adjourn the virtual conference meeting at 1:20 PM. The next meeting will be held

on **November 19, 2020 Video Conference Meeting held via Virtual Google Hangouts.**