



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF WATER SUPPLY & GEOSCIENCE

Water System Operations Element

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New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Board of Examiners for Water and Wastewater Licensing
Board Meeting Minutes for November 30, 2022
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Approved by the Board on February 8, 2023

Board Members Present: Charles Jenkins, David Fields, Ronald Anastasio, JoAnn Mondsin, Robert Genetelli, James Mastrokalos, Eric Ekoue, Wendy Simone

There were 8 Board members present, constituting a quorum.

Board Members Absent: Patricia Gardner

Board Legal Representatives Present: Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Stephanie Carney, NJ Division of Law

NJDEP Staff Present: Kristin Tedesco, Malathi Prabhu, Casey Lippincott and Tyler Rowe

Members of the Public: Roger Budd, Robert Noel, Nick Mackowski, Keith Smith, Sean Irwin, Ed Pisani, Richard Howlett, Cliff Keen, Jim Mackie, Michael Furrey, John Hroncich

1. Call to Order

R. Genetelli presided over the virtual meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:02 am, noting there were enough Board members present to constitute a quorum. K. Tedesco initiated the Roll Call.

K. Tedesco read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement (OPMA).

This meeting was held virtually through Microsoft Teams. Notice of the meeting and instructions on how to participate by phone were provided by public notice on January 5, 2022, in advance of the meeting.

2. Minutes

R. Genetelli noted the draft August 24, 2022 minutes were circulated prior to today's meeting and asked for a motion to adopt the minutes.

J. Mondsin motioned to accept the meeting minutes and J. Mastrokalos seconded the motion. All

were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Old Business:

- *Program Updates*

R. Genetelli yielded to K. Tedesco for the Program Update. K. Tedesco began with examinations, stating that there was a letter of complaint regarding the examination process further down on the agenda and reminded the Board that the Department has been logging complaints about PSI, ABC and the process in general.

K. Tedesco stated that the Department is currently working towards a new agreement with PSI and ABC, who are updating their systems in order to allow for more than one testing modality. Currently it is not possible to do so, and there are some challenges involved. Currently, the Department can switch or alternate between two testing modalities (exams hosted at PSI testing centers or remotely proctored exams).

K. Tedesco stated that remotely proctored examinations would be cheaper than the testing centers. Also discussed the possibility of sending out an email notifying the operator community of a set period utilizing the new modality, and seeing what modality is preferred.

R. Genetelli asked if there are any limitations to using the testing centers, or if the designated number of spots could be overwhelmed.

K. Tedesco replied that there is no anticipation of overwhelming the testing centers. In prior discussions with the testing agency, the numbers from the previous year's exams were ran to determine the number of tests vs the number of available spots and there was ability to accommodate them. Would still like to do a trial run.

W. Simone stated that her operators have expressed to her how stressful it is to set up for an examination at home and would much rather go to a testing center. The additional money may be worth the convenience.

J. Mondsini agreed with a trial run and proposed having someone from the Department or the Board to sit in and see the experience for themselves before opening it up fully to operators.

J. Mastrokalos asked if there has been any positive feedback from remotely proctored examinations, since he has heard primarily negative feedback since joining the Board. Felt that testing centers would be more flexible and would be easier to schedule. Also agreed with having a trial run.

R. Genetelli stated that most of the negative feedback received is due to technical glitches and issues with the remotely proctored exams and expects the testing centers to remediate this issue. Agreed with J. Mondsini that it is a process that will need to be explored. Asked the Department how it would balance the two testing modalities and the timeframes for all the changes.



K. Tedesco stated that the Department would want feedback from the testing centers first. Stated that the first quarter of 2023 would utilize testing centers to gauge it and have remotely proctored examinations as a backup for those who need it.

R. Genetelli asked K. Tedesco if the switch to testing centers could happen by January. K. Tedesco responded that PSI expressed there would be a quick turnaround.

J. Mondsini asked how many testing centers there are. K. Tedesco estimated 10-20 but would follow up with the full list.

R. Genetelli asked if the test would stop if too many questions were incorrect, as the Commercial Driving License exams do. K. Tedesco stated that applicants will go through the whole test, and J. Mondsini agreed that they would.

R. Anastasio stated that the list of testing centers looked good and seems better than before remotely proctored examinations where there were only three locations. Expressed that he would like both testing modalities offered, but the differences between them highlighted somewhere.

R. Genetelli stated that the Board was in agreement to give the testing centers a trial run and get feedback from surveys as soon as possible.

R. Genetelli and R. Anastasio asked K. Tedesco about the complaints that the Department receives. After some discussion, R. Genetelli proposed a "Complaint Subcommittee," which could handle looking at or monitoring the complaints received. K. Tedesco stated that it would be a good idea.

R. Genetelli asked the Board if there were any more comments on the testing centers. There were none, so the meeting moved on to Exam Statistics.

- *Examination Statistics and Trends*

R. Genetelli asked if there were any comments on the licensing statistics. K. Tedesco asked T. Rowe if there was anything to add.

T. Rowe gave a brief description of what was provided. Consisted of exam statistics that were graphed visually based on brief comments from Board members in a previous meeting. Asked the Board to send any feedback or requests for other methods of presentation.

R. Genetelli asked if the trends consisted of 2 years' worth of data. T. Rowe responded that the data from 2021 was not broken into quarters by the time of the meeting, but the 2022 data was. Stated that the next iteration would be fully broken into quarters and would be more statistically sound.

J. Mastrolalos stated that he appreciated the trending over time but would like to see the number of examinations from each quarter also included on an axis.



J. Mondsini stated that she would like an annual breakdown of the pass/fail/absent rates in pie chart form. T. Rowe asked if that would be per license, and J. Mondsini replied yes.

R. Genetelli thanked T. Rowe and then noted the 30% pass rate for sanitary licenses, and how there was a significant gap between that and the other license categories. Would like to know if it is a testing issue, applicant issue, procedure issue, etc.

Several Board members discussed the possibility of testing centers positively affecting the examination results. R. Anastasio asked if the Department compared examination results to results from decades prior. K. Tedesco stated that the Department has not gone back that far, but there may be summaries from past years to reference.

R. Genetelli stated that he was still interested in having a subcommittee for reviewing examination questions and getting the 10 New Jersey regulation questions back onto the exam. Would want to see the procedure and questions, and understands K. Tedesco is still following up on the feasibility. R. Genetelli asked if there were any other questions on examination statistics. There were none, so the meeting moved on to the next agenda item.

- *Status Update on Reciprocity Applications*

Sean Irwin

K. Tedesco asked T. Rowe to provide the Board with the history of Sean Irwin's application. T. Rowe stated that Mr. Irwin had submitted a reciprocity application previously, and the Board had taken issue with the fact that he already had a T-2 license in New Jersey and was requesting a T-4 through reciprocity.

Mr. Irwin addressed the Board and explained that the nature of his employment at Veolia had him moving across state lines and was asked to run a specific treatment plant in New Jersey after working some time in New York. Mr. Hroncich, Mr. Irwin's supervisor, also gave the Board some history and clarification.

After some discussion, R. Genetelli asked for a motion to reconsider Mr. Irwin's application at the end of the reciprocity applications. J. Mastrokalos motioned and W. Simone seconded. J. Mondsini abstained due to potential conflict of interest, but all other members were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Shaun Whetstone – N-4 (PA)

R. Genetelli asked the Board if there were any comments on this application. J. Mondsini noted that he signed his own SOQ and should be sent back to the applicant to have that corrected.

R. Genetelli stated that based on the information provided Mr. Whetstone may qualify for a conditionally approved N-3 license over an N-4, dependent on the securing of a signature attesting to his experience. Asked the Board for their opinion.



W. Simone agreed with R. Genetelli and J. Mondsini that a supervisor's signature would be required. R. Anastasio stated he agreed with the decision as well.

R. Genetelli asked for a motion to conditionally approve Mr. Whetstone for an N-3 license pending supervisory signature, allowing the Department to make the final determination.

R. Anastasio motioned and J. Mondsini seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

David Jones – W-4 (CT)

R. Genetelli asked the Water side of the Board for their opinions.

W. Simone stated that she saw a lot of the experience provided in the SOQ was relating to water [treatment], not in distribution. Recommended Mr. Jones sit for the W-3 examination and felt a reciprocal W-4 license was not applicable.

J. Mastrokalos agreed that the experience provided in the SOQ did not seem sufficient. Several Board members continued to discuss the details and stated percentages of Mr. Jones' operating experience.

After some discussion, E. Ekoue noted that the application seemed to consist mainly of water treatment experience and would like Mr. Jones to send in an amended application that better reflects his distribution experience.

R. Genetelli asked if E. Ekoue if his statement was a motion to table the application, pending an amended SOQ that better reflects the applicant's distribution experience. E. Ekoue agreed that it was. W. Simeone seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ed Pisani – C-4 (PA)

R. Genetelli noted that the application was a resubmittal and asked the Board for a discussion on the application. After several Board members discussed some components of the resubmittal, T. Rowe informed the Board that Mr. Pisani was on the call and could provide clarification on any items the Board identified.

Mr. Pisani provided context on his experience and answered the Board's questions. R. Genetelli stated that he was satisfied with the resubmittal and asked for a motion.

J. Mondsini motioned to approve Mr. Pisani for a C-4 license through reciprocity and R. Anastasio seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Sean Irwin - T-4 (NY)



R. Genetelli reminded the Board that they decided to reconsider Mr. Irwin's application.

W. Simone began the discussion by noting that based on the previous submittal and earlier discussion, she felt that Mr. Irwin's stated experience did not properly reflect what was provided in his application. Recommended Mr. Irwin straighten up his SOQ and reapply, showing that he has more treatment experience than mechanical experience.

J. Mastrokalos asked how the Board would normally quantify and differentiate experience. Also asked if there was a difference in counting experience with reciprocity applications versus examination applications. R. Genetelli responded that in the past, a decision would be made to include different types of experience in the total experience if the applicant made the clear case to consider it as such. Noted that W. Simone did not appear to think that case was made in the application.

R. Genetelli asked the Board if it would be acceptable to require Mr. Irwin to submit an amended application explaining his treatment experience over his mechanical experience. J. Mastrokalos and W. Simone agreed.

R. Genetelli asked for a motion to have Mr. Irwin amend his application and redefine the experience that would be applicable to the license he is trying to receive. W. Simone motioned and R. Anastasio seconded. J. Mondsini and J. Mastrokalos abstained due to potential conflict of interest, but all other members were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Hearing no additional questions or comments, R. Genetelli moved on to the next agenda item.

4. New Business:

- *Subcommittee Update*

J. Mondsini began the discussion by stating the Handbook Subcommittee sent out a last draft to all members of the subcommittee in October 2022, and are scheduled to meet to review that last draft and any comments. Is hopeful for a final subcommittee approval in order to submit to the Department for review.

R. Genetelli stated that the Handbook Subcommittee would like to meet with S. Carney regarding the handbook and discuss legal-related items. Asked J. Mondsini to set up a meeting with S. Carney and the subcommittee.

R. Anastasio gave the Board an update on the Examination Application Redesign Subcommittee, stating that they had met several times and sent a draft to the Board and Department staff on November 21st. Noted that the subcommittee also intends to send the draft to the Advisory Committee and outside organizations for their comments. Stated that progress has been made.



J. Mondisini noted that Rick Howlett of NJ Water asked to see the draft in the meeting chat. R. Genetelli confirmed that NJ Water is on the list of recipients for comment.

- *Letter from Alan J. Kennedy*

R. Genetelli thanked Mr. Kennedy for submitting the letter. Felt that the subject of examination applications and steps being taken to remediate issues was already addressed earlier in the meeting and asked the Board if there were any other comments on the letter. There were none.

5. Advisory Committee Update

K. Tedesco stated that there was not very much to update the Board on. Some items that were identified were updating the bylaws for the Advisory Committee, looking at feasibility of Training on Demand, virtual trainings and its criteria, and having a joint subcommittee meeting with the Board of Examiners.

6. 2023 Meeting Schedule Proposal

K. Tedesco stated that the Department has reserved a couple dates for future meetings. Expects to hold the meetings on Wednesdays and will send them in an email after this meeting. Any feedback could be sent to either herself or T. Rowe. The reserved dates were scheduled around the availability of Department staff but can be moved around if they do not work with the rest of the Board.

R. Genetelli asked if there were any comments. There were none, so the meeting moved on to the public comment section.

7. General Public Comment:

Dennis Palmer of Landis Sewerage Authority had a question for K. Tedesco and the rest of the Department, asking about what had happened to the Licensed Operator Rules and Regulations. Noted that previously there were a lot of meetings on rewriting the rules and regulations and providing updates and quoted P. Gardner from two meetings in 2018 and 2019 about rewriting the regulations.

K. Tedesco responded that it is standard practice to roll over (readopt without change) rules and regulations so that they do not expire, and that that action does not reflect a lack of prioritization from the Department. Noted that information extracted from a stakeholder session during the 2018-2019 period was provided to a rule team. Another goal for the Department is to have focus group sessions on particular subjects and noted that the process is moving forward.

Mr. Palmer asked if the Board would be involved in the process. K. Tedesco stated that the Board would be included in discussions regarding rule changes.

R. Genetelli stated that the Board is looking to work with the Department to get some changes made. Noted that the rules had been readopted without change in the past but assured that the Board is not ignoring the Licensed Operator Rules and Regulations.



Cliff Keen began by thanking K. Tedesco and Department staff and thanked the Board for everyone's work. Wanted to suggest that everyone that has taken a test with PSI since March 2020 should be sent a survey regarding the examination process.

There were no other comments.

8. Adjournment:

Several members asked for a motion to adjourn, which was motioned by R. Anastasio and seconded by R. Genetelli . Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.

