



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF WATER SUPPLY & GEOSCIENCE

Water System Operations Element
Bureau of Water System Engineering
401 East State Street

P.O. Box 402, Mail Code 401-04Q
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420
Tel. (609) 292-2957 ♦ Fax (609) 633-1495
www.nj.gov/dep/watersupply

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

SHAWN M. LATOURETTE
Commissioner

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Board of Examiners for Water and Wastewater Licensing
Board Meeting Minutes For November 29, 2023
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Approved by the Board on February 15, 2024

Board Members Present: Linda Ofori, David Fields, Robert Genetelli, Ronald Anastasio, JoAnn Mondsini, Kouao-Eric Ekoue, James Mastrokalos, Wendy Simone

There were 8 Board members present, constituting a quorum.

Board Members Absent: Charles Jenkins

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

NJDEP Staff Present: Kristin Tedesco, Joseph duRocher, Malathi Prabhu, Tyler Rowe

Members of the Public: Joe Langel, Mike Rummel, Sean Andres, Richard Howlett, Garrett Brown, David Leister

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM, it was noted that there were enough Board members present to constitute a quorum.

DAG Kevin DeCristofer read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement (OPMA).

This meeting was held via conference call. Notice of the meeting and instructions on how to participate by phone were provided by public notice in advance of the meeting.

2. Adoption of Meeting Minutes

R. Genetelli asked for a motion to approve the August 9, 2023 meeting minutes and had no edifications. J. Mondsini motioned to approve, and R. Anastasio seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Old Business

Examination Updates and Pass/Fail Statistics

J. duRocher gave a brief overview of the pass and fail statistics that were given to the Board.

R. Genetelli asked if there were any questions or discussions. Hearing none, he made a point that the passing percentage was higher this quarter and was above fifty (50%) percent. All licenses were trending slightly higher, with Wastewater Collections (C) and Industrial Wastewater Treatment (N) licenses having the highest pass rates.

R. Genetelli also added that he would like the Board to work more with the Advisory Committee in order to help the pass rate.

J. Mastrokalos stated he would like to find out what percentage of the applicants underwent a classroom curriculum versus a correspondence course and compare the materials and the pass rates between the two categories. He noted that currently that data is manually written on the applications and could be difficult to aggregate but suggested adding a field on the application and then adding a column to the exam statistics spreadsheet.

J. duRocher stated that the Department could begin recording that information at the administrative level, but any retroactive data gathering would be incredibly difficult. J. Mastrokalos agreed regarding the difficulty and clarified that the data gathering going forward would be alright.

J. duRocher clarified that the ask would be to identify the category of training for the Introduction to Water and Wastewater Treatment Course and the Advanced Water and Wastewater Treatment Course, either “in person or online.” The Board members agreed.

J. Mastrokalos offered to do some of the analytics himself if he could be given the raw data.

W. Simone noted that every time she talks to an exam applicant, they say that the math is the issue. She would like to look at the particular sections applicants are failing in.

R. Anastasio added that some applicants may need to “get their feet wet” before succeeding and would like to see the pass rates for applicants with repeat examination attempts.

Program Updates

J. duRocher began by identifying five (5) outstanding items that require a status update:

- **NJDEP-065 Form**: this document is currently being revised. The revised form was sent out to the Board for comments and the Department has received them. J. duRocher stated he has met with L. Ofori and K. Tedesco regarding the revised form and have agreed to adopt the form as drafted. It has not yet gone into effect.



- Revised Examination Application Form: J. duRocher stated that members of his team have provided some comments on the form and has been advanced to his management with little to no changes.
- Board Member Handbook: J. duRocher stated that his team has reviewed the submittal and has provided some preliminary feedback. A few items require further fleshing out and because the Board and the Department want the handbook to be a resource for consistency, the Department may ask the Board to add certain things.
- Examination Question Review: this is the item that requires a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). There were some legal ramifications and a recent change in the DAG that has caused some delay with this item. J. duRocher informed the Board that the DAG is looking into the situation and hopes to have a meeting soon. K. DeCristofer added that he needs to meet with his supervisors to go over a few items, and once completed would reach out.
- State-Specific Questions: J. duRocher stated that the Department has received the ten (10) questions that were submitted, but still needs further review. He added that WPI has ensured the Department that the questions could be accommodated but would require a follow up.
 - K. Tedesco added that the state-specific questions would come at an extra cost to the Department, as it is all contract-based. WPI would need to add the questions to their build for systems and would require peer-review and rotation, all of which need to be defined in the contract. The contract is expiring, and the Department plans to meet with WPI sometime around January to get more details and questions answered.

Examination Modality Announcement

J. duRocher stated that taking effect in mid-December, WPI (formerly ABC) recently announced that an update to their examination platform will now allow for multiple modalities of examination. The Department plans on utilizing this update to administer examinations via in-person testing centers and remotely proctored (“at-home”) examinations.

W. Simone asked how many versions of the exam there are. J. duRocher answered that it is his understanding that there are two versions of the examination with shuffled and rotated questions but are ultimately the same examination. K. Tedesco agreed with J. duRocher.

J. Mastrokalos asked if exam applicants have the opportunity to visually cheat at testing centers. J. duRocher stated he has not been to a testing center. S. Andres responded that there are cubicles utilized at testing centers.

R. Anastasio stated that he likes the testing centers very much and they seem to have addressed a lot of the issues that exam applicants had been running into.



R. Genetelli stressed the importance of listening to the new generation of licensed operators, and [rhetorically] asked the Board members when the last time any one of them had seen or taken an examination. He would like to get a better feel for what exam applicants are being asked.

E. Ekoue asked if the Department and the Board could look into facilitating better communication between the instructors and the students.

R. Anastasio stated that the Department and the Board should continue with the Examination Question Review, acknowledging that there were some legal issues with doing so. Several Board members expressed their agreement.

R. Genetelli asked what role the Department has in the process, if WPI is a private organization and if the Department is on some sort of board. J. duRocher responded that New Jersey has been a member of WPI (formerly ABC) for a while but had more of an integral role a few decades ago. Noted there have been internal conversations that expressed interest in becoming more involved with WPI once again.

R. Genetelli asked if there were any other discussions or questions on Old Business. There were none.

4. New Business

Reciprocity Applications

Nadia Bastos Facciolla (S-1; AZ)

R. Genetelli stated that the applicant sent in her S-1 reciprocity application to the Department and applied from the State of Arizona, but it had gotten mixed up and processed as a regular examination application. Arizona allows their applicants to sit for an exam without any operating experience, and the applicant took and passed her examination. T. Rowe advised the applicant to gain operating experience before applying for reciprocity. After doing so and applying, the application was reviewed as a regular application, not a reciprocity application, and it was approved for the applicant to take the S-1 examination.

R. Genetelli noted that her education and experience had already been accepted to qualify for the S-1 exam and she has already taken the examination and passed. He asked for a motion to approve the applicant for a S-1 license to be issued. J. Mondsini motioned to approve and E. Ekoue seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Garrett Brown (N-2 & S-2; CO)

R. Genetelli opened up the discussion.

J. Mondsini stated that she has one concern regarding the one (1) year, nine (9) months experience listed on the applications. Noted the applicant has a lot of various licenses, but in New Jersey, those licenses would require multiple years of experience to obtain. Stated she was okay with granting an S license but did not see enough industrial experience in his SOQ to warrant a reciprocal N license.



R. Genetelli added that the applicant states sampling and other things in regard to publicly owned industrial treatment, but questioned whether that relates enough to an N-2.

After some additional discussion, G. Brown volunteered to answer any questions the Board may have. He clarified some of the programmatic differences between Colorado and New Jersey and gave the Board further clarification on the breakdown of his operating experience.

R. Genetelli asked for a motion. After some discussion by the Board, J. Mondisini motioned to grant the applicant a S-1 license. J. Mastrokalos seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittee Update

J. Mondisini stated that she would like to come up with more questions and answers to add to the FAQ section of the Board Member Handbook and asked the Board to remember any tough questions and submit them to her.

R. Genetelli stated that the biggest issue with this Board has been its consistency and wants to put things down on paper for future Board members. There have been some unique situations and Board members should be noting these things and stressed the importance of getting those questions and answers to J. Mondisini.

W. Simone stated that she is waiting to hear back from the Department and is looking forward to sitting down with WPI and taking a look at the examination.

R. Genetelli asked about the status of the Licensed Operator Rules and Regulations. K. Tedesco responded that the Department is going to hold a focus group on December 11, 2023, clarifying that OPMA requirements still need to be followed, so not every member of the Board can be included at one time. Noted there are other groups scheduled for the beginning of next year.

NJDEP IT Project Update

M. Prabhu outlined some IT projects for the new year. One project is the development and implementation of an online portal for operators to submit their exam applications. Currently the process depends on receiving a check and then processing that check, but the portal would allow for instant payment and would allow for immediate administrative review. There would also be automatic email updates for every step that would be sent to the applicant.

M. Prabhu added that another project would allow Training Contact Hour (TCH) Providers to upload their course rosters to the online portal, which would increase efficiency. A third project is to have a web platform for TCH Providers to post six (6) months of upcoming courses, allowing licensees to see what is offered and what can satisfy all their requirements.

R. Genetelli asked if the Advisory Committee would be involved in the approval process. J. duRocher clarified that the third IT project would be more like a calendar for already approved TCH Providers to post upcoming courses so that it could be used as a resource for licensees looking for courses to take.



J. Mastrokalos asked if the online portal would be an appropriate place to record the in-person or correspondence course information that was spoken about before. M. Prabhu stated she would have to look into it.

K. Tedesco noted that the online portal is currently in the design phase, so different components can be incorporated based on what is needed.

5. Advisory Committee Update

K. Tedesco stated that there is progress with the Committee, and that the Department has received recommendations for a number of vacancies. Stressed the importance of continuing with a joint meeting between the Board and the Committee, especially with topics like pass/fail and questions on the exam.

6. 2024 Meeting Schedule

K. Tedesco asked if a similar format to the 2023 schedule would be acceptable. Several members of the Board stated they were agreeable to a similar format. K. Tedesco stated that proposed dates would be sent out soon.

M. Prabhu asked the Board to submit their 2024 vacation schedules to C. Haviland so as to avoid sending reviews to members that aren't available.

7. General Public Comment:

There were no comments.

8. Adjournment:

R. Genetelli asked for a motion to adjourn. R. Anastasio motioned to adjourn and J. Mondsini seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 11:49 AM.

