

- I. Open Public Meetings Act read by A. Cramer
- II. Approval of the Agenda. Motion to approve by J. Greipp, seconded by S. Spero. Motion passed unanimously
- III. Approval of Minutes of April 2026 Meeting. Motion to approve by M. Goggin, seconded by G. Lovallo. Approved with corrections.
- IV. **Administrative Report** – Monthly Statistics reviewed.

The process for the new legislation was reviewed by C. McLaughlin. The citations must be short and accurate in order to give defendants information of what they are being charged with and have to be small enough to fit in the space allotted. The new legislation has not been posted or re-codified under the NJSA so before the next meeting she will find out who to get in touch with to find why and once we get the new enforcement authorities codified, we will be able to input the statute table into the administrative office of the court and get them locked so the inspectors can start filing those complaints with the municipal court. Inspectors can file the complaint forms with the municipal courts but the use of the ticket books will help the courts understand that this is an agency of the state and has ticketing authority, with their own ticket designation. We also met with all the inspectors on April 6 and had a good, productive meeting regarding the municipal court and administrative processes. A. Cramer asked if the inspectors could issue an NOV as just a warning and be able to redirect it to the municipal court at a later date. Candice did not think this would be a viable option. They could give a warning but would have to find the violator working again in order to submit a violation to the municipal court.
- V. **Financial Report** – Revenue (DEP report) We brought in \$268,000 this year. Our budget was \$325,000. FY 2026 was the “big” fiscal year and FY 2027 is the “small” fiscal year. In the month of August we get 85% of our revenue from Business Renewal and Registration and in January we have 91% of our revenues coming from Licenses and License Renewals. That tells you the seasonal nature of our revenues. On the back page we have the totals. Over the course of the whole year 50% from Business registrations/renewals, 35% from Licenses/License Renewals. We only had about 9% coming from penalties.

Preparation for FY 2027 – DEP informed us that we have a budget of \$200,000.00 instead of \$325,000.00. FY2027 is the small year and our revenues will be about \$200,000.00, In FY2025 our revenues were \$190,000.00 and FY2023 they were \$226,000.00. They averaged the budget for \$200,000.00 and Vanessa from the DEP advised that they will take our \$40,000.00 from that amount for legal fees which leaves 160,000.00 for all wages and other expenses. That’s not going to do it. She supplied a spread sheet to fill in which I filled with hours, which I did. I put in a full year of hours which will be approximately \$270,000.00 to fully fund all of our wages for next year and does not include any other bills. In order to keep our budget under the \$160,000, I had to cut all the hours in half and that brought it to just over 130,000. So we can fund our office

staff and inspectors for about half the year. I am hoping we can start this new violation process as soon as possible which I feel will help with revenues. G. Lovallo asked whether the inspectors are tracking the companies that are not registered. A. Cramer explained that the inspectors hours are already limited and they are concentrating on enforcement activities (NOV's, NVOS, etc) and leave it to the office staff to call the companies that need to register. G. Lovallo felt we are punishing the companies that are compliant. The inspectors do come upon companies that are not registered and they are issuing NOV's to those companies. Finding unregistered companies in the field is difficult and would require that to use more hours than they are allotted. A discussion regarding whether or not to reduce hours and what the focus should be regarding bringing companies into compliance should be. Amy recommended that the office staff call companies who have let their registrations and/or licenses lapse and get them back into compliance. Discussion regarding use of the municipal court violation as opposed to the administrative violation depending on the severity of the violation and the status of the company involved. Non-compliant and Non-registered companies especially those who have multiple violations and fines pending should receive municipal court violations. The municipal court process is much quicker as compared to the administration process. Municipal court violations receive notices within a month. The Administrative process can take years. Paying municipal court fines online will expedite the process, so that option should be implemented. Candice will try and find out who to deal with regarding the codifying of the enforcement authorities. J. Greipp recommended a review of previous years to see if there were any trends that were different from current trends in issuance and collections of penalties. He also recommended the office staff try and contact companies with outstanding fines to try and collect on them. A. Cramer will try and do a review of previous years as recommended by J. Greipp. The postage costs are unavoidable. Moving the current unpaid NVOS' forward to AONOCAPA could result in court cases which the present budget would not cover. The municipal court would not bill the Board. Hand delivering NOV's in the field will defer some of the cost of mailing. Litigation cost for the AONOCAPA is theoretically possible but has never been accomplished. Increased hours for the inspectors were not approved last year.

VI Compliance Inspectors Report

A discussion with E. Jones regarding how he uses his working hours and how he finds companies that he NOV's.

VII General Public

VIII Unfinished Business

Translation of Exams - We are making really great progress with this project. We met with Christina Best, Natalia Cebollero and Pieter Slump and had a talk about the translation project and they're all very enthusiastic about it. So the

members of the new committee are Christina Best, Natalia Cebollero, Pieter Slump, Henry Navarro and Frank Molina. Raul Cabrera will be available to review the translations as they are completed. They've sent their bios and resumes so we have them on file. The next step will be to send confidentiality agreements so they understand that our exams are strictly confidential and are not to be released to anyone or discussed with anyone outside of the committee. A. Cramer drew up a Confidentiality Agreement and sent it to B. Velzy. As soon as it is approved she will send it to the Translation Committee for signatures. We'll then be able to begin with the actual translations.

The regulatory bulletin is in final form. It has been uploaded to our website and is available to everyone. S. Chisholm had it uploaded to T. Slack at the DEP and she had posted it on her Bulletin Board which is an email/newsletter delivery service and would make it available to about 15,000 people. Regarding sending them out to municipalities, we have 564 municipalities in New Jersey and they all have different emails. I am on #25 at this time. I plan to set up a spreadsheet of all the court clerks in all the municipalities and their emails so we can target the municipalities for other informational emails.

Thomas Karkas – They sent his CEU information and recently his Renewal Form which we are not sure is applicable since his does not have an LTE License. So our options are 1) we can just give him the license or 2) have him apply for reciprocity to waive the written exam and he would have to take the field exam. Bruce wrote back and said I wanted to outline the steps for the Thomas Karkas matter. Northeast Tree Expert Co., Inc is currently, albeit mistakenly, registered and can continue operating as per the administrative procedures act until such time as the Board decides to revoke his license. He is not licensed and Northeast needs to get an LTE or LTCO on staff until this matter is resolved. Mr. Karkas needs to send proof of certification as an LTE prior to April 17, 2027 and or experience in arboriculture or what certification he seeks. Once all the information is available to the Board a decision can be made. A motion by G. Lovallo to restore T. Karkas' license since there was culpability on both sides. He should submit all the documentation as requested. J. Greipp pointed out that he was to send 32 CEU's for each cycle

Gary made a motion to issue a new license with the same number and assess the fees that are still outstanding. Shari seconded, and the motion passed. The result of the vote will be sent to Bruce to get his opinion on it.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

a. Harassment Incident – Incident regarding Erik Jones, Compliance Inspector on May 7, 2026. Platinum Tree Service was performing tree work at a property on the same street where I live. The house at 780 Hyson Rd has been a problem for me personally because the work being done is washing dirt and debris into my driveway. When I went to the job site, they thought I was there to harass them. I handed them my ID and told them I was there on business, it was nothing personal. That turned into them saying I should be

ashamed of myself and I was harassing them because of their religion. I received three threats from them that they were going to call the police. I told them “Let’s get this out of the way. Why don’t you just call them.” So, they called the cops and in the interim they realized I had a right to enter the property as long as tree work was being done on the property. They accepted that. However, when they called the police, they accused me of something that was not true. I have asked for the transcription with an OPRA request because they supposedly called it in as a burglary. I just wanted to let you know there was an incident while I was on the job and I’ll update you once I have the records I requested. I don’t like false accusation being present my way. They kept yelling that I cost them money. Apparently, they were conflating the two issues. So far, the sheriff’s office denied the body cam footage we requested but sent the police report.

C. McLaughlin advised Erik if this incident goes any further but he could submit to the State or 22nd Century for legal coverage if necessary.

Draft Suspension Notification for non-Renewals- This gives businesses 20 days to respond either with renewal application and payment or fill out a hearing request form which will be attached with the Notice.

Ethics Requirement – All the Board members have to acknowledge the receipt of the code and guide that were attached to the email from the state and do the outside employment questionnaire.

Shari Spero has to do the complete training as a new Board member.

X. **Review of applications:**

Business Registrations

Apex Tree & Land LLC

Davey Rail Services

Richard’s Procure Landscaping

Pure Life Hardscaping & Tree

47 Tree Work LLC

LTCO reciprocity

Adam Arena - approved

Brian Krachun – not enough experience – denied – no signed letters

Exam Passed

Gerson Jimenez

Marianne Smith

Paul Cannizzaro
Anthony Rodriguez
Ricardo Morales-Martinez

Instructions for taking an exam – to be written out and given to exam applicants prior to the exam

Motion to go into closed session made by G.Lovallo, S. Spero seconded, passed unanimously

Motion to accept the minutes of the April 21st, 2027 meeting with summary by B. Velzy made by G. Lovallo, second by S. Spero, passed unanimously. S. Chisholm abstained.

S. Chisholm moved to come out of closed session, G. Lovallo seconded, passed unanimously