



STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, July 21, 2022 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

Jay Price	Sanitary Districts; Board Chair; CSAWWA Liaison
Benjamin Thompson	County Governments; Board Vice-Chair
Bruce Darner	Agriculture; WWOA Liaison
Joseph Wright	Maryland Environmental Service
Hiram Tanner	Public-At-Large
Eric Dutrow	Public-At-Large
Connie Luffman	Wastewater Supervision (left 11:14am)
Tony Sierra	Maryland Department of the Environment
Clark Howells	Municipal Governments; CWEA Liaison

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Doug Abbot	Water Supervision
Ed Hogan	Industrial Superintendents

LIASONS, GUEST & STAFF PRESENT

Dee Settar	Board Secretary
Jennifer Bowman	Board Counsel
Martin Fuhr	Board Staff
Victoria Arbaugh	Board Staff
Tara Jones	MCET Liaison
Bill Shreve	TRE Committee Liaison
Scott Harmon	MRWA Liaison
Christopher Hawthorne	Guest, City of Frederick
Susan Springer	Guest, City of Frederick
Brad Crin	Guest, City of Frederick

01. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Jay Price called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Roll Call was done by Victoria Arbaugh, Board Staff. The Board meeting was conducted online using Google Meet.

02. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Board Members reviewed the July 21, 2022 Draft Agenda. Bruce Darner moved to adopt the proposed meeting agenda. Ben Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Board Chair Jay Price abstaining.

03. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Board members reviewed the draft June 16, 2022 open meeting minutes and made several changes. Bruce Darner made a motion to adopt the minutes with changes. Ben Thompson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with Board Chair Jay Price abstaining.

04. BOARD CHAIR'S COMMENT & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Board Chair Jay Price opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and congratulated Clark Howells for his appointment to represent Municipal Governments on the Board. Jay then asked guests to introduce themselves and state the purpose for their attendance. Christopher Hawthorne advised that he was attending to provide additional information for his reciprocity application. Susan Springer and Brad Crin attended in support of Mr. Hawthorne.

05. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Martin Fuhr presented on reciprocity application.

Christopher Hawthorne

Christopher Hawthorne provided the information requested by the Board to further evaluate his request for Wastewater 5A certification. Wastewater 5 had been previously approved. After presenting the information, the Board decided Mr. Hawthorne's experience was sufficient to approve his request. Motion to approve "WA" Certification by Ben Thompson, and seconded by Bruce Darner. Passed unanimously with Board Chair and Hiram Tanner Abstaining.

06. BOARD STAFF'S REPORTS

A. Board Appointment Updates

Dee Settar formally welcomed Clark Howells of Baltimore City as the most recent appointee to the Board and noted that Clark knew the other Board Members and staff due to his tenure as Chesapeake Water Environment Association (CWEA) Liaison.

B. Revenue & Expenditures Update

Dee presented the revenue and expenditure as of June 30, 2022. She noted that revenue from applications has increased significantly due to an uptick in renewal and examination applications. She opened the floor to questions and none were presented.

FY22 Appropriations	\$390,093.00
Unreconciled Cumulative Revenue	\$186,433.00
Cumulative Expenses	\$229,737.99
Encumbrance	\$25,194.00

C. Exam Statistics

Martin Fuhr presented the exam statistics for the months of April, May and June, 2022. He noted that both the D1 and the C2 had excellent results after the short course.

There were eighty-six total exams taken in April, with an overall pass rate of 26.74%. Twenty-five operators sat for the paper water exams, scoring a pass rate of 28%; and three operators sat for the online (AMP) water exam, scoring a pass rate of 33%; In April, fifty operators sat for the paper wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 28%; and eight operators sat for the online (AMP) wastewater and industrial wastewater exams scoring a pass rate of 13%.

There were fifty-three total exams taken in May, with an overall pass rate of 33.96%. Twenty operators sat for the paper water exams, scoring a pass rate of 40%; and one operator sat for the online (AMP) water exam, scoring a pass rate of 0%; In May, eighteen operators sat for the paper wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 39%; and fourteen operators sat for the online (AMP) wastewater and industrial wastewater exams scoring a pass rate of 21%.

There were one hundred eighty-three total exams taken in June, with an overall pass rate of 45.36%. Sixty-eight operators sat for the paper water exams, scoring a pass rate of 69%; Two operators sat for the online (AMP) water exam, scoring a pass rate of 0%. In June, one hundred four operators sat for the paper wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 36%; and nine operators sat for the online (AMP) wastewater and industrial wastewater exams scoring a pass rate of 67%.

D. Board Initiatives & Inquiries

a. Exam Tracking Update

Dee advised that Board staff begin using the new database to track exam results and the registration process has been amended to assist operators with exam-related inquiries. Victoria added that both are a great aid to answer questions instead of forwarding all exam inquiries to Martin.

b. Industrial Wastewater Inquiry

Victoria Arbaugh requested Board Member input regarding plant classification for two commercial laundries that discharge to the WSSC sanitary sewer, as MDE staff expressed uncertainty regarding the industrial classification framework. Board Members discussed the treatment processes and determined that both are classified as I6 plants. Victoria will respond to the operators and inspectors who made the initial plant classification inquiries.

07. NEW BUSINESS

A. Board Elections

Dee Settar asked Board Members if they were prepared to vote at the meeting, as two Members were absent. Hiram Tanner suggested that the vote be taken without delay. Board Counsel Jenn Bowman concurred.

Ben Thompson commended Jay Price for his great work and nominated him as Board Chair. As no one else expressed interest in the Board Chair position, Jay accepted the nomination.

Bruce Darner nominated Ben Thompson for Vice-Chair. The nomination was seconded by Hiram Tanner. As no one else expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position, Ben Thompson accepted the Board Vice-Chair nomination.

Everyone agreed that the continuity was good for the productivity of the Board as most Members had very limited experience. Dee Settar advised she will continue to serve as Board Secretary until replacement staff is hired.

08. OLD BUSINESS

A. Proposed Rules of Attendance for Public Meetings (Board Vote)

Dee presented proposed rules for attendance for public meetings and asked Board Members if they were prepared to vote or wished to table the matter until the next meeting. Ben Thompson made a motion to adopt the rules as proposed. The motion was seconded by Joe Wright. The motion passed unanimously.

with the Board Chair abstaining.

B. TRE Subcommittee Report

a. Subcommittee Meeting, July 2022

Martin Fuhr presented the recommendations from the July 13, 2022 TRE subcommittee. He explained to the Board that the quiz for an online course was intended to confirm attendance and not competency. After a discussion, Bruce Darner moved to adopt the recommendations of the subcommittee. Joe Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with the Board Chair abstaining. A list of approved courses will be posted to the Board's web page.

b. TRE Policy Update

Dee Settar presented a proposed amendment to the recently updated TRE policy, as Board Members previously requested to reevaluate the granting of 1.5 credit hours for coursework upon completion of a learning quiz. Dee noted the regulation specifies 1.5 credit hours be granted to trainers but does not specify additional credit hours be granted to operators upon taking a learning quiz, and she expressed concern that the additional credit potentially minimizes the required training hours. Board Members agreed to table the matter until the next meeting to provide additional time to review the material.

C. Regulation Subcommittee Report

Dee updated the Board on the membership in the Regulation Subcommittee. The current members are Jay Price, Jenn Bowman. Tony Sierra, Eric Dutrow, and Bill Shreve offered to participate if permissible. Dee advised the Board that this subcommittee is a priority among competing responsibilities as Water Supply Deputy Program Manager.

D. Examination Subcommittee Report

Dee Settar advised that she can coordinate the work of the committee but will not be reviewing exams. The current members are Ed Hogan, Doug Abbott, Joe Wright, and Bill Shreve. Dee advised that she has reached out to the compliance division and is waiting to hear back from anyone regarding staff to sit on the committee.

09. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS

Tara Jones, MCET - Advised that they did not yet receive a grant for the planned apprenticeship program. However, MCET has applied for another EARN grant that will start next year. She is still developing the new training schedule for 2023 and directing traffic to the website to maximize access and enrollment.

Scott Harmon, MRWA - Advised the Association received funding for an energy management grant. He also reminded attendees about the National Rural Water Association Conference at National Harbor on 9/21/2022 and recommended everyone attend.

Bill Shreve, TRE - Asked about the status of the Governor's water industry Task Force that was previously discussed. Dee advised that, although not invited, she attended the meeting and found it involved initiatives being taken by MES, separate and distinct from programs such as EARN and MRWA's Apprenticeship Program. She continued that the initiative is focused on recruitment from high-schools, co-tech schools and community colleges. Tara asked for clarification, and Dee stated that the matter exclusively addressed MES apprenticeships. Tara expressed concerns about redundant efforts and competition between different programs for the same candidates. Ben Thompson echoed her concerns that the MES program may adversely impact EARN participation and other apprenticeship programs. Hiram offered to assist in any initiatives since he serves on the Board of MES. Dee closed the conversation by expressing her belief the industry's workforce is currently in dire need of new operators, and as such, the multiple programs will offer different opportunities to suite the unique needs of operators and utilities.

Bruce Darner, WWOA - Advised that the July 27, 2022 conventional treatment (water and wastewater) class in Thurmont had 15-16 enrollees and there was more room if anyone knew anyone who may be interested.

Clark Howells, CWEA - Advised additional moderators are needed for the Tri-Association conference (Tri-Con) in late August and asked anyone interested to contact him.

Jay Price, CSAWWA - Advised that the Mid-Atlantic Utilities Conference would be held Power Plant Live on October 25-26, 2022 if anyone was interested in attending.

10. BOARD VOTE TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to General Provisions Article ("GP") § 3-305(b), on a motion made by Ben Thompson and seconded by Bruce Darner, the following Board members voted in favor to move into closed session on July 21, 2022 at 12:18 PM via Google Meet video/ teleconference for the purpose of complying with certain provisions of the Open Meetings Act: Ben Thompson, Bruce Darner, Eric Dutrow, Hiram Tanner, Tony Sierra, Clark Howells and Joseph Wright. Board Chair Jay Price abstained. The motion carried

11. ADJOURNMENT

Ben Thompson moved to adjourn the open meeting at 12:17 PM. The next meeting will be held on **August 18, 2022 Video Conference Meeting held via Google Meet.**

CALL TO ORDER AND PURPOSE OF CLOSED MEETING

With a quorum present, Chairman Jay Price called the meeting of the closed session to order at 12:30 PM to perform administrative functions, pursuant to the following provisions of GP § 3-305(b):

GP § 3-305(b)(2) - To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business

GP § 3-305(b)(7) - To consult with Board Counsel to obtain legal advice

During the closed meeting, the following Board members were present: Jay Price, Ben Thompson, Bruce Darner, Hiram Tanner, Eric Dutrow, Joseph Wright, Tony Sierra and Clark Howells. The following MDE staff were also present during the closed meeting: Jenn Bowman, Dee Settar, Martin Fuhr, and Victoria Arbaugh. The following Board Members were not present: Doug Abbott, Ed Hogan and Connie Luffman.

TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING CLOSED MEETING

Board Members continued discussing the security breach of the 5A Exam.

The July 21, 2022 Open Meeting Minutes were approved by the WWSO Board on August 18, 2022