



**STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, April 16, 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.

As of March 5, 2020, the Board has been operating under a State of emergency and catastrophic health emergency proclaimed by Governor Hogan due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the April 16, 2020 Board meeting was held by videoconference (with the conference video link and telephone number made available to the public).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

William Shreve	Joseph Johnson
Bruce Darner	Nancy Hausrath
Jay Price	Scott Harmon

LIASONS, GUEST & STAFF PRESENT

Dee Settar	Acting Board Secretary, Recused Board Member
Martin Fuhr	Board Staff
Pam Franks	Board Staff
Partha Tallapragada	Board Member Nominee
Hiram Tanner	Board Member Nominee
Jennifer Bowman	Board Counsel
Sue Houghton	MRWA Liaison
Karen Brandt	MCET Liaison

Not Present

Dominic Deludos	Board Member
Laura Mayberry	Board Counsel
Tara Jones	MCET Liaison

01. CALL TO ORDER

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

02. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

It was moved by Scott Harmon and seconded by Jay Price to adopt the proposed meeting agenda as written. Motion carried.

03. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Board Members reviewed the February 20, 2020 draft meeting minutes. After review, it was moved by Scott Harmon and seconded by Joseph Johnson to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried.

04. BOARD CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Board Chairman thanked Board Members and Liaisons for attending today's meeting; expressed well wishes and continued safety through the recent global pandemic. 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 and Shelter – In-Place Executive Order.

05. SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Board Members

Dee Settar informed the Board that due to her acting capacity status as Board Secretary she would recuse herself from voting.

B. Report on Board's Administrative Activities

1. Acting Board Secretary Dee Settar gave the current status of Board Member applications and vacancies and nominees whose applications are pending as well as approved.
2. Dee informed the Board that the Board Staff is teleworking due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no Expenditures and Revenues to report at this time. Expenditures and Revenues for March, April and May will be available at the next virtual Board Meeting to be held on May 21, 2020.
3. Dee suggested drafting and evaluating a Board exam "Need to Know Criteria", and possibly implementing a link to MCET's website. Board discussed the current need for study material and an update of exam prescriptive.

C. Report on Examination Results

1. Please refer to Attachment A.

Board Staff discussed the examination statistics for the month of February 2020. There were 43 total exams taken in February, with an overall pass rate of 37.21%. Eleven operators sat for the paper water exams, scoring a pass rate of 45%; and zero operators sat for the online (AMP) water exam, scoring a pass rate of 0%; In February, twenty-four operators sat for the paper wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 29%; and eight people sat for the online (AMP) wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 50%.

Board Staff then discussed the examination statistics for the month of March 2020. There were 26 total exams taken in March, with an overall pass rate of 34.62%. Seven operators sat for the paper water exams, scoring a pass rate of 0%; and one operator sat for the online (AMP) water exam, scoring a pass rate of 0%; In March, sixteen

operators sat for the paper wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 50%; and two people sat for the online (AMP) wastewater and industrial wastewater exams, scoring a pass rate of 50%.

A total of 97 exams have been taken calendar YTD.

06. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Willie James Foster – Requested Reciprocity from the State of Florida for a Maryland Water Distribution Class 1 Operator Certification. Board Staff recommended that Mr. Foster be granted the Maryland Distribution Class 1 Water Operator Certification. Jay Price abstained from voting; Scott Harmon moved to approve Board Staff recommendation and was seconded by Bruce Darner. Motion carried.

Nicole Bell – Requested Reciprocity from the State of Pennsylvania for a Maryland Water Treatment Class 3 Operator Certification. Board Staff recommended that Ms. Bell be granted the Maryland Water Treatment Class 3 Operator Certification. Joseph Johnson moved to approve Board Staff recommendation and was seconded by Jay Price. Motion carried.

07. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Training Review and Evaluation (TRE) Committee

Board Members discussed drafting a letter to training sponsors outlining requirements for approval of transitioning approved classroom training to virtual training format. The draft will be reviewed by the TRE committee, followed by final Board approval. Board Members discussed the possibility of revoking a sponsor’s approval if a virtual training class is determined to be inadequate. Board Members and Liaisons agreed due to the recent updates in learning technology, both virtual-classroom and online training options should be implemented. It was moved by Scott Harmon and seconded by Joseph Johnson to approve the TRE committee’s recommendation to approve virtual training requests for currently approved classroom training only.

The TRE Committee recommended further review of a 2-hour OSHA training course that appeared to be an overview but was titled to indicate a comprehensive course with 8 hours of content. Board Members requested the course title be updated to accurately reflect the material presented before approving the course.

Since the 2020 MRWA Conference and “Short Course” training event were cancelled, all previously assigned course numbers will be retired and unavailable for use.

The next TRE meeting will be held remotely June 10 due to social distancing requirements.

08. ON-GOING BUSINESS

A. Board Appointments

Dee Settar reported there were two nominee’s applications which have been approved since last meeting; and no update on the approval process of Board member nominees’ for applications filed for the Board of Waterworks and Waste Systems Operators. There are currently (3) three vacant positions. Board discussed the urgency of finalizing this process to

fill the Board member vacant positions.

B. Compliance & Licensing

Dee Settar discussed complaint of small water systems and flushing permit concerns. Board agreed that these concerns should involve the Utility and be addressed at the local level. It was determined by the /board this is not a licensing issue, and all civil matters should be handled accordingly.

09. NEW BUSINES

A. Certified Operator Training and Renewal Process

1. Board Chair discussed COVID-19 response and turnaround time for Renewals and required training. Board discussed the 30-day extension of License Renewals mandated by Governor Larry Hogan to remain in affect pending the lifting of the State of Emergency Executive Order. All training events are cancelled, causing a greater need for virtual training. Board Counsel will further discuss options of waving late fees associated with the renewal application Process.
2. Board discussed the possibility of drafting a contingency letter to employers that would hold Operators harmless, allowing time to complete the recommended training needed to renew their Operator Certifications.

10. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS

- A. **Bruce Darner** – WWOA General Conference Meeting and financial Development course for 2020.
- B. **Jay Price** – CSWWA-CWEA Short Course cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic. That was scheduled to be held May31, 2020 at Washington College in Chestertown, MD.
- C. **Karen Brandt** –MCET- Implemented new Virtual Environment training courses will allow them to do online exams. On Maryland Center for Environmental Training’s website. This training is for all operators. Courses offered are as follows:

11. ADJOURNMENT

Joseph Johnson moved to adjourn virtual conference meeting at 12:41 PM. The next meeting will be held on **May 21, 2020 Video Conference Meeting held via Virtual Google Hangouts.**