



**STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD**

Thursday, June 17, 2021 – 10:00 AM

Video Conference via Google Hangouts Meet

Link: meet.google.com/yif-qpmv-oqw

Phone: +1 617-675-4444 / PIN 472 826 233 3022#

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

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|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| William Shreve | Wastewater Supervision; Board Chair |
| Hiram Tanner | Public-At-Large; Board Vice-Chair |
| Doug Abbott | Water Supervision |
| Bruce Darner | Agriculture; Liaison- WWOA |
| Dominic Deludos | Industrial Superintendent |
| Eric Dutrow | Public-At-Large |
| Rosann Ndebumado | Municipal Government |
| James Price | Sanitary Commission; Liaison- CSAWWA |
| Partha Tallapragada | Maryland Environmental Service |

LIAISONS, GUESTS & STAFF PRESENT

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|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Dee Settar | Board Secretary |
| Jennifer Bowman | Board Counsel |
| Pam Franks | Board Staff |
| Martin Fuhr | Board Staff |
| Clark Howells | Liaison- CWEA |
| John Smith | Guest- Water Supply Program |

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Ben Thompson | County Governments |
| VACANT | MDE |

01. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM. Roll Call was done by Pamela Franks, Board staff. The Board meeting was conducted virtually via video conference as required by the state of emergency proclaimed by Governor Larry Hogan due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Jenn Bowman and Eric Dutrow arrived at 10:17 AM.

02. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Bruce Darner moved to adopt the proposed meeting agenda. Partha Tallapragada seconded the motion. Board Chairman Bill Shreve abstained.

The motion carried unanimously.

03. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DRAFT FOR PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Board Members reviewed the May 20, 2021 draft meeting minutes. Jay Price moved to adopt the minutes as amended with the necessary corrections. Doug Abbott seconded the motion. Board Chairman Bill Shreve abstained. The motion carried unanimously.

04. BOARD CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Board Chairman Bill Shreve welcomed and thanked Board Members and Liaisons for attending and participating in today's meeting. Board Chair opened discussion regarding an update on the Governor's announcement for termination of the state of emergency on July 1, 2021 and if any restrictions would be lifted at MDE. Board Counsel Jenn Bowman responded that clarification of the Governor's announcement would be discussed in the day's Closed Session.

Board Secretary Dee Settar responded that MDE will increase office staff beginning July 1st but that employees will continue to telework to some extent. The Board Chair asked guests to introduce themselves. John Smith from MDE Water Supply Program introduced himself and gave a summary of his recent updates to the Boards website and Database.

05. BOARD STAFF'S REPORTS

A. Revenue & Expenditures Update

Secretary Dee Settar presented the updated May Draft Revenue and Expenditures Report. As of May 31, 2021, the cumulative revenue equaled \$130,735.00, and as of April 30, 2021, the cumulative Expense equaled \$141,805.00 and the Encumbrance equaled \$24,540.00. Dee advised the Board that the May revenue was not yet confirmed by MDE's Fiscal Services. No questions were posed by the Board in regards to the revenue reporting.

B. Other Board Initiatives

Board Secretary Dee Settar apprised the Board of the new database and explained that it allows tracking of certified operators in the State of Maryland. She also noted the database update has been a major accomplishment and gave thanks to John Smith of MDE's Water Supply Program for his continued efforts. Dee Settar noted that her position as Division Chief and Board Secretary was official effective June 2, 2021, Board Chair Bill Shreve congratulated her, as did all other attendees. Dee also noted she is no longer a Board Member and the Department's representation is currently vacant.

Board Secretary Dee Settar reminded Board Members of the memo from MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles regarding Board oversight and the response letter dated from Board Chair Bill Shreve which requested clarification of certain points. The Board Chair's letter was submitted through the Board Secretary on March 2, 2021; the letter is still under review by Water and Science Administration.

As Board Chair votes will occur in July, Dee asked Board Counsel Jenn Bowman if the Board could vote for Chair and Vice-Chair elections by email as the meeting will be held virtually. Board Counsel asked Dee to submit an official request for counsel through the Department's appropriate channels.

Dee Settar updated the Board Members of a recent request under the Public Information Act (PIA) by a training sponsor for a list of all operators' mailing and email contact information. After several discussions with Board Counsel, a list was provided to the requester. As several Board Members made a similar (verbal only) request, Dee apologized that they were not directed to submit a PIA request in writing to obtain a mailing list.

C. Exam Updates

Board Chair announced that Exam statistics will be presented by Board staff on a quarterly basis. Martin Fuhr gave a brief overview of the exams administered at the Short Course. There were 109 operators registered to take the Exam, 16 no-shows and 93 exams taken. He briefly discussed the backlog of exam applications and the proposed plan to resume and accommodate operator's exam requests. No questions were posed by the Board in regards to the examination dates. Tri-Con Exam is cited to administer up to 100 operators, with a capacity of 50 for the upcoming exam at MDE in September.

08. ON-GOING BUSINESS

A. COVID-19 (Administrative Extension for Renewals and Operators)

Board Secretary Dee Settar advised the Board that the Governor's Executive Order that granted an administrative extension for certification renewals will terminate on June 30, 2021. Per pre-COVID practice, Board staff will allow an additional 90 days for operators to complete their exam and continuing education requirements IF renewal applications and fees were received prior to July 1, 2021.

Dee Settar provided data of certifications which had not yet been renewed. To date, 1,804 certifications are still considered active under the extension and will become inactive if applications are not received by June 30th, including 848 Operators In Training, 798 Operators, and 158 Superintendents. In addition, Board staff have received an astronomical amount of applications due to the impending termination date. There are currently (138) new Exam applications, (48) OIT Operator-In-Training, new certification requests and (78) Renewals waiting for additional information included in the (120) applications to be processed. Dee also noted that the Board's web page will be updated weekly with the list of actively certified operators.

B. Proposed Regulatory Changes

Dee Settar informed Board Members she received guidance to initiate regulatory changes and was drafting a more formal document for Board review. Board Members asked questions regarding CEU's and the need to clarify the training hours. Doug Abbott provided information on exam prescriptions and the need for study guides for operators.

09. NEW BUSINESS

Review of Education Application

Martin Fuhr presented Vicente Martin – Requested 9 months' education credit toward his Class 5 Industrial Wastewater Treatment certification. Based upon Mr. Martin's 70 applicable college credits, Board Staff recommended approval of the 9 months. Bill Shreve corrected the recommendation by stating the Board grants what the applicant is eligible for, not necessarily what has been requested. Board Staff corrected the recommendation, requesting Mr. Martin be granted 1 year education substitution. Dominic Deludos suggested that it be verified Mr. Martin works at Frito Lay before granting the request. Jay Price made a motion to accept the recommendation. Doug Abbot seconded. The motion passed.

Board Members made an exception to the Training, Review and Evaluation policy to consider an application PIA requests to be discussed at the July meeting.

10. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS

Clark Howells (CWEA) – He noted Tri-Con is planned to be an in-person event and mentioned upcoming webinars about residuals management and master planning.

Bruce Darner (WWOA) – Planning session to be held July 31st, 2021; they will be holding in person meetings for those scholarship applicants in the coming weeks. He also advised he will miss the next meeting for personal reasons. Board Chair noted his absence would be considered as excused.

Jay Price (CSAWWA) – Reminded Board Members that the 2021 Short Course was a success and noted the Tri-Con is scheduled for in-person conference.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Bill Shreve moved to adjourn the virtual conference meeting at 1:06 PM. The next meeting will be held on **July 15, 2021 by Video Conference to be held using Google Hangouts.**