



STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, November 16, 2023 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

Doug Abbott	Water Supervision; Board Chair
Bill Shreve	Public at Large: Board Vice-Chair
Ed Hogan	Industrial Superintendents
Bruce Darner	Agriculture; WWOA Liaison
Connie Luffman	Wastewater Supervision
Davina Yutzky	County Government
Ben Thompson	Sanitary Commission
Eric Dutrow	Public-At-Large
Joe Wright	Maryland Environmental Service
Anthony Nwagwe	Maryland Department of Environment / Water Supply Division

LIAISONS, GUESTS & MDE STAFF PRESENT

Jennifer Bowman	Board Counsel
Martin Fuhr	Board Secretary
Pamela Franks	Board Staff
Victoria Arbaugh	Board Staff
Alex Rubin	MDE Water Supply
Melissa Coker	Director MCET
Donna Dunlap	Maryland Rural Water Liaison
Clark Howells	CWEA Liaison

01. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Doug Abbott called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Roll Call was conducted by Martin Fuhr at 10:01 AM. The Board meeting was conducted online using Google Meet.

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02. BOARD CHAIR’S COMMENT & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Board Chair Doug Abbott opened the meeting by thanking all in attendance. He welcomed back Ben Thompson who is now serving as the Board Representative for the Sanitary Commission. Ben thanked the Board for the opportunity to continue to serve and confirmed that he was sworn in by the Moore Administration. Doug thanked Anthony Nwagwe for accepting the appointment as Action Item Administrator. Anthony provided each responsible person with the action items they were charged with fulfilling and advised them of the recommended action date. Martin introduced Division Administrative Aid, Alex Rubin who will be assisting Board Staff, the Well Driller’s Board, Laboratory Licensing Division and Program Manager Greg Busch with Division Clean-Up, Space Management & Organization.

03. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Board Members reviewed the November 16, 2023 Draft Agenda. Bill Shreve moved to adopt the proposed meeting agenda with amendments. Bruce Darner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

04. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT OCTOBER 19, 2023 OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Martin Fuhr presented the proposed minutes for review. Bill Shreve made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections. The motion was seconded by Ed Hogan and passed unanimously.

05. BOARD STAFF’S REPORTS:

A. Revenue & Expenditures Update

The Board Secretary advised that current revenue and expenditures are still being processed by the Water Supply Accountant. He explained that MDE Fiscal is working on a finalization of WWSO Board Appropriations and correcting all reported numbers as of Fiscal Year 2024, which started July 1, 2023 and ends June 30, 2024. Martin invited inquiry but the Board did not have any additional questions regarding the matter. Martin then presented the following tentative figures:

FY24 Appropriations through June 30, 2024	Still Unknown
Draft Cumulative Revenue as of November 30, 2023	\$70,575.00
Reconciled Cumulative Revenue as of October 31, 2023	\$58,300.00
Reconciled Cumulative Expenses as of October 31, 2023	\$194,793.87
Encumbrance as of September 30, 2023	\$32,461.00

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88 **B. TRE Committee Recommendations**
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91 Martin Fuhr presented the recommendations of the TRE Committee to the Board. After review, Bill
92 Shreve made a motion to accept all recommendations based on receipt of additional information from
93 Delaware Tech. Ben Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the Board Chair abstaining.
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95 Martin then presented two (2) last minute submissions from CSAWWA for review and consideration by
96 the Board. Board members reviewed the courses and determined both courses should be approved for all
97 operators in all categories. Bill Shreve made a motion to approve the courses. The motion was seconded
98 by Bruce Darner. The motion passed with the Board Chair abstaining.
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101 **06. BOARD INITIATIVES & INQUIRIES:**
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103 **A. Email Blast to Operators**
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105 Martin Fuhr presented the Board Counsel approved draft to members for approval. There were no
106 additional comments or questions. Ed Hogan made a motion to approve the email blast. Joe Wright
107 seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
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109 **B. ABC / WPI**
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111 Bill Shreve briefed the members on the work of the Exam Review Subcommittee. They are reviewing
112 over 130 questions and working hard to ensure that each category is properly represented on the exams.
113 He explained that it is a laborious endeavor, and the Subcommittee hopes to present its final proposal at
114 the December Closed Meeting. Doug Abbott asked him to ensure that similar questions are not used twice
115 to avoid redundancy. Bill Shreve noted that the Board's need to know criteria is already over 30 years old
116 and they are working to ensure there are not redundant or irrelevant questions posed on the exams. Bill
117 concurred and emphasized that the Board had been using ABCs criteria for the past decade. Bill then asked
118 the subcommittee members to review all questions and have Martin compile a list of the subcommittee's
119 approved questions for the December Closed Meeting. He advised Martin that the subcommittee would
120 submit all information to him by no later than November 30, 2023. Doug Abbott followed up with an
121 emphasis that since many questions are broad, the subcommittee should prioritize questions that are
122 narrowly tailored and focus on process. Martin agreed to do whatever was asked of him by the
123 subcommittee.
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125 **C. Subcommittee for Application Process & Communications**
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127 The Board Secretary advised that the subcommittee will be submitting a request for information from
128 Board Staff. Doug explained the purpose of the subcommittee is to identify problems and recommend
129 solutions. Joe Wright was appointed as the Subcommittee Chair and he will provide the update briefing
130 at the next meeting. Board Members offer to brainstorm and make other recommendations as needed.
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134 **D. WWSO Board Vacancies**
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136 The Board Secretary advised that he had spoken to Sophia Oberton about applying for the municipal
137 vacancy. She was excited to be considered and hopes to be appointed. Eric Dutrow noted that she is
138 passionate and driven and she was also the AWWA Operator of the Year. Eric emphasized that she will
139 be a great addition to the Board. Doug Abbott agreed and asked Martin to update the website to include
140 Ben Thompson as the Sanitary Commission Member.
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144 **07. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**
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146 **A. Jeffrey Hayes Substitution of Education for Experience**
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148 Mr. Hayes submitted his college transcript which included 35 credits in math and sciences. Board Staff
149 recommended that he be granted 1 year of experience credit for his education, making him eligible for full
150 operator certification on 2/1/2023. Bill Shreve made a motion to adopt the Board Staff recommendation.
151 The motion was seconded by Joe Wright. The motion passed with Ben Thompson abstaining.
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155 **08. COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS & LIASONS**
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157 Board Chair, Doug Abbott invited members to comment and bring up any concerns during this time.
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- 159 1.) Bill Shreve advised the Board that he had located that October 2009 Sunset Review for the 2011
160 Sunset performed under prior WWSO Board Counsel Nancy Young. He noted that prior fees were
161 to be reinstated as of 2021. Then Bill specifically asked Board Counsel Jenn Bowman if the 2021
162 sunset review item was impacted by Covid and if the WWSO Board would be subject to another
163 review? If yes, then when will it take effect. Jenn Bowman responded that Board Secretary Martin
164 Fuhr would have to make a referral to her for advice. She explained that she will be investigating
165 the matter, discussing it with the Counsel for the Well Driller's Board and then follow up with the
166 WWSO Board.
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- 168 2.) Ben Thompson expressed his thanks and admiration for Bill Shreve. He was impressed that Bill
169 both kept and located the above referenced information. Ben then asked Martin Fuhr about the
170 Board Action Spreadsheet and if a copy could be obtained. Martin noted that the spreadsheet was
171 not current but that he would email a copy to all members.
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- 173 3.) Pam Franks asked if the upcoming December 2023 WWSO Board Meeting could be held in
174 person. Bill Shreve made a motion to hold a hybrid (virtual / in person) meeting on 12/21/2023,
175 The motion was seconded by Joe Wright. The motion passed with Board Chair abstaining.
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178 **09. REVIEW / STATUS OF ACTIONS ITEMS**
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180 Anthony Nwagwe presented the current items for action / follow up and resolution:
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- 182 1.) Martin Fuhr will confirm that email blast is sent for approval to Board Counsel Jenn Bowman and
183 sent out once approved. He will report on status by the next meeting.
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- 185 2.) Martin Fuhr will update the webpage to reflect all current Board Members by the next meeting.
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- 187 3.) The Exam Review Subcommittee and Subcommittee for Application Process & Communication
188 will email Martin with updates prior to next Board meeting.
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- 190 4.) Board Counsel Jenn Bowman will review the Sunset Law Requirements and provide answers to
191 Bill Shreve's questions by the next Board meeting.
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- 193 5.) Martin Fuhr will compile the proposed exam questions, and have them emailed to exam
194 subcommittee by 12/7/2023
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- 196 6.) Martin Fuhr will email the Board Action Spreadsheet to all Board Members by 12/7/2023.
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- 198 7.) Martin Fuhr will complete Meeting Prep for the next Board Meeting on the Tuesday before the
199 meeting, and all changes / submissions will be considered if forwarded him by that date.
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- 201 8.) Martin Fuhr will get a head count and provide lunch for those attending the 12/21/2023 Board
202 Meeting in person.
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205 **10. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS**
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208 **Bruce Darner (WWOA)** – There will be a Main Body Meeting on 11/22/2023. Bruce attended the
209 Western Section Training session on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, and it was a good turnout, The training
210 was great and very informative. There were 38 attendees. He thanked Eric Dutrow for all his assistance.
211 Bill Shreve added that the Southern Section met on November 15, 2023, and had 40 plus attendees. He
212 gave two classes that were interesting and engaging. It was a very successful event. Bruce thanked Bill
213 and added that there will be scholarships available for Tri-Con and everyone is encouraged to apply.
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216 **Clark Howells (CWEA)** – A letter was signed by CWEA for a workforce development grant
217 collaboration with the City of Baltimore. They will focus on underserved community development in
218 water and wastewater careers. They will work to create career pathways and connections with employers.
219 Bill Shreve added that WWOA will also be participating, and that Baltimore County Schools are working
220 towards developing a Water Palooza to generate student interest.
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Melissa Coker (MCET) – Melissa noted that MCET is working on training updates, and she is learning a lot at the Board meetings. She advised that MCET will be emailing certificates of course completion and they are still running the EARN Program. MCET has also partnered with WSSC which will be holding classes onsite.

Donna Dunlap (MRWA) – Donna advised that MRWA just received approval from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations for an apprenticeship program. There will be 3 water systems participating and she encourages everyone to spread the word as they are looking to expand and take on more apprentices.

Ben Thompson (CSAWWA) – Ben advised that the organization was concerned about the ongoing drought and low levels in the Potomac. It is currently in the alert stage of monitoring. Bruce Darner noted that the Monocacy was also running very low. Ben advised another concern was that WSSC reserves are currently at 33% and everyone should be concerned about river levels. Doug Abbott agreed and asked everyone to pray for rain.

11. 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 Bill Shreve, the following Board members voted in favor to move into closed session on November 16, 2023 at 11:26 AM via Google Meet video/ teleconference for the purpose of complying with certain provisions of the Open Meetings Act: Bill Shreve, Ed Hogan, Bruce Darner, Connie Luffman, Ben Thompson, Eric Dutrow, Anthony Nwagwe, Joe Wright and Davina Yutzy. Board Chair Doug Abbott abstained. The motion carried.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Ed Hogan moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:27 AM and the motion was second by Bruce Darner. The next meeting will be held on December 21, 2023 as a hybrid meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND PURPOSE OF CLOSED MEETING

With a quorum present, Board Chairman Doug Abbott called the meeting of the closed session to order at 11:35 AM 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: Chairman Doug Abbott, Vice-Chairman Bill Shreve, Ed Hogan, Bruce Darner, Connie Luffman, Ben Thompson, Eric Dutrow, Anthony

267 Nwagwe, Joe Wright and Davina Yutzy. The following MDE staff were also present during the closed
268 meeting: Jenn Bowman, Martin Fuhr, Pam Franks and Victoria Arbaugh.

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272 **TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING CLOSED MEETING**

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274 Board Members discussed the following items: Board Staff Determining Plant Classification and Fee
275 Increase Regulation Changes.