



STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, December 21, 2023 At 10:00 A.M
Virtual Video Conference Meeting via Google Hangouts

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2 MISSION OF THE MARYLAND BOARD OF WATERWORKS & WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
3 The Treatment Systems that provide drinking water for our citizens and handle the wastes generated by
4 our daily activities play an important role in protecting Public Health and the Environment of Maryland.
5 Through the Certification Program established by State Law, the “Board of Waterworks and Waste
6 Systems Operators” sets the education, experience and examination standards for Operators and
7 Superintendents who work in these vital systems.
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10 **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

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12 Doug Abbott Water Supervision; Board Chair
13 Bill Shreve Public at Large: Board Vice-Chair
14 Ed Hogan Industrial Superintendents
15 Bruce Darner Agriculture; WWOA Liaison
16 Connie Luffman Wastewater Supervision
17 Davina Yutzky County Government
18 Ben Thompson Sanitary Commission
19 Eric Dutrow Public-At-Large
20 Joe Wright Maryland Environmental Service
21 Anthony Nwagwe Maryland Department of Environment / Water Supply Division
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24 **LIAISONS, GUESTS & MDE STAFF PRESENT**

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26 Jennifer Bowman Board Counsel
27 Martin Fuhr Board Secretary
28 Pamela Franks Board Staff
29 Victoria Arbaugh Board Staff
30 Seth Eisenstein Executive Director Septic System Board
31 Nicole Septic System Board
32 Alex Rubin MDE Water Supply
33 Melissa Coker Director MCET
34 Donna Dunlap Maryland Rural Water Liaison
35 Clark Howells CWEA Liaison
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38 **MDE STAFF NOT PRESENT**

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40 Pamela Franks Board Staff
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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 10:00 AM. The Board meeting was hybrid, online using Google Meet and at the Maryland Department of the Environment.

02. BOARD CHAIR’S COMMENT & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Board Chair Doug Abbott opened the meeting by thanking all in attendance. He welcomed everyone and had all the guests introduce themselves.

03. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Board Members reviewed the December 21, 2023 Draft Agenda. Joe Wright moved to adopt the proposed meeting agenda with amendments. Bill Shreve seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

04. REVIEW & ADOPTION OF DRAFT NOVEMBER 16, 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 Joe Wright and passed unanimously.

05. REVIEW & ADOPTION OF DRAFT NOVEMBER 16, 2023 CLOSED MEETING MINUTES

Martin Fuhr presented the proposed minutes for review. Ben Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections. The motion was seconded by Anthony Nwagwe and passed unanimously.

06. NEW BUSINESS

Travel expense reimbursements for the Board Member travel will now only be made via direct deposit. No checks will be issued. As a result, Board Members would have to submit banking information at least 30 days in advance of disbursements and also provide their social security number.

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07. 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 advised that he will ask the Water Supply Accountant when appropriations will be assigned for the WWSO Board. Martin invited inquiry but the Board did not have any additional questions regarding the matter. Martin then presented the following figures:

FY24 Appropriations through June 30, 2024	TBD
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 October 31, 2023	\$32,461.00

B. ABC / WPI

Bill Shreve briefed the members on the work of the Exam Review Subcommittee. Board Chair Doug Abbott requested that the Exam Committee compile a full list of all approved questions prior to the next Board Meeting. There was a lively discussion with Ben Thompson, Doug Abbott and Bill Shreve emphasizing that not all of the questions which are frequently missed are superfluous or unnecessary. All agreed that a few of the most missed questions are essential to job function and should be known to working operators. Bill Shreve confirmed that he will volunteer to assist in rewriting a proposed prescription to be subject matter specific and provide more detail. Doug Abbott made a motion to have the full Board approve the exams as amended by the subcommittee at the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Joe Wright. The motion passed with the Board Chair abstaining.

C. Subcommittee for Application Process / Communications

The Board Secretary advised that the subcommittee will be submitting a request for information from Board Staff. Joe Wright confirmed that he had sent out a series of questions.

D. WWSO Board Vacancies

Sophia Oberton is under review per the Office of the Secretary for potential WWSO Board Appointment. Doug Abbott recommended inviting her to the next WWSO Board Meeting. Eric Dutrow sang her praises noting that she is passionate and driven and she was also the AWWA Operator of the Year.

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07. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

A. Dale T. Miller

137 Mr. Miller is seeking reciprocity from the state of Pennsylvania where he operates the wastewater plant
138 at the Bimbo Bakery in Carlisle. If granted reciprocity, he will be supporting the wastewater system at the
139 Frederick facility. He is asking to be granted a Maryland Industrial 5 Certification. Board Staff
140 recommended that given Mr. Miller’s experience in Pennsylvania with processes similar to those in
141 Maryland, he be awarded his Maryland Industrial 5 Certification. A motion to adopt Board Staff
142 recommendations was made by Bill Shreve, The motion was seconded by Joe Wright. The motion passed
143 with the Board Chair abstaining.

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B. Korey Walker

146 Mr. Walker is requesting Education Substitution for his Water Treatment 4 Certification. He has been
147 employed with Frederick County at the New Design WTP since June, 2021. Mr. Walker passed his Water
148 Treatment 4 Exam. Based on his 18 credits of science and math courses, Board staff recommends that Mr.
149 Walker be granted 7 months of Education Substitution, which would make him immediately eligible to
150 receive his full operator’s certificate. A motion was made by Bruce Darner to adopt the recommendation.
151 The motion was seconded by Anthony Nwagwe and passed with the Board Chair abstaining.

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08. COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS & LIAISONS

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156 Board Chair, Doug Abbott invited members to comment and bring up any concerns during this time.

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1.) Bill Shreve asked guests from the Septic Board about the certification process and continuing
159 education classes. He explained that some of the continuing education courses for Septic systems
160 have already been reviewed and approved by the WWSO Board. He recommended that
161 information be provided to the Septic Board. Seth Eisenstein thanked Bill and advised they were
162 currently focusing on audit and they seek to audit 25% of all Septic Systems.

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2.) Bill Shreve also asked whether there was any chance that MDE would be replacing Martin’s vacant
165 position. Martin answered no but that Water Supply has hired a contractual administrative assistant
166 who he hoped would be able to assist the WWSO Board.

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3.) Ben Thompson asked if the WWSO Board was still updating its decision matrix. Doug Abbott
169 asked if Ben was volunteering to maintain and update all of the information. Ben responded that
170 he would actually be happy to assist if provided a copy to start maintaining with new information.
171 Martin advised that he would email a copy to Ben within the next week.

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4.) Anthony Nwagwe advised that the website needed to be updated since the last application received
174 reflected a date in October. Martin responded that the webpage would be updated within the week.
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177 5.) Eric Dutrow advised the Board that the Town of Manchester is upgrading its plant to a 5A. He
178 asked others what they believed was the best study method for that class. Bill Shreve recommended
179 either the Sacramento State or Keller series. Doug Abbott added that the new prescription should
180 be completed within the next 6-8 weeks and should provide more accurate and helpful information.
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183 **09. REVIEW / STATUS OF ACTIONS ITEMS**
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185 Anthony Nwagwe presented the current items for action / follow up and resolution:
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- 187 1.) Martin Fuhr will email the Board Meeting Information at least two (2) days prior to the meeting.
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189 2.) Martin Fuhr will update the webpage with application entries on a bi-weekly basis.
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191 3.) Martin will also update the incomplete application list on a bi-weekly basis.
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193 4.) Board Counsel Jenn Bowman will review the Sunset Law Requirements and provide answers to
194 the Board's questions by the next Closed Board meeting.
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196 5.) Ben Thompson will start updating the WWSO Board Matrix on a monthly basis.
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198 6.) Martin Fuhr will email the Board the proposed updated Wastewater 5A Exam by 2024.
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200 7.) Martin Fuhr will consider all changes to the Agenda if forwarded to him by Tuesday - 1/16/2024.
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203 **10. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS**
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205 **Bruce Darnier (WVOA)** – Bruce advised that there was no Main Body Meeting in December. WVOA
206 will be having their next meeting on 1/17/2024 at MCET.
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208 **Melissa Coker (MCET)** – Melissa noted that MCET is working on updates to the EARN Program. MCET
209 is focusing on assisting with basic math and computer skills.
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211 **Eric Dutrow (MD-RWA)** – Eric advised that the Apprenticeship Program is now underway. The MD-
212 RWA Conference will be the first week in May at the Convention Center in Ocean City, Maryland.
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214 Clark Howells: Gave update on CWEA
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216 Ben Thompson: Gave update on CSAWWA
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219 **11. ADJOURNMENT**
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221 Ben Thompson moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:07 AM and the motion was seconded by Bill
222 Shreve. The next meeting will be held on **January 18, 2024 as a Video Conference Meeting held via**
223 **Google Meet.**