



STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:
Thursday, May 18, 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 waste 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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| Doug Abbott | Water Supervision; Board Vice-Chair |
| Ed Hogan | Industrial Superintendents |
| Bruce Darner | Agriculture; WWOA Liaison |
| Eric Dutrow | Public-At-Large |
| Connie Luffman | Wastewater Supervision |
| Davina Yutzky | County Government |
| Anthony Nwagwe | Maryland Department of Environment / Water Supply Division |

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

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| Joe Wright | Maryland Environmental Services |
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LIASONS, GUEST & STAFF PRESENT

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| Martin Fuhr | Board Secretary |
| Jennifer Bowman | Board Counsel |
| Pamela Franks | Board Staff (arrived 10:11 am computer issues) |
| Victoria Arbaugh | Board Staff (arrived 10:09 am computer issues) |
| Zoe Goodson | MDE Engineering Technical Advice Division |
| Gavin Courtright | MDE Engineering Technical Advice Division |
| Anthony Nwagwe | MDE Engineering Technical Advice Division |
| Bill Shreve | TRE Committee Liaison |

01. CALL TO ORDER

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

02. BOARD CHAIR’S COMMENT & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Board Vice Chair Doug opened the meeting by thanking all in attendance. He continued by stressing the importance of the work the Board does.

03. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Board Members reviewed the May 18, 2023 Draft Agenda and made amendments, including postponement of the closed meeting to review minutes. Bruce Darner moved to adopt the proposed meeting agenda with amendments. Ed Hogan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Martin Fuhr advised that the minutes would be available for review at the next meeting due to loss of the document in a total computer failure. Victoria Arbaugh will redo the minutes for the next meeting upon provision of a fully functioning computer.

05. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

Martin Fuhr introduced the Board to Zoe Goodson and Gavin Courtright of ETAD. Gavin proceeded to explain their concerns about the adequacy of the Water Treatment 4 Examination for surface water system operators. He proposed the creation of two supplemental classifications with corresponding examinations for granular filtration processing and UF/MF membrane filtration. Eric Dutrow noted that the best mechanism to address their concerns would be to create a site-specific certification where warranted. Bill Shreve echoed Eric’s concerns stating that the creation of new subclasses and exams would take a minimum of two years, requires a reg change and generally be very cumbersome and time-consuming endeavor. Bill followed up by asking Board Secretary, Martin Fuhr, whether all sites use the same RO Examination and if the Board could do a site-specific certification for multiple similar locations? Martin answered that all RO Exams were the same and that he believed it would be possible to issue a blanket site-specific certification for operators performing similar surface water treatment processes.

Zoe Goodson presented an explanation of ETADS concerns over legionella and on-premises plumbing treatment systems. She presented the statutory and regulatory requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act and recommended that the WWSO Board create a new Operator Classification similar to the Distribution 1 to be labeled as B1 to certify plumbers who build such systems and a supplemental 5S to cover systems involving chloramines and chlorine dioxide. Bill Shreve responded that this too would take a minimum of 2 years to develop since it would not only involve regulation changes but also exam

87 development and the establishment of a new Board position to represent operators within the new
88 classification category. He emphasized the need to consult with the Plumbing Board as they may have
89 original and exclusive jurisdiction over regulation of plumbers. Anthony Nwagwe asked if the Board
90 Counsel could verify whether jurisdiction could fall with both the WWSO Board and the Plumbing Board.
91 Jen Bowman responded that Martin should send her an email requesting OAG Advise and then she would
92 research the matter and brief the Board. Martin advised he would do so and that the Board would be best
93 served to wait for Jen’s advice and determination of any jurisdictional conflict prior to going forward
94 further with this proposal. Doug Abbot thanked Jen for her assistance. Martin Fuhr thanked both Zoe and
95 Gavin for their presentation and invited them to stay and observe the remainder of the meeting if able.

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98 **06. BOARD STAFF’S REPORTS**

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100 **A. Revenue & Expenditures Update**

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102 The Board Secretary presented the figures for January, February, March and April of 2023. He highlighted
103 the Revenue & Expense Report to the Board and explained that the figures for April had not yet been
104 confirmed by MDE Fiscal. After the presentation, Martin opened the floor to inquiry and comment. The
105 Board had no questions or comments regarding the information that was reported.

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| FY22 Appropriations through June 30, 2023 | \$376,189.00 |
| Draft Cumulative Revenue as of April 30, 2023 | \$149,050.00 |
| Reconciled Cumulative Revenue as of March 31, 2023 | \$130,450.00 |
| Reconciled Cumulative Revenue as of February 28, 2023 | \$116,250.00 |
| Reconciled Cumulative Revenue as of January 31, 2023 | \$101,550.00 |
| Encumbrance as of March 31, 2023 | \$20,883.64 |

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114 **B. TRE Committee Proposal Approval**

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116 Martin Fuhr presented the TRE Committee Proposal. Doug Abbott advised that he has some questions
117 about the California and Jacobs Courses. Specifically, he wanted to know the justification for approving
118 these courses for all operators and all supervisors and why a sanitary survey training course, in particular,
119 was approved for wastewater operators and superintendents? Martin advised that he would review the
120 approval of the sanitary survey course for all operators and superintendents then resubmit the proposal at
121 the next TRE Committee Meeting. Doug asked that the entire TRE Proposal be delayed until the next
122 meeting so all of the “all operator and supervisor” designations could be revisited. Ed Hogan concurred
123 with Doug’s suggestion. Bill Shreve also agreed that Martin should table the proposal to double check the
124 classifications for which each course would be approved. Bruce Darner made a motion to adopt the TRE
125 Proposal absent the California & Jacobs course submissions until such time as Martin could revisit the
126 approval for all operators and superintendents. Ed Hogan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
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129 **C. Board Initiatives & Inquiries**

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131 **i. Board Vacancies**

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133 Martin Fuhr advised the Board that while Anthony and Davina were great additions and that Bill Shreve's
134 appointment was just awaiting final approval, the Board still needs both a Municipal Government and
135 Sanitary Commission Seat. Bill Shreve suggested that Tara Jones would be a great candidate and fits the
136 criteria for the sanitary seat since she now works for WSSC. Martin advised that he would reach out to
137 Tara to see if she was interested.

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139 **ii. MRWA Conference**

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141 Martin Fuhr reported that the MRWA Conference was a huge success. MDE employees, including all
142 Board Staff enjoyed meeting with operators, attending classes and fielding questions. It was a great
143 experience for many MDE employees from other divisions as well and helped operators to connect to the
144 agency.

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146 **iii. Short Course Enrollment**

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148 Martin Fuhr reported that as of the Board Meeting over 121 operators had registered for the Short Course
149 Examination and more seats were available. He encouraged Board members to spread the word to register
150 early to ensure a seat is available.

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152 **iv. Suspension of the August, 2023 Meeting**

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154 Board members concurred that 12 meetings a year were unnecessary. However, due to the volume of
155 issues currently being addressed, any changes to the schedule would wait. Upon the advice of Board
156 Counsel, it was decided that the August Meeting would remain on the schedule and could be cancelled if
157 not necessary.

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159 **v. Discontinuance of the combined Wastewater 5A Examination.**

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161 Martin Fuhr revisited the option of eliminating the combined Wastewater 5A Examination and only
162 offering the 5 and A Exams individually. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that since many people
163 do pass the 5A, it is more expensive to sit for both exams. Davina Yutzy and Bill Shreve argued that since
164 many operators still had interest in the combined exam: it should continue to be offered. Ed Hogan
165 concurred. There were no objections to keeping the 5A Exam until further review and evaluation. .
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172 **07. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

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174 **a. Application to Substitute Education for Experience – Risto Worthington**

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176 Mr. Worthington applied to substitute education for experience. Based upon his college transcript, Martin
177 recommended that he be granted 12 months of experience credit for his education, making him eligible
178 for full certification on April 1, 2024. Bruce Darner made a motion to adopt the recommendations of
179 Board Staff. The motion was seconded by Ed Hogan and passed unanimously.
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181 **b. Application to Substitute Education for Experience – Elizabeth Thompson**

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183 Ms. Thompson applied for 12 months of education credit. Based upon her college transcript, Martin
184 recommended that she be granted 12 months of experience credit, making her eligible for full certification
185 immediately. Ed Hogan made a motion to adopt the recommendations of Board Staff. The motion was
186 seconded by Bruce Darner and passed unanimously.
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188 **c. Special Accommodation Request – Chad Lecates & Leslie Guessford**

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190 Martin advised that he was postponing the presentation of these applications. He is going to send them to
191 Board Counsel Jen Bowman for review. Jen advised that she would research the matter and send back
192 advice. She noted that even after advice it is most likely that these applications can only be reviewed in
193 closed session to prevent violations of health and privacy laws and regulations.
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196 **08. OLD BUSINESS**

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199 Martin advised that he would be sending the most often incorrectly answered WPI / ABC Exam Questions
200 to Exam Committee Members individually for review. Board Counsel reminded the Board that under the
201 Open Meetings Act, any time that more than 50% of the Board meets then it is considered an official
202 Board Meeting and must be posted and open to the public. The Board will remain cognizant when
203 appointing new members to the Committee. Martin noted that both Scott Harmon and Tara Jones are both
204 non-members on the Committee and offer a great wealth of knowledge. Board Staff will continue to work
205 to get someone from MDE Wastewater Permit Enforcement or the Compliance Division on the
206 Committee.
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208 **09. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS**

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210 **Bruce Darner (WWOA)** – No new report at this time since he was unable to attend the previous day’s
211 meeting.
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213 **Eric Dutrow (MRWA)** – MRWA has a very successful conference in Ocean City, Md. They will be
214 moving to the Ocean City Convention Center next year.
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216 **Bill Shreve (TRE Committee / Reporting for MCET)** – Advised that Melissa Coker is the Interim

217 Director at MCET. He will invite her to attend the next Board Meeting.

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221 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

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223 Ed Hogan moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:49 AM. The motion was seconded by Bruce Darner.

224 The next meeting will be held on **June 15, 2023 Video Conference Meeting held via Google Meet.**

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