



**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
**BOARD OF WATERWORKS AND WASTE SYSTEMS OPERATORS**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:**  
**Thursday, July 20, 2023 At 10:00 A.M**  
**Virtual Video Conference Meeting via Google Hangouts**

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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.  
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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Doug Abbott	Water Supervision; Excused
Ed Hogan	Industrial Superintendents
Bruce Darner	Agriculture; WWOA Liaison
Eric Dutrow	Public-At-Large
Bill Shreve	Public-At-Large
Connie Luffman	Wastewater Supervision
Davina Yutzzy	County Government
Joe Wright	Maryland Environmental Service
Anthony Nwagwe	Maryland Department of Environment / Water Supply Division

**LIASONS, GUEST & STAFF PRESENT**

Dee Settar	Deputy Program Director Water Supply
Martin Fuhr	Board Secretary
Jennifer Bowman	Board Counsel
Pamela Franks	WWSO Board Staff
Victoria Arbaugh	WWSO Board Staff

**01. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Vice Chair Bill Shreve 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.

43 **02. BOARD CHAIR’S COMMENT & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS**

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45 Board Vice Chair Bill Shreve opened the meeting by thanking all in attendance.  
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48 **03. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA**

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50 Board Members reviewed the July 20, 2023 Draft Agenda. A motion was made to adopt the proposed  
51 meeting agenda with amendments, then seconded. The motion carried unanimously.  
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54 **04. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT JUNE 15, 2023 OPEN MEETING MINUTES**

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56 Martin Fuhr presented the proposed minutes to the Board for review. Amendments and corrections were  
57 made. Ed Hogan made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Bruce  
58 Darner and passed unanimously.  
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61 **05. UPDATE BY WATER SUPPLY DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER DEE SETTER**

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63 **A. LRCA Plans**

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65 The Deputy Program Manager for Water Supply advised that MDE is moving forward with planning  
66 automation for the WWSO Board. She expects that an IT Manager will be assigned to officially commence  
67 the project in November of 2023. Martin will proceed with reaching out to stakeholders for input and  
68 advice. She also advised the Board that MDE has now hired an official videographer who would like to  
69 produce a video to improve recruitment of Water and Wastewater Operators. This was well received by  
70 the Board who unanimously offered to assist and provide support as needed.  
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72 **B. Regulation Changes**

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74 Dee advised the Board to focus on top priorities in regard to proposing regulation changes. She advised  
75 that the Board Secretary should have a list of proposals ready by no later than the end of September, 2023.  
76 The Board should vote on all proposed regulation changes and related matter by the October Board  
77 Meeting and have Martin submit the information to her by October 20, 2023 in order to ensure timeliness.  
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79 **C. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Meeting**

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81 Dee Settar advised that Water Supply will have a follow up meeting with the EPA in regard to record  
82 retention. She requested that all Board Members send any questions to Martin so she can present them to  
83 the EPA for a response. Martin asked members to email him all questions and concerns by the end of the  
84 following week.  
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88 **D. Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) Meeting**

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90 Dee Settar advised that Water Supply had met with the DJS to discuss an internship program with the  
91 Engineering, Technical and Advice Division (ETAD.) Board Member Anthony Ngwawe will be  
92 spearheading the project and mentoring youth and MDE will be recruiting directly through DJS. Bill  
93 Shreve advised that the City Program B-more Wise will be offering a similar program with the focus on  
94 intervention and rehabilitation for at risk youth and will also be working directly with Baltimore City  
95 Workforce Development. Bill volunteered to assist Anthony in any way he could.  
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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 advised that he just received the final May, 2023 numbers from MDE Fiscal and he  
103 will present them at the next Board Meeting. He reported the unreconciled revenue for June of 2023 and  
104 will report the reconciled numbers at the next Board Meeting. The Board did not have any additional  
105 questions regarding the matter.  
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107 **B. Quarterly Examination Statistics**

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110 Martin Fuhr presented the quarterly examination statistics. He noted the increase in passage because of  
111 the short course which always has higher passage rates. Martin opened the floor to questions and the Board  
112 had no inquiries at this time.  
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115 **C. Board Initiatives & Inquiries**

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117 **i. Marijuana Use**

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119 Martin Fuhr advised the Board that an Operator made an inquiry regarding the WWSO Board's position  
120 on the use of legalized marijuana. He noted that the Board's prior position statement only applied to the  
121 use of medical marijuana. The Board Counsel advised that she believes that the current statement must be  
122 amended in light of the recent changes to Maryland law. Bill Shreve recommended using the prior  
123 language and just removing all references to medical marijuana. Jen Bowman advised that she would  
124 research the feasibility of that strategy and confirm her findings with the Water Director's Office. She  
125 advised that she would update the Board on her findings at the next meeting. The Board agreed to postpone  
126 a vote on the language change until the next meeting.  
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132                    **ii.     Public Inquiry**

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134 Martin Fuhr reported that he received a request from Baltimore City DPW for the WWSO Board to  
135 consider the issuance of an “Emergency Provisional Certification” similar to the one being issued in the  
136 State of Massachusetts. Martin presented the information from Massachusetts to the Board. Bill Shreve  
137 stated that would most certainly require a regulation change. The Board Counsel concurred. Bill added  
138 that is also a public health and safety concern to allow unsupervised and inexperienced operators to run  
139 plants of any kind. Martin noted that it concerned him that none of these operators would be under the  
140 supervision of an Operator in Charge, and as such, nobody would be ensuring errors did not occur.  
141 Everyone on the Board agreed that this is not a regulation change they are interested in proposing.  
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144                    **iii.     WWOA Resignation**

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146 The Board Secretary advised that Mr. Paul Hignutt is resigning from the Water and Wastewater Operators  
147 Association (WWOA.) Bruce Darner advised that he served as a Trustee and his position may be abolished  
148 if he is not replaced. Bruce Darner invited Board members to call and congratulate him on his retirement  
149 and thank him for his many contributions to the industry. Pam Franks recommended a letter of gratitude  
150 from the Board. Martin Fuhr will draft a letter signature by the Board Chair.  
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152                    **iv.     Suspension of the August, 2023 Meeting**

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154 Upon the advice of Board Counsel, it was decided that the August Meeting would be cancelled since it  
155 was not necessary.  
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157                    **07. TRE COMMITTEE RECCOMENDATIONS**

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160 There was a lively discussion of the test preparation courses submitted by American Water College.  
161 Anthony Ngwawe and Bill Shreve both brought up the confusing nature of the course titles. In appears to  
162 infer that the State of Maryland endorses / sponsors the course which is not the case. Bill Shreve added  
163 that the course also does not address all relevant topics or match up with the course prescriptions. The  
164 Board Chair asked Martin to follow up with the vendor to inquire about a name change prior to approval.  
165 Bruce Darner inquired about a submission from Jane Pierce of MCET. Martin Advised that is was in  
166 process and will be a priority for the next Board Meeting. A motion was made to adopt the amended  
167 proposal of the TRE Committee by Bruce. The motion was seconded by Anthony. The motion passed  
168 unanimously.  
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177 **08. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

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180 **A. Kyle Galla Substitution of Education for Experience**

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182 Martin presented an application submitted by Kyle Galla for education substitution. Based on his  
183 academic record, Martin recommended he be granted nine (9) months of credited time, making him  
184 eligible for full certification on May 1, 2024. A motion was made by Bill Shreve to adopt the  
185 recommendation of Board Staff. The motion was seconded by Ed Hogan. The motion passed with Joe  
186 Wright abstaining.

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189 **09. BOARD ELECTIONS**

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192 Bill Shreve nominated Doug to continue as Board Chair and the nomination was seconded by Bruce  
193 Darner. Bruce Darner nominated Bill Shreve to serve as Vice Chair. The motion was second by Ed Hogan.  
194 All votes were mailed to Martin for processing and both nominees were elected unanimously.

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197 **10. OLD BUSINESS**

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200 The exam committee had expressed concerns over the responsibility and impact of proper plant  
201 classifications. Martin Fuhr advised that it was too time consuming for the Board to license / certify  
202 specific plants. Martin opened the floor to discussion. Bill Shreve noted that there were always big issues  
203 with building plants since permit writers do not often communicate with compliance and they sometimes  
204 do not agree or interpret classes and classifications the same. As a result, he recommends a check sheet.  
205 Dee Settar concurred that was a method that may work since we must ensure the effort is productive if we  
206 are going to get the Board involved in the Plant Classification process. Eric suggested reviewing other  
207 states processes, particularly Pennsylvania and West Virginia which have more user-friendly plant class  
208 systems. The Board will revisit after reviewing other State's plant certification systems.

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210 The exam committee is also concerned with the number of operators who fail exams 3 or more times.  
211 Bruce and Bill agreed that nearly a dozen of the questions most often missed by test takers are necessary  
212 and relevant to the job. Bill agreed commenting that some of the questions required merely rote  
213 memorization of technology and automation and added that they all must know basic math skills. Bill  
214 referred everyone back to Saied's prior desire to require a mandatory remedial course for those who have  
215 failed 3 exams or more. The Board agreed to revisit this project once a proposal was made by the exam  
216 committee.

222 **11. DISCUSSION WITH BOARD LIAISONS AND GUESTS**

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225 **Bruce Darner (WVOA)** – Advised that the Western Section has a meeting next week in Thurmont, MD  
226 and at least 20 people are expected to attend. The WVOA General Meeting was yesterday. They have  
227 220 booth set up for Tri-Con and eleven (11) items up for the silent auction. Registrations are steady.  
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229 **Bill Shreve (TRE Committee / Reporting for MCET)** – Recommended that Martin invite the new  
230 Director of MCET to the next Board Meeting. Martin advised that he would do so.  
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234 **12. BOARD VOTE TO MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION**

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236 Pursuant to General Provisions Article (“GP”) § 3-305(b), on a motion made by Ed Hogan and seconded  
237 by Bruce Darner, the following Board members voted in favor to move into closed session on July 20,  
238 2023 at 11:42 AM via Google Meet video/ teleconference for the purpose of complying with certain  
239 provisions of the Open Meetings Act: Vice-Chairman Bill Shreve, Ed Hogan, Bruce Darner, Eric Dutrow,  
240 Connie Luffman, Anthony Nwagwe, Joe Wright and Davina Yutzy. The motion carried.  
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243 **13. ADJOURNMENT**

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245 Bill Shreve moved to adjourn the open meeting at 11:43 AM and the motion was second by Ed Hogan.  
246 The next meeting will be held on **September 21, 2023 Video Conference Meeting held via Google**  
247 **Meet.**  
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249 **CALL TO ORDER AND PURPOSE OF CLOSED MEETING**

250 With a quorum present, Vice Chair Bill Shreve called the meeting of the closed session to order at 11:50  
251 AM to perform administrative functions, pursuant to the following provisions of GP § 3-305(b):  
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253 GP § 3-305(b)(2) - To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to  
254 public business

255 GP § 3-305(b)(7) - To consult with Board Counsel to obtain legal advice  
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257 During the closed meeting, the following newly elected Board members were present: Vice-Chairman Bill  
258 Shreve, Ed Hogan, Bruce Darner, Eric Dutrow, Connie Luffman, Anthony Nwagwe, Joe Wright and  
259 Davina Yutzy. The following MDE staff were also present during the closed meeting: Jenn Bowman,  
260 Martin Fuhr, Pam Franks and Victoria Arbaugh.  
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262 **TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING CLOSED MEETING**

263 Board Members discussed the following item: applications for special accommodations for examinations  
264 based on disability.