

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS  
OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

**MINUTUES FOR JULY 9, 2002 MEETING**

**Members in Attendance:** Rick Dionne, Julia Forgue, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock, Tom White and Ray Wright

**Others in Attendance:** Don Benz, Warwick Sewer Authority  
David Gaipo, Aquasource  
Greg Shultz and Scott Mooney, DEM Legal Services  
Traci Lima, DEM

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:39am. With no concerns from the Board, Mr. Patenaude took up items 3 & 4 on the agenda first, which dealt with matters of interest to those visitors in attendance. Per §42-46-5(4) of the Rhode Island General Laws as amended, Mr. Patenaude addressed two issues on the agenda that may require discussion in a closed executive session. Mr. Patenaude gave David Gaipo the option to conduct his portion of the meeting in executive session or open meeting. Mr. Gaipo opted to conduct the meeting in an open forum.

Mr. Gaipo's situation came to light because of an inspection at the Westerly facility where Mr. Gaipo was not present a number of times. Mr. Gaipo's position requires that he be on duty at the facility full-time. Mr. Patenaude summarized many documents that Mr. Gaipo and others had submitted to the Department, including certification applications submitted to both Rhode Island and Massachusetts, as well as responses to DEM staffing inquiries from the Town of Westerly and AquaSource, and finally a July 2002 correspondence from Mr. Gaipo. Mr. Patenaude summarized significant discrepancies on the documents regarding Mr. Gaipo's employment in Rhode Island and in Massachusetts. Furthermore, the amount of time at which Mr. Gaipo was working at Massachusetts' facilities appeared significantly greater than any such mention of those duties in applications filed with Rhode Island. Mr. Gaipo informed the Board that his intentions were not to be deceptive or manipulative, but admitted that it was apparent that he was "guilty of not paying close attention to detail and dates." Mr. Patenaude noted that Mr. Gaipo had passed the spring 2002 Grade 3 exam, but due to these discrepancies, it is not clear at this time whether he will receive the Grade 3. The Board had few questions for Mr. Gaipo at this time, and Mr. Gaipo, did not have further comments.

The next issue was the matter of Timothy Barry, an operator from the Warwick Sewer Authority (WSA). Present at the meeting was Donald Benz, Assistant Superintendent at WSA. According to Mr. Benz, on May 25 there was a chlorine failure at the plant. Mr. Barry acknowledged the alarm but did nothing to correct the situation. When his shift was over and a new operator came on duty he did not inform the new operator who relieved him of the chlorine failure. The issue is should Mr. Barry's Grade 1 license be revoked. Mr. Benz was present to show the Board that specific steps are in place should a similar situation arise. The Board sent a certified letter to Mr. Barry to invite him to the meeting so he could defend his actions and inform him of the risk of his license being revoked. He chose not to attend. Since the incident, Mr. Barry has been terminated from the WSA.

**A motion was made by Mr. Patenaude for the Board to convene in Executive Session per §42-46-5(4) of the Rhode Island General Laws as amended. Seconded by Mr. Schock, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

**After completing specific business in executive session, a motion was made by Mr. Schock to re-open the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Forgue, all members voted in favor to open the meeting and the motion passed.**

Per Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-7(c) it was noted that two votes were taken in executive session. The first with respect to Mr. Gaipo was that any further action would be postponed until additional information is received from Mr. Gaipo and/or his employer regarding their response to the information currently in the Board's possession. The other voted regarding Mr. Barry was to proceed with an administrative hearing to revoke his license.

At this time Mr. Schock left the meeting.

The next order of business was the draft June 5, 2002 meeting minutes. Ms. Forgue pointed out an error.

The next order of business was the draft closed meeting minutes of the June 5, 2002 meeting. Board members reviewed the minutes.

The next item was the Rules and Regulations for Wastewater Treatment Facility Operators promulgation update. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that the Regulations were still in the process of being promulgated.

The next order of business was the applications for the Community College of Rhode Island wastewater course instructor. Mr. Patenaude reviewed the applications with the Board. Ms. Forgue stated she would like copies of the applicants' resumes to review. Mr. Patenaude will be sending copies of the resumes to the Board so they may review them. Then the Board could be polled via telephone as to which applicants could be invited to the August meeting.

**With no further business, Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dionne and Kurdziel, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, August 7, 2002, 9:30 am at the DEM office.