



BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Draft Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, September 6, 2017

Members in Attendance: Paul Desrosiers, Fred Kurdziel, Frank McLynch and Bill Patenaude

Others in Attendance: Chijioke “Collins” Njoku, Synagro
Christina Hoefsmit, Esq. and Traci Pena, RIDEM

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

The Board reviewed the draft August 2, 2017 open meeting minutes.

Mr. Desrosiers motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. McLynch seconded the motion. The motion passed with all eligible members voting in favor. Mr. Kurdziel abstained as he was not present at the August meeting.

The next item discussed were the August 2, 2017 draft executive session meeting minutes.

Mr. Desrosiers motioned to approve the draft executive session meeting minutes. Mr. McLynch seconded the motion. The motion passed with all eligible members voting in favor. Messers. Kurdziel and Patenaude abstained as Mr. Kurdziel did not attend the meeting and Mr. Patenaude had recused himself from executive session deliberations.

The next item discussed was a request from Chijioke “Collins” Njoku. Mr. Njoku submitted an application for the November 28/29, 2017 exam. Unfortunately it is past the one-year mark in which Mr. Njoku needs to be a certified operator in the State of Rhode Island. Mr. Njoku had three previous opportunities in which to sit for the exam; 1. December 2016 (which he did not sit for); May 2017 (which he sat for but did not pass); and August 2017 (which he could not take as his application was late). Mr. Njoku asked the Board for an extension of his one-year period. Mr. Patenaude stated due to previous staffing and licensure issues with Synagro, he was not inclined to grant their operators additional time. Mr. Desrosiers stated that Mr. Njoku was under pressure to get to licenses and would be willing to grant an extension to the 1-year. Messers. Kurdziel and McLynch agreed.

After further discussion, Mr. McLynch motioned to extend Mr. Njoku’s one year and allow him to sit for the November 2017 exam with the understanding that should Mr. Njoku not pass the November 2017 exam, Synagro will have to remove Mr. Njoku from operations until he

attains licensure. Mr. Desrosiers seconded the motion. All others voted in favor with one nay by Mr. Patenaude. As such the motion passed.

Mr. Njoku left the meeting.

The next item discussed was an application from Philip Kinslow, City of Woonsocket. Mr. Kinslow is seeking reciprocity. The Board considered Mr. Kinslow's licensure history and the following information: his initial wastewater operator license was issued by the State of Texas in June 2014. At that time, he took and passed the Texas Class D exam. The Texas Class D exam and license is equivalent to Rhode Island's Grade 1 exam and license. In October 2016, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania issued him a Class B, E license via reciprocity, which is certification for satellite collection systems (E) and activated sludge treatment for facilities between 1 and 5 MGD (B). No exams were taken as part of this licensure.

After discussion, Mr. Desrosiers motioned to issue Mr. Kinslow a full Rhode Island Grade 1 license via reciprocity and sign him up for the Grade 2 exams on November 28th/29th. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. With all members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

Another application reviewed was from MaryAnne Peck, from the Woonsocket facility. Ms. Peck was issued a Grade 3 license through reciprocity in March 2017. Mr. Desrosiers noted that Ms. Peck was not in direct responsible charge and would need more experience to sit for Grade 4 examination.

The next item on the agenda was draft revisions to the Board's Rules and Regulations. Mr. Patenaude provided copies of the regulations as re-codified as part of ongoing statewide regulations standardization. This new format does not change any text, rather reformats it into a new statewide standard numbering/formatting system. Mr. Patenaude noted that he would like to make three administrative amendments to the Regulations, which were also discussed at the previous meeting. He would like to propose relaxing the requirements for approving training courses *relaxing the requirements for approving training courses*. Right now the regulations state that training "will be in topics that are not required for the performance of an Operator's required duties." The proposed change would be to add "is intended to be in topics..." By doing this operators can receive approval for courses in subjects that are related to their duties but are not required at present. The goal is to stimulate professional development. (For instance, in Boot Camp, operators are given training in areas that they do not necessarily deal with at work, but may someday. In the past, we've given credit for that. So this change will reflect that.) Another change would be to *extend the grace period for a late renewal from February 1 to February 15, while clarifying that licenses expire at the end of a renewal period*. Currently when a retired licensee does not wish to renew their license and does not notify the Board, we have to send them a series of notices, etc., via certified mail. This change streamlines that process. And finally, there are also some word changes from exam "grade" to exam "score," etc. for clarification purposes.

Mr. Patenaude notified the Board of the Direct Rule expedited rule process, which states that the Board would be making changes in 30 days providing there isn't any feedback the changes will be made.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to accept all changes proposed and move forward with promulgation. Mr. Kurdziel seconded. All present voted in favor, as such the motion passed.

The next item discussed was a request from the town of South Kingstown to notify operators of a position opening. The Board discussed its hesitancy with directly contacting qualified candidates. Ms. Pena suggested the development and use of a listserv, similar to one used in the RIPDES program. Such a listserv would be voluntary and be used to share information from the Board and the industry.

August exam results were reviewed.

In New business, Mr. Desrosiers noted that the NWPCA Trade show and clambake would be taking place on Friday, September 8th at Twelve Acres facility. The Annual NEWEA golf tournament is October 16th at the New Bedford Country Club. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Boot Camp. 20 invites were mailed. Lastly, Mr. Patenaude will be working with Janine Burke-Wells and other New England states to introduce veterans to the wastewater business. Mr. Patenaude would like the Board's assistance in endorsing the program, and to possibly consider CEUs for reserve time

At 10:25 Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjourn, Mr. McLynch seconded, all members present voted in favor, as such the motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at 9:30 at the RIDEM – Office of Water Resources, Room 280 located at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908.