

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

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 7, 2001

In Attendance: Rick Dionne, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock, Tom White and Ray Wright
Also in Attendance: Paul Desrosiers, NBC-Fields Point
David Gaipo, AquaSource, Westerly WWTF
Traci Lima and Alisa Richardson, RIDEM

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:37 am.

The first order of business was the review of the January 2001 meeting minutes. Mr. Schock questioned the wording on the second page, third paragraph. The sentence should read "Mr. Wright asked if there was tracking...enroll."

Mr. Schock motioned to accept the minutes as amended. Seconded by Mr. Patenaude, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next order on the agenda was the status the new appointment by the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, however because Mr. David Gaipo was present, Mr. Patenaude requested to put Mr. Gaipo's issue next.

Mr. Gaipo had possessed a Grade 2 license, which had expired due to a failure to renew. He is now looking for Grade 3 reciprocity, as AquaSource has retained him on behalf of the Town of Westerly as an Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Patenaude prepared a history of Mr. Gaipo's employment. While Mr. Gaipo does have the required 5 years of employment as an operator, he does not have a full 3 years in direct responsible charge. As such, if he passed a Grade 3 exam, he would be required to get a 3-year OIT. Mr. Schock reviewed the criteria for a provisional certificate and inquired what would be considered to be direct responsible charge on the outline. He asked about Mr. Gaipo's septage treatment experience in Massachusetts, comparing it to NETCO. Mr. Patenaude noted that NETCO was a sludge handling facility only, which could only certify operators up to Grade 2 only; septage-treatment facilities were more complex, like WWTFs, and could be certified higher than a Grade 2. Mr. Schock stated he was mostly concerned with Mr. Gaipo's Yarmouth experience, to which Mr. Gaipo explained his Yarmouth duties. Mr. Patenaude asked if there was any further discussion. Mr. Schock wanted to know of any other examples where a 3-year OIT has been given to an individual. Mr. Patenaude told him that the Board has been issuing 3-OITs since it upgraded its regulations in the early 1990's. This was necessary because an operator needs a full 3 years of DRC experience to be fully licensed under section 12(f). Mr. Patenaude told him that he would provide more information on the matter for the next meeting. Mr. Schock wanted to be sure that the community is not being done a disservice. Mr. Schock also wanted to know what would happen to Mr. Gaipo was allowed to take the Grade 3 exam and failed. Mr. Patenaude said in that instance, Mr. Gaipo would remain a Grade 2 and would be unable to maintain his position as Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Schock asked that the issue of Mr. Gaipo be tabled. Mr. Patenaude noted that if the matter were to be tabled, Mr. Gaipo would be operating without a license, and that issuing a Provisional at this point is consistent with past Board practices and its regulations. The length of the 3-OIT to be issued if Mr. Gaipo passes the exam, however, would be tabled until more information was available regarding Mr. Gaipo's employment history.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to issue Mr. Gaipo a Grade 3 Provisional license (which is a 6-month certificate), then issue a 3 OIT if he is successful at passing the exam. Messrs. Dionne and Wright seconded the motion. Messrs. Dionne, Kurdziel, Patenaude, White and Wright voted in favor; Mr. Schock voted against the motion, noting that he felt as though he needed additional information. As such, the motion passed.

Because Mr. Desrosiers was present, the Board heard his issues next. Mr. Desrosiers wanted to resurrect the issue of mandatory retraining, enumerating a number of reasons why the MRR would not be a burden to the Board. Mr.

Patenaude asked if the Association was formally requesting to revive mandatory retraining on the agenda. Mr. Desrosiers stated that the Association was not at this point. Mr. Desrosiers provided the Board with "A Plan to Implement a Training Requirement for Licensing of Wastewater Treatment Operators" dated May 9, 1995. Mr. White requested that the Board review the document until the Association reconvenes and submits a formal request. Mr. Dionne stated his support for such a review of the matter should it be formally received. Mr. Wright brought up the fact that the plan was dated for 1995, would the prices in the plan be obsolete because the plan is 5 years old? Mr. Schock also noted concerns about the number of Grade 4 courses that would be available. Mr. Desrosiers welcomed this input.

Mr. White motioned to put Mandatory Retraining on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Patenaude seconded the motion. All voted in favor to put Mandatory Retraining on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Desrosiers was invited to stay for the rest of the meeting.

The next order was a letter requesting that Mr. Quarterman of NETCO/SYNAGO be allowed to retake the CCRI Course. He was unable to complete the class due to health problems. Because the Board only sponsors the class, and it is not mandatory, no action is necessary by the Board. Mr. Patenaude will send a letter to Mr. Quarterman stating as such.

The next order was a letter received by the League of Cities and Towns regarding Adel Banoub's resignation from the Board. Dan Beardsley, the Executive Director, said he was aggressively pursuing a replacement for Mr. Banoub. Information was sent to Mr. Beardsley with the criteria for an appointee. Mr. Patenaude also drafted a letter thanking Mr. Banoub for his service to the Board. The members reviewed the letter. All approved of the draft.

Mr. Desrosiers wanted to revisit the matter of the CCRI Course. Mr. Schock welcomed the topic, questioning what the Board could do about the number of people not passing the course. Mr. Desrosiers said he would like the test to reflect the individuals who work hard in the class and therefore should get more credit for quizzes or homework, with less emphasis on the final exam. Mr. Desrosiers feels that some people do not test well. Possible solutions to the testing problems would be: 1. Make the questions shorter; 2. Make test measurements attainable; 3. Make the questions less wordy; 4. Don't use the word "Not" in the questions; 5. Review the manner in which the questions are asked; and 6. Better clarity. Messrs. Shock, Wright and Dionne agreed. Mr. Patenaude asked for volunteers from the Board to help him review the Grade 1 exam. Messrs. White and Dionne offered their services. Mr. Schock asked Mr. Desrosiers to map out a plan for something that he envisioned for the final grading. Mr. Wright offered to help Mr. Desrosiers with that matter.

The next order was a presentation by Alisa Richardson on the DEM's website and what type of information the Board would like to see as a web page. Brainstorming developed and such things as applications, rules and regulation, exam results, license expiration, sample exams, job postings from cities and towns, monthly board meetings and agendas, events, and courses. All members thought this would be a good idea to get information on the website. Mr. Patenaude said he would draft something and think of possible links.

With no further business Mr. Patenaude adjourned the meeting at 11:05am, seconded by Mr. White, the motion passed with all members voting in favor.

The next meeting was scheduled for 9:30am on Wednesday, March 7, 2001 in Room 280 on the 2nd floor of the Department of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade St., Providence.