

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER
TREATMENT FACILITIES

Members in Attendance: Bill Patenaude, Dr. Janet Baldwin, Julia Forgue, Paul Desrosiers, Frank McLynch, and Jon Schock

Others in Attendance: Eddie Davies, Quonset Point WWTF
Adam Federau, Jacobs
Joe LoBianco, Esq., and Traci Pena, RIDEM

MEETING MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

Due to the COVID restrictions, the Board held a teleconference meeting.

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Mr. Patenaude performed an audio roll call of Board members and members of the public/wastewater industry that were participating (see above).

The Board reviewed the draft August 5, 2020 meeting minutes.

After review, Mr. Schock motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mrs. Forgue seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Forgue, Mr. Desrosiers, Mr. McLynch, Mr. Schock and Mr. Patenaude voting in the affirmative.

The next item on the agenda was a request for Grade 4 reciprocity from Adam Federau, who had been selected by Jacobs Engineering for the superintendent's position of the Westerly WWTF. Mr. Federau holds a Grade 1 license in Illinois which is equivalent to Rhode Island's Grade 4 license. He passed the RI equivalent Grade 4 exam with a score of 72. He is also licensed in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, has an ABC certificate and has a Bachelors in chemistry. After vigorous review of his application and discussion, Mr. Schock cited that according to the Rule 5.11f.2A if Westerly is a Grade 3 facility, Mr. Federau would be eligible for reciprocity at a Grade 3 license even though qualifications meet Grade 4 licensure.

Mr. Shock motioned to issue Mr. Federau a Grade 3 license through reciprocity, and that if Mr. Federau should need a Grade 4 license the matter could be revisited. Mr. Desrosiers seconded the motion. All members voted in favor via roll call: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Forgue, Mr. Desrosiers, Mr. McLynch, Mr. Schock, and Mr. Patenaude voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Patenaude noted that the appointment of Mr. Federau by Jacobs prior to licensure confirmation is a frustration on the part of the Board. It is helpful to all, and only fair to the individual, when communities or contract firms consult the Board before offering the position.

The next item to be discussed was an update on staffing at Rhode Island WWTFs. Karen Goffe has retired as the Superintendent at the Smithfield WWTF. Kevin Regan has been upgraded to the superintendent and James Proulx, a Boot Camp graduate and former NBC employee, has been hired as the new Assistant Superintendent.

The next item on the agenda to be discussed is leniency for Grade 1 one-year requirements in light of COVID-19.

After discussion, Mrs. Forgue motioned to add four months to the required one-year date for Grade 1 licensure for all unlicensed operators hired between March 20, 2019 and March 20, 2020. The Board considered this a fair and generous extension given the uncertainties related to COVID-19. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call : Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Forgue, Mr. Desrosiers, Mr. McLynch, Mr. Schock and Mr. Patenaude voting in the affirmative.

The next item was the resignation of Melissa Orpen-Tuz, the Department of Health designee. She has accepted a new role at DOH. We will be working with DOH for a replacement. Mrs. Orpen-Tuz contributions and insights to the Board will be missed.

The next item to be discussed was the Grade 1 course. Mr. Davies was able to complete the course and offer exams. To date 8 out of the 10 participants past the course and one student needs to schedule a make-up exam due to him being on active duty. A Fall course will be offered.

The Board would like to schedule a Regulation update meeting. The next one would be September 15th at 9:30.

Mr. Patenaude then gave an update on the August exams. Grades 1, 2 and 4 were held at Goddard Park and Grade 3 were held at the Foundry. RIWCA provided hand sanitizers and masks to all applicants.

The Board then reviewed 2 courses that were not approved.

With no further business at 10:46, Mr. Schock motioned to adjourn. Mr. McLynch seconded. The motion was approved with the following roll call: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Forgue, Mr. Desrosiers, Mr. McLynch, Mr. Schock and Mr. Patenaude voting in the affirmative.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.
and will be held by teleconference.

