

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
Board of Certification of Operators
Of Wastewater Treatment Facilities

MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 2, 2005

MEMBERS in ATTENDANCE: Rick Dionne, Julia Forgue, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock and Tom White

OTHERS in ATTENDANCE: William McBurrough
Matt Calderiso, Bristol WWTF
Dan Gorka, Veolia Water
Traci Pena, RIDEM

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

The first item discussed was the draft January 5, 2005 meeting minutes.

Mr. White motioned to approve the minutes as given. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. With all other members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

The next item discussed was the exam application of a Mr. William McBurrough, who had taken the Grade 1 operator course in the Fall of 2004. Mr. McBurrough's final score of the course (30% of the midterm and 70% of the final) calculated to a 69.8. Mr. Patenaude explained that while the Board does not accept a score of less than 70 in its examinations, the operator course differs in that it is the weighted average of two scores – the midterm and the final. With no previous request to consider rounding a final score, Mr. Patenaude asked the Board to consider that, in Mr. McBurrough's case, and future ones, the final score be rounded to the closest rounded whole number. The Board discussed the matter and found no reason to preclude such rounding of the course final grade.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to approve the rounding of the WWTF GRADE 1 COURSE FINAL GRADE ONLY. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. With all other members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

The following item to be discussed was question number 17 from the Grade 3 exam, which was contested by Richard Ferreira of the Bristol WPCF.

After Board discussion of the question Mr. Patenaude motioned was made to change question number 17 on the Grade 3 examination and allow answer b or c. Mr. Dionne seconded the motions. All other members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Patenaude then handed the Board-requested history of the wastewater examinees, which was intended to show the Board any trends for those operators who continually take and fail the same exam. The Board reviewed and stated that they would like to see the exam score on the sheet to see the progress of examinees and see if study habits could be determined.

Mr. Patenaude then provided an update on the enforcement action involving 3 individuals formerly employed at the Narragansett Bay Commission. At the time of the meeting DEM legal counsel was still drafting a consent agreement.

The next agenda item discussed was an update on the Freedom Bay classification. Mr. Patenaude noted that an appointment with Applied Water to tour a similar plant is still needed and future updates will be provided once the meeting is scheduled.

The next topic to be discussed was mandatory retraining. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that he would be attending a meeting sponsored by NWPCA on February 8, 2005. He welcomed other Board members to attend the meeting to discuss their concerns on mandatory retraining. Mr. Dionne and Mr. Schock stated that they would attend the NWPCA meeting. The Board engaged in discussion regarding mandatory retraining and thought perhaps credits could be limited to those operators who currently work at a wastewater treatment facility. If the operator should actively be employed into the field, credits must be received by a limited amount of time. Mr. Schock thought the fiscal side of the mandatory retraining still needed to be investigated. Also, it would now become the Board's responsibility to certify classes that are acceptable for credit. The instructor would also have liability for the attendance and grades. The Board felt as though there needed to be a level of accountability. Also, at the NWPCA meeting the Board could discuss the issue of submitting false documents is in violation of the Board's rules and regulations.

The next item discussed was the staffing plan at the Cranston WPCF. Mr. Gorka passed out an amended staffing plan and letter addressing the Board's concerns regarding more detailed job duty descriptions. After review, the Board asked a number of questions, which were answered by Mr. Gorka. Mr. Schock noted that he would like to see the titles on the organizational chart match those in the Board's rules and regulations. Mr. Patenaude noted that final approval of the organizational chart sits with the DEM Operations and Maintenance office, but that from a certification standpoint, the org chart now appeared to meet Board concerns, especially clarifications now provided regarding management positions.

In a related topic, the Board reviewed the Grade 4 reciprocity from Massachusetts of Ms. Kathy Heroux-Yattaw, who is employed as Assistant Superintendent of the Cranston WPCF.

After the review of the application, Mr. Patenaude motioned to grant Ms. Heroux-Yattaw a Grade 4 license through reciprocity with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Mr. White seconded the motion. With all members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

Mr. Patenaude then updated the Board on membership status. It was his understanding that the letters for reappointment should be going out soon from the Governor's Office. He also provided the Board with a certificate of engagement that should be filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.

With no further business, Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjourn the February 2, 2005 meeting. Mr. White seconded the motion. With all members present voting in favor the motion passed.

The next meeting will be March 2, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. at 235 Promenade Street, Room 280 in Providence.