



BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Meeting Minutes: March 3, 2010

Members in Attendance: Fred Kurdziel, Frank McLynch, Dr. Gene Park, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock and Tom White
Others in Attendance: None.

The March 3, 2010 meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. The first order of business was minutes of the February 3, 2010 meeting.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the draft minutes of the open meeting. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. Messrs. Kurdziel, Patenaude, Schock and Dr. Park voted in favor; Messrs. McLynch and White abstained as they were absent from the February meeting. As such the motion passed.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the draft minutes of the closed meeting. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. Messrs. Kurdziel, Patenaude, Schock and Dr. Park voted in favor; Messrs. McLynch and White abstained as they were absent from the February meeting. As such the motion passed.

The next order of business was a draft of the board's regulations, specifically language dealing with retraining requirements. Mr. Patenaude presented a proposal for a new model to determine the level of training needed at each facility; the model would rate the training program similarly to plant grade classifications by awarding points for individually weighted subjects, which would then be multiplied by the number of hours of training provided in a two-year renewal period. The proposal would also only require such training for licensees who maintained the same position at the same facility within the two-year renewal period. Mr. Patenaude explained that any operator that accepts a position in a new wastewater facility would automatically be in "training mode" regarding the new facility, and so meet the intent of any training requirement. Dr. Park asked if this would also be the case for operators being promoted within their facility. Mr. Patenaude noted that he hadn't thought of that scenario, but agreed that a promotion would also provide an intensive period of training, and as such would also meet the intent of a training proposal.

Mr. Schock expressed deep concerns about the cost of such a proposal, indicating that such a training requirement would be an unfunded mandate without any state funds and as such he could not support it. Likewise, he was also concerned that such a proposal, to be effective, would require significant organizational oversight by both communities and the DEM—neither of which he felt had the necessary resources to make such a program meaningful.

Mr. Patenaude noted that a requirement for training would not be a new one; it is indeed already a requirement of the RI DEM Operations and Maintenance Regulations. Mr. Patenaude said that he would rather have the more-inclusive Board coordinate and approve wastewater facility training programs and not the RI DEM.

Messrs. Schock and Kurdziel stated concerns of how the proposed training program rating system would prevent excessive and repetitive training in a single subject. Mr. White noted that such concerns could be dealt with as (or if) the Board was to adopt such a model. Mr. Kurdziel stated nonetheless that the model was a worthy one to eventually balance operator training and making such a requirement a benefit to the facilities as opposed to a burden. Mr. McLynch noted that most plants were already meeting the proposed requirements.

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Mr. Schock asked for more time to consider the new proposal as it had just been presented at this meeting. Mr. Patenaude agreed.

Dr. Park presented information on the term "accredited," which is used in the existing regulations in reference to Board-approved educational degrees for various levels of licensure. At present the term is undefined. After briefing the board on how accreditation is used within higher education, especially within engineering and the natural sciences, Dr. Park agreed to propose regulatory language to better define the term for the Board's use.

During this discussion Mr. Patenaude noted existing language related to education within engineering and science, and how that language may be better used throughout sections of the regulations that deal with education.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the RIDEM Office located at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI.