



## **BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, September 5, 2018

**Members in Attendance:** Janet Baldwin, Paul Desrosiers, Frank McLynch and Bill Patenaude and Jon Schock

**Others in Attendance:** Harrison Songolo, Asst. Supt., West Warwick WWTF  
Greg Schultz, Esq., RI Attorney General's Office  
Christina Hoefsmit, Esq and Traci Pena, RIDEM

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m.

**Mr. Patenaude motioned to convene into executive session per §42-46-4 and 42-46-5(a)(4). Mr. McLynch seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call: Mr. Patenaude Mr. Desrosiers, Dr. Baldwin, Mr. Schock and Mr. McLynch voting in the affirmative.**

**After review Mr. Desrosiers voted to approve the draft executive session August 8th, 2018 meeting minutes. Mr. McLynch seconded the motion. Mr. Schock and Dr. Baldwin abstained, as they were not present at the meeting. All eligible members voted in favor, as such the motion passed.**

**Mr. Patenaude motioned to seal the September 5, 2018 executive session meeting minutes. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. The motion passed with all present voting in the affirmative.**

**Mr. Patenaude motioned to resume the meeting into open session. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. The motioned passed with all present voting in the affirmative.**

Mr. Patenaude presented conceptual draft Rules and Regulations of Operators of Wastewater Treatment Facilities. One proposed change was to eliminate the definition of "Maintenance technician" and include it in the definition of "Operator." By doing so, it would allow maintenance staff to sit for exams higher than Grade 2. Mr. Patenaude noted that this suggestion resulted from a Boot Camp discussion and general comments received from the industry over the years.

Mr. Schock stated that he vehemently opposed this suggestion. His concern was that at smaller facilities many Grade 2 mechanics did not have the operational experience to operate Grade 3 and 4 facilities.

**BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS  
OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

Mr. Desrosiers stated that a “good marriage” for wastewater staff be assigned responsibilities for both operations and maintenance, as it invites a complimentary skillset to the organization. Mr. McLynch noted that from a union perspective allowing all maintenance positions to attain Grade 3 and 4 licenses could interfere with job classifications.

The Board then discussed options to offer higher levels of licensure to maintenance personnel, such as allowing individuals in maintenance positions to sit for higher grade licenses on a case-by-case basis.

Attorney Hoefsmit stated that the Board could hold an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) as a preliminary notice, announcing that the Board is considering a regulatory action. An ANPRM is issued only when an agency believes it needs to gather more information before proceeding to a notice of proposed rulemaking.

Attorney Schultz and Mr. Schock suggested that clear standards need to be met so the rules are not arbitrary. Mr. Desrosiers said that a significant consideration would be leadership activities within any position under review. Mr. Patenaude asked the Board to propose new language and he encouraged the industry to provide comments at the next meeting. The matter will be continued.

At 10:40, Mr. Schock and Dr. Baldwin left the meeting.

The next item discussed was the training course approval hours from the Hach Center.

**After review and discussion, Mr. Patenaude motioned to approve the Hach Training Center for the following hours:**

<b>Introduction to Chlorine</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Introduction to pH</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>pH Potentiometric Technology</b>	<b>1.0 hours</b>
<b>Introduction to Conductivity</b>	<b>5 hours</b>
<b>Conductivity Technology</b>	<b>.5 Hours</b>
<b>Introduction to Dissolved Oxygen</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Introduction to Total Organic Carbon</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Measuring Total Organic Carbon</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>

**Mr. McLynch seconded. All present voted in favor, as such the motion passed.**

Exam results were then reviewed.

Mr. Patenaude then notified the Board that the Department of Administration had notified him that they no longer have the capacity to correct the Board’s exams. Mr. Patenaude noted his concerns with this news, stating that there is a certain integrity added to the exam process by having an agency other than DEM correct the exams. He noted that another alternative would be to allow ABC to administer the exams, which is both expensive and provides less oversight by the Board. The Board agreed that DOA should continue correcting its exams.

**BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS  
OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

Next, the Town of East Greenwich had requested an advisory opinion regarding the use of a Grade 2 operator being in charge at the plant when both Grade 3 operators are unavailable (such as during times of extended medical leaves and/or vacations). Mr. Desrosiers recused himself from discussion as he has a personal relationship with a member of the Town's wastewater management team. After discussion, the Board agreed that Town should execute a Standard Operator Procedure (SOP) for such times and submit it to DEM's O&M section.

Next, an operator at the NBC Bucklin Point facility requested a reduction in required time to sit for the Grade 4 given his bachelor's degree in business management. The Board reviewed the information provided and its regulations, which stipulates that such experiential reductions can be awarded only for degrees in science or engineering, or related topics. As such, the Board could not award the operator the requested reduction in experience.

After this discussion, Mr. Desrosiers noted that in his opinion a degree in business management would be more beneficial and that such a degree should be added in any new draft regulations. Mr. Patenaude noted that he would also suggest including military experience.

Next, an advisory opinion was requested from the Zambarano facility regarding a facility employee who is a Certified Nursing Assistant and is interested in working at the wastewater facility. The facility manager asked if such an individual could be licensed if he/she were only working occasionally. The individual is taking the basic course offered by NEIWPC. After discussion, the Board noted that such an individual would be able to attain a Grade 1 OIT as he/she is working at the facility at times, and that the Board would extend the OIT time from one year to a time deemed equivalent to one year, based on actual working hours.

**Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjourn. Mr. McLynch seconded the motion passed, which all members voting in favor.**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the RIDEM – Office of Water Resources, Room 280 located at 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908.