

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
STATE BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF
WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS OPERATORS**

Board Meeting Minutes

February 3, 2021

Skype Call

Board Members Present (via phone)

Ed Chescattie, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water (BSDW), DEP Secretary Designee
Mary Roland, Board Chairperson, Certified Water Operator
Joseph Swanderski, Certified Wastewater Operator
Mike Kyle, Lancaster Area Sewer Authority, Employee of a Political Subdivision
Mark Smith, Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc., General Public
Jeff Bickel, Aqua PA, Inc., Official of Private System
Rachel Brennan, Penn State University, Teacher/Professor
John Cantwell, Legal Counsel
Laura Chambers, Board Secretary

Non-Board Members Present (via phone)

Bill McNamara, BSDW
Jeff Allgyer, BSDW
Lori Wise, BSDW
Bill King, BSDW
Shalini Moola, BSDW
Mahendra Patel, BSDW
Theia Hofstetter, Bureau of Clean Water
Brian Chalfant, Policy Office
Joel Jordan, PRWA
Wendy Malehorn, PRWA

Public Present (via phone)

Chairperson Roland took roll call to confirm all individuals participating in this Board meeting via conference call and called the meeting to order at 10:01a.m. Mr. Chescattie announced that the public participants on the call would be provided an opportunity for input toward the end of the meeting.

Approval of December 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Regarding the draft minutes, Chairperson Roland pointed out that after Mr. Swanderski's name, Penn State University was still reflected and should be removed since he is now retired from PSU, and "Certified Wastewater Operator" should be listed next to his name instead. Next to Jeff Bickel's name, the role he plays on the Board should be added.

Mr. Kyle asked that in the first paragraph under the "Comments from the Public" section, the phrasing be changed to "Chairman Swanderski provided an opportunity for any additional public

comments.” Mr. Kyle noted that for the CHR, the Client ID number should be reflected as “267608” in all applicable areas of the minutes.

Mr. Kyle motioned to approve the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes as edited. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New and Upgrade Applications

Ms. Chambers presented the following new and upgrade license for Board consideration:

- 55 new water licenses
- 30 upgraded water licenses
- 40 new wastewater licenses
- 20 upgraded wastewater licenses

The Department also received an additional application that was not included in the summary report. It is for Shaun B Whetstone, Client ID 359096, and the Department recommends granting him WWB-1,3 license; and OIT for subclasses 2 and 4.

Mr. Smith motioned to approve all the new and upgraded license applications. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Reciprocity Requests

Wastewater

Travis Steimle – Holds a New York Wastewater 3A license that was issued to him on August 28, 2019 and expires on September 1, 2024. His application documents 1 year, 2 weeks’ experience working at Village of Bloomingburg, which is a class D facility using subclasses 1,2,4. His application documents 1 year, 1 month experience at Twin Lakes Village in Bloomingburg, which is a Class D facility using subclasses 2,4. His application documents 2.1 years’ experience at Pike County Environmental in Matamoras, PA, which is a Class D facility using subclasses 1,4. An operator is required to have a minimum of 1 year experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class D license. **Therefore, the Department’s determination is that Mr. Steimle has documented the adequate experience relative to a WWD – 1, 2.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed wastewater exams developed by ABC and administered in New York.

The Department’s recommendation: The Board should please review the examination information provided by New York Operator Certification program staff and vote on whether Mr. Steimle has passed a comparable examination in the State of New York.

Mr. Bickel asked whether all the signatories are certified operators. Mr. Chescattie clarified that all signatories are properly certified.

Mr. Kyle commented that Mr. Steimle's exams did not include content on collections systems, according to the exam content checklist within the verification form completed by New York.

Mr. Kyle motioned to issue Mr. Steimle a WWD - 1, 2. Mr. Swanderski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Hector Rosado – Holds a New York Wastewater 2A license that was issued to him on October 16, 2020 and expires on November 1, 2025. His application documents 7 years, 4 months' experience working at Pike County Environmental, which is a Class D facility using subclasses 1, 3, 4. His application documents 1 year, 6 months' experience working at Twin Lakes Village, which is a Class D facility using subclasses 2, 4. His application documents 1 year, 6 months' experience working at Camp Simcha WWTP, which is a Class D facility using subclasses 1, 4. But both of these part-time jobs overlapped with the fulltime job and cannot be added beyond the 7 year 4 months' full time experience. An operator is required to have a minimum of 1-year experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class D license. **Therefore, the Department's determination is that Mr. Rosado has documented the adequate experience relative to a WWD – 1, 2, 3.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed wastewater exams developed by ABC and administered in New York.

The Department's recommendation: The Board should please review the examination information provided by New York Operator Certification program staff and vote on whether Mr. Rosado has passed a comparable examination in the State of New York.

Mr. Kyle motioned to approve Mr. Rosado's WWD – 1, 2, 3 license. Mr. Swanderski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously

Robert Giovanetti – Holds a New Jersey S2 Public Wastewater operator license, and an Industrial N2 wastewater license, both of which expire on September 30, 2021. New Jersey staff have not responded to provide required information for the Department to complete their review.

****Ms. Chambers originally requested the completed verification form on December 22, 2020 via email to Trish Conti (Bureau Chief for New Jersey Operator Certification). Ms. Conti responded via email on January 4, 2021 stating that her staff had been on vacation but would complete and return the form ASAP. After giving it a couple weeks, Ms. Chambers sent a follow-up email on January 19, 2021 to Trish and her staff telling them we had yet to receive the forms. To date, no response has been received.***

The Department's recommendation: Due to the fact that New Jersey has not responded with a completed verification form after *multiple attempts to obtain the information, the Department's determination is that reciprocity for the applicant cannot be issued at this time.

Water

Joshua Irvine – Holds a North Dakota Class B – 1, 7, 8, 11, 12 license that was issued to him on March 4, 2020 and expires on July 1, 2021. His application documents 9 years, 4 months’ experience working at Park River Water Treatment Plant, in Park River, ND, which is a class B facility using subclasses 1,7,8,11,12. An operator is required to have a minimum of 3 years’ experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class B license. **Therefore, the Department’s determination is that Mr. Irvine has documented the adequate experience relative to a WB – 1, 7, 8, 11, 12.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant took the Class 3 Water exam in North Dakota, which require a 70% passing score in all associated subclasses. Please see the PDF attachment entitled “Irvine_Operator_Certification_Information” for details on the associated North Dakota test content area. For a comparison of applicable Pennsylvania exams, please see the final attachment to this packet.

The Department’s recommendation: The Board should please review the examination information provided and vote on whether Mr. Irvine has documented that he has passed a comparable examination in the State of North Dakota.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Mr. Irvine’s WB – 1, 7, 8, 11, 12 license. Mr. Bickel seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Haitham Khalil – Holds an Arizona Grade 1 Water Treatment Plant Operator license that was issued to him on November 21, 2019 and expires on November 30, 2022. His application documents no operating experience, which Ms. Chambers confirmed via a phone call on January 21, 2021. **Therefore, the Department’s determination is that Mr. Khalil has not documented the adequate experience relative to a Pennsylvania Water Operator Certificate.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed water exams developed by ABC and administered in Arizona.

The Department’s recommendation: Due to the fact that the applicant has no operating experience, the Department’s determination is that he does not meet minimum requirements for reciprocity.

Chairperson Roland motioned to deny Mr. Khalil’s license per the Department’s recommendation due to lack of experience. Mr. Swanderski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Wayne Buller – Holds a New Jersey T2 Water Treatment license and a New Jersey W2 Water Distribution license, both of which expire on September 30, 2021. New Jersey staff have not responded to provide required information for the Department to complete their review.

****Ms. Chambers originally requested the completed verification form on December 22, 2020 via email to Trish Conti (Bureau Chief for New Jersey Operator Certification). Ms. Conti responded via email on January 4, 2021 stating that her staff had been on vacation but would complete and return the form ASAP. After giving it a couple weeks, Ms. Chambers sent a follow-up email on January 19, 2021 to Trish and her staff telling them we had yet to receive the forms. To date, no response has been received.***

*The Department's recommendation: Due to the fact that New Jersey has not responded with a completed verification form after *multiple attempts to obtain the information, the Department's determination is that reciprocity for the applicant cannot be issued at this time.*

Board Secretary Report

Ms. Chambers noted that the Department received a downgrade application for Julio Pazmino. Mr. Chescattie provided a summary of a conversation he had with Julio Pazmino's father regarding the circumstances surrounding the downgrade application. The Board reviewed the downgrade request application which provided significant details related to this request and situation. After some discussion, Chairman Roland motioned to approve Mr. Pazmino's downgrade request to D,E – 1, 2, 3, 4. Mr. Swanderski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old and New Business

Ms. Chambers announced that an alternate designee to Mary Roland for the Small Water Systems Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) needs to be appointed. Chairperson Roland, Mr. Chescattie and Mr. Allgyer provided some additional details on what this position would entail. Joel Jordan noted that he is an alternate on the TAC Board for PRWA and clarified that TAC bylaws have recently been updated, and its scope has been expanded to include all regulated drinking water systems. Mr. Smith and Mr. Bickel both expressed interest to be Chairperson Roland's alternate on the TAC board.

Ms. Chambers agreed to send out individual emails to all Board members to request their vote on nominations within a reasonable timeframe following the meeting.

Mr. Chescattie provided an update on prioritization of vaccines for operators, which was discussed at the previous Board meeting. Chairperson Roland drafted a letter to Dr. Rachel Levine, which was reviewed and approved by the Board members and Mr. Cantwell as legal counsel. Ms. Chambers sent the letter to Dr. Levine via US mail and email, and Mr. Chescattie put together an associated briefing for Secretary McDonnell.

Comments from the Public

Joel Jordan said that the PRWA training program is going well, numbers are high for training registrations, and PRWA has gotten a lot of positive feedback regarding all the virtual training.

The Board went into executive session at 11:18am to discuss extension requests.

The Board came out of executive session at 12:04pm.

Criminal History Report

No CHRs were received for this meeting.

Extension Requests

Operator ID 287644 – Has a wastewater license which expired on September 30, 2020. This individual's extension request documents extreme extenuating circumstances due to the pandemic.

Operator ID 308782 – Has a wastewater license which expired on December 31, 2020. This individual's extension request documents extreme extenuating circumstances.

Operator ID 321772 – Has a wastewater license which expired on December 31, 2020. This individual's extension request documents extenuating medical circumstances; and, requests an extension to January 27, 2021.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the extension for Operator 287644 through February 28, 2021. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion. Motion carried with four Board members in agreement, Mr. Swanderski, Mr. Bickel, and Mr. Chescattie were in opposition.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the extension for Operator 308782 through February 28, 2021. Mr. Swanderski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the extension for Operator 321772 through January 27, 2021. Mr. Chescattie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Swanderski motioned to adjourn the meeting. Chairperson Roland seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12:08pm.