

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

Board Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2023

Room 105 / Teams Call

Board Members Present

Mary Roland, Board Chairperson, Certified Water Operator
Mike Kyle, Lancaster Area Sewer Authority, Employee of a Political Subdivision
Autumn Crawford, Western Butler County Authority, Certified Wastewater Operator (via Teams)
Jeff Bickel, Aqua PA, Inc., Official of Private System
Ed Chescattie, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water (BSDW), DEP Secretary Designee

Non-Board Members Present

Laura Chambers, Board Secretary
John Cantwell, Legal Counsel to the Board
Jeff Allgyer, BSDW
Lori Weaver, BSDW
Bill King, BSDW
Shalini Moola, BSDW
Mahendra Patel, BSDW
Jeffrey Schultz, BSDW
Victor Landis, Bureau of Clean Water
Andrew Hall, Bureau of Clean Water (via Teams)
Bill McNamara, BSDW
Derik Dressler, BSDW
Selina Prettnner, BSDW
Doug Macik, BSDW
Brian Chalfant, Policy Office (via Teams)
Leda Lacomba, BRC (via Teams)

Public Present

No members of the public were present or called in for this meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 10:01am.

Approval of August 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Mike Kyle motioned to approve the August 9, 2023 meeting minutes including the minor edits provided. Chairperson Roland seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New and Upgrade Applications

Ms. Chambers presented the following new and upgraded licenses for Board consideration:

- 85 new water licenses
- 55 upgraded water licenses
- 90 new wastewater licenses
- 45 upgraded wastewater licenses
- 15 Operator in Training (OIT) upgrades

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve all the new and upgraded license applications. Jeff Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chambers pointed out that this is a total of 290 licenses processed, which is either a record high number for one Board meeting or very close to a record high number. She recognized the hard work of Shalini Moola in having a lead role in processing these applications for the Board to consider.

Downgrade Requests

Donald Zimmerman, Operator 374445 – requested a downgrade from a WWC-1 and WWE4 to a WWD-1 and WWE4.

Lowell Ebersole, Operator 374456 – requested a downgrade from a WWC-1 and WWE4 to a WWD-1 and WWE4.

Ms. Chambers verified that both individuals are at the beginning of a new three year cycle and are only employed at WWD systems.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the downgrade requests for Operators 374445 and 374456. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Reciprocity Requests

Water

Thomas Smitley II – Holds a Florida Class B Drinking Water Treatment License that was issued on November 13, 2019 and expires on April 30, 2025. His application documents the following confirmed experience: a total of 1 year of experience working at Tampa Bay Public Water System, which is a Class A system using subclasses 1,2,4,8,14; a total of 1 year, 3 months' experience working at City of Inverness, which is a Class B system using subclasses 7,8,10,12.

Mr. Smitley's confirmed experience was obtained at Class A and B facilities and an operator is required to have a minimum of 2 years of experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class C license. **Therefore, the Department's determination for Board consideration is that Mr. Smitley has documented the adequate experience relative to a WC-1,2,7,8,10,12.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed water exams that were developed and administered by the state of Florida.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Mr. Smitley's WC-1,2,7,8,10,12 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Wastewater

Thomas Smitley II – Holds a Florida Class B Wastewater Treatment License that was issued on July 3, 2019 and expires on April 30, 2025. His application documents the following confirmed experience: a total of 3 years, 4 months' experience working at City of Inverness, which is a Class B system using subclass 1 and Collections.

Mr. Smitley's confirmed experience was obtained at a Class B facility and an operator is required to have a minimum of 3 years of experience in order to obtain a Pennsylvania Class B license. **Therefore, the Department's determination for Board consideration is that Mr. Smitley has documented the adequate experience relative to a WWB-1 and WWE4.**

Regarding the comparison of examination questions, the applicant passed wastewater exams that were developed and administered in the state of Florida. (Ms. Chambers confirmed via email on October 6, 2023 from Florida Operator Certification staff that the Wastewater B exam that Mr. Smitley took does contain questions on activated sludge.)

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Mr. Smitley's WWB-1 and WWE4 certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Secretary Report

Ms. Chambers provided the following summary regarding exams for 2023 (as of 10/6/23):

- Number of exam **sessions held** thus far in 2023: **58** (as compared to 45 last year at this time)
- Number of exam **seats offered** thus far in 2023: **1,869** (as compared to 1,555 last year at this time)
- Number of exam **seats filled** thus far in 2023: **1,377** (as compared to 1,136 last year at this time)
 - Currently, the percentage of seats filled versus seats offered is approximately 74%.
- Number of additional exam sessions tentatively scheduled for remainder of 2023: **12**
- Number of additional exam seats tentatively offered for remainder of 2023: **76**
 - Total number of computer exams for 2023: **41**
 - Total number of paper exams for 2023: **29**
 - Total number of exams for 2023: **70**

Old and New Business

There were no items discussed under Old and New Business.

The Board went into Executive Session at 10:42am to review sensitive information, extension requests, new criminal history reports, etc.

The Board reconvened for public session at 11:59am.

Criminal History Report

Criminal History Review Evaluations were conducted for the below applicants. It has been confirmed that charges were not related to the operation of a drinking water or wastewater treatment system. Therefore, the preliminary review committee recommended the below applicants for presentation and approval at the October 11, 2023, Board Meeting:

1. Operator 377755: WD,E – 13 certification
2. Operator 369973: WB – 1,7,8,10 certification
3. Operator 376550: WWE4 – OIT certification
4. Operator 377791: WA,E – 11,12 certification
5. Operator 378407: WWE4 certification

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve 377755 WD,E – 13 certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 369973 WB – 1,7,8,10 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 376550 WWE4 – OIT certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 377791 WA,E – 11,12 certification. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve Operator 378407 WWE4 certification. Mr. Kyle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Extension Requests

Water Operator 197169 – Has a drinking water license that expired on September 30, 2023. The applicant was required to obtain 30 hours of continuing education training for their drinking water certification and as of September 30, 2023 had only obtained 14 hours. The application claims medical reasons for not being able to obtain all required training hours and is accompanied by a doctor's note. The applicant is requesting an additional six months to complete the additional 16 required continuing education hours.

Water Operator 335704 – Has a drinking water license that expired on June 30, 2023. The applicant was required to obtain 30 hours of continuing education training for their drinking water certification and as of June 30, 2023 had only obtained 27 hours. The application claims extreme extenuating circumstances regarding a tragic event in the operator’s life. The applicant completed an additional six hours of DEP-approved training on September 14, 2023, which brings their total number of training hours up to 33. The applicant is requesting through September 14, 2023 to complete the additional training hours.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the extension for Operator 197169 through March 31, 2024. Mr. Bickel seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve the extension for Operator 335704 through September 15, 2023. Mr. Kyle seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Applications for Board Consideration:

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve WE certification for Client 377187. Mr. Bickel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland motioned to approve WWD-1 certification for Client 378511. Ms. Crawford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Roland reminded Board Members that the December 6, 2023 Board meeting will be held virtually via Teams.

Mr. Chescattie motioned to adjourn. Several other Board Members seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12:04pm.