



**STATE BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION
OF SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
DRAFT MINUTES April 20, 2022**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Samuel D’Alessandro (telephone).....Board Chair
Gordon Sheetz (telephone) Board Vice-Chair
John Seamans (telephone)..... Board Member
John Wagman (telephone) Board Member
Luke Helsel (telephone)..... Board Member

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP) STAFF PRESENT

John Cantwell (telephone) Board Legal Counsel, DEP
Brian Chalfant DEP, Policy Office
Adam Duh (telephone).....Counsel, DEP
Brian Schlauderaff.....DEP, BCW
Janice VolleroDEP, BCW
Charles Klinger.....DEP, BCW
Brett Steers.....DEP, BCW
Rachael White DEP, BCW
Chloe Wilson.....DEP, BCW

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chair Samuel D’Alessandro at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held through Microsoft® Teams online, as well as in-person, in the 12th floor conference room of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, at 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA. A quorum was present.

Chair D’Alessandro requested consideration of the November 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Janice Vollero suggested a correction be made to the noted committee, which was previously identified as “Sewage Advisory Committee (SAC)” and amended to reference the appropriate board.

Motion: Vice-Chair Gordon Sheetz motioned to approve the minutes subject to the proposed revision, with John Seamans seconding the motion. It was unanimously approved by the Board. Motion carried.

SEO BOARD POSITIONS UPDATE

Chair D'Alessandro asked Ms. Vollero to apprise attendees on which board positions were due to expire or have expired. Ms. Vollero noted the following board member term appointment and expiration dates:

- Mr. Helsel was approved as a board member shortly after the November 2021 meeting, with a term expiration date of November 11th, 2025.
- Chair D'Alessandro's term expired on March 11th, 2022. He serves as a representative of the Sewage Advisory Committee (SAC). The March 2022 SAC meeting was canceled; therefore, no SAC nominee to the Board was obtained. Chair D'Alessandro will continue in his present position until the next SAC meeting when approval for his reappointment can be obtained.
- Mr. Seamans' term on the board is set to expire in September 2022. Mr. Seamans stated his intention to retire, effective at the conclusion of the meeting. Board members thanked Mr. Seamans for 25 years of service. Chair D'Alessandro advised, per the clarification from Ms. Vollero, that should any board members have a nominee who could serve as an engineering representative, they could provide this information to her to fill Mr. Seamans' position once vacant.

SEO BOARD VOTE FOR 2022 OFFICERS

Chair D'Alessandro called for a discussion regarding officers for 2022, with Ms. Vollero advising that a nomination for Secretary was also necessary. Rachael White announced the appointment of a new employee, Chloe Wilson, filling the vacant position previously occupied by the former Board Secretary, Amy Forney.

Motion: Mr. Seamans motioned for Chair D'Alessandro and Vice-Chair Sheetz to continue in their current positions, and to approve Ms. Wilson as the new Board Secretary. John Wagman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

CERTIFICATION OF SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS (SEOs)

Ms. Vollero reported that, of the 4 candidates that took the exam, 2 passed and 2 failed; she noted that the 2 who had failed had previously taken the exam. Concern was expressed for one candidate who had failed the exam numerous times and what measures could be taken or resources provided that could help the individual improve their score.

Motion: Mr. Helsel motioned to certify the 2 candidates who had passed the exam. Vice-Chair Sheetz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

2022 DATES FOR SOILS PRECERTIFICATION DATES

Ms. Vollero provided the following information for course dates:

- May 4th and 5th – Shippensburg University
- June 8th and 9th – Bloomsburg University

- August 2nd and 3rd – Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- August 9th and 10th – undecided location in eastern PA

A fifth course was also added, expected to be conducted on May 18th and 19th, that will not be open to the public and was made at the request of the Montgomery Department of Health. Mr. Seamans wanted to know if this course was mandatory and equips students with required updates integral to suitable training; Ms. Vollero confirmed this to be accurate, with current SEOs earning 15 credits upon successful completion. Students could register for the course through the Clean Water Academy.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Helsel mentioned the struggles SEOs encountered with planning and other administrative items, and if this warrants scrutiny in terms of how testing is conducted. Chair D'Alessandro questioned if the problems were specific to the individual or if they were due to departmental issues in certain regions; he did not feel it would be profitable to alter the test to curtail difficulties, especially if the root cause was a fundamental lack of understanding. He suggested it might be more beneficial to modify their training and instruction; Mr. Helsel agreed with these sentiments. Vice-Chair Sheetz added that the planning section of the Academy proved difficult for some SEOs, many of whom come from technical backgrounds and have not yet had the experience required to excel in this section.

Brian Schlauderaff shared that the Academy has made changes to instructional materials in the past so that students would be adequately prepared for the exam but emphasized that currently, the planning section, while challenging, has 10 questions and that students only had to score a 50% to pass. He confirmed that the Bureau of Clean Water (BCW) is amenable to adjusting the exam should the Board make that determination but was also unsure if there would be an appreciable effect on outcomes. He stated that BCW does make improvements to training, as well as the exam, should the need arise or as issues present themselves but was hesitant to make changes to the benefit of candidates who would normally face elimination because they did not fully comprehend instructional materials. Vice-Chair Sheetz agreed; he felt the instructor responsible for the planning section was well-qualified and presenting this information in a way that was appropriate.

Mr. Seamans was concerned about complaints regarding the operation of regional offices relevant to returns on planning modules or requests for planning exemptions. Mr. Schlauderaff advised Mr. Seamans that he could contact him directly so that he could research this further.

NEXT MEETING

The next SEO Board meeting is scheduled for September 7th, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair D'Alessandro called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Vice-Chair Sheetz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wagman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.