

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF OPERATORS
OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

MEETING MINUTES FOR
FEBRUARY 4, 2004

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rick Dionne, Julia Forgue, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock and Tom White

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Greg Schultz and Traci Lima, DEM
Steve Carson and Mike Madden, Synagro

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

The first order of business was the draft January 7, 2004 meeting minutes.

After Board review, Mr. White motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Patenaude seconded the motion. Mr. Schock abstained, as he was not present at the meeting. All other members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next item discussed was Board membership status. Messers. Dionne and White will verify their reappointment status with their respective agencies that they represent and will submit a letter to Deborah Smith, Director of Appointments at the State House.

The next item discussed was the continuation of the five applicants for reciprocity from the Town of Warren/Woodard and Curran. Mr. Patenaude offered a recap of the situation. There are five individuals who are employed by Woodard & Curran, but are not full-time employees at the Warren wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Patenaude had reservations with licensing these individuals; in general he asked if the Board license operators who many only be working one shift per week? He suggested a registering process be implemented whereby operators would need to be licensed in other states, granted reciprocity in Rhode Island and register with the Board that they will be working at a specified plant in Rhode Island for a specified amount of time. Mr. Patenaude also stated that he would like to get comments from the wastewater community. Ms. Forgue stated that an operator out for an extended period of time (for illness, etc.) would be a different circumstance than just a part-time use of an operator. Mr. Schock noted that the facility should be staffed according to the DEM's O&M staffing plan. Mr. White thought that the operators should at least be registered in case there are enforcement issues that may come to light, so that the Board can act to remove the ability of an operator if need be. Mr. Kurdziel questioned if this policy would be lowering the bar from what we expect from operators and would the policy be limited to neighboring states. Mr. Patenaude noted that as long as the license is reciprocal any operator would be considered for the registration process. Attorney Schultz said that technically registration of operators was not allowed under the current Rules & Regulations. He suggested revising the Rules & Regulations to include the registration process. He also suggested sending a letter to the wastewater community in the mean time alerting the facilities of this possible change until a policy is enforced.

Mr. Schock made a motion to prepare a draft amendment to the Rules and Regulations for Wastewater Treatment Facility Operators to provide part-time wastewater operators with a valid out-of-state license to be registered with the Board to work at a Rhode Island facility. The policy would be applied to a specific facility and a specific time frame. Also the chair of the Board would send a letter to the facilities alerting them of the impending change in policy. Mr. White seconded the motion. All other members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

Attorney Schultz left the meeting.

Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-5(a), Mr. Patenaude requested that the Board convene in executive session to discuss the Synagro spill investigation and an issue at the West Warwick wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Patenaude led a role call of votes to convene into Executive Session: Mr. White, Mr. Kurdziel, Mr. Dionne, Ms. Forge and Mr. Schock all voted in favor.

The meeting then adjourned into executive session, with Messers. Carson and Madden present.

After completing the specific business in closed session, the meeting reopened into open session with Mr. Patenaude making a motion to send a letter of reprimand to Mr. John Murphy of Synagro stating he had not acted “in good standing” as a result of an incident in June, 2003 at the Synagro Facility. Ms. Forge seconded the motion. All other members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

The other motion taken by the Board, made by Mr. Patenaude was to take no further action at this time regarding an incident involving failure to report daily permit violations by the Town of West Warwick, but to keep the incident on record. Mr. Dionne seconded the motion. All other Board members present voted in favor and the motion passed.

The final motion made by Mr. Patenaude was to seal the February 4, 2004 Executive Session meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. White. With all members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

The next agenda item discussed was new business. As Mr. Schock was not present at the previous meeting to discuss ABC membership; he wanted to discuss that perhaps the Board should hear from them and we should request a presentation. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that he would be happy to send a letter to ABC inviting them to a Board meeting to hear about their organization. Also in new business was an update from Mr. Patenaude regarding Governor Carcieri’s Fiscal Fitness Program. Some recommendations could affect the Board as to how licenses are handled and perhaps all licenses would be consolidated.

Also an issue was raised at a recent superintendents meeting concerning testing fees. Some had concerns about operators taking the morning off for the exams, leaving the plant and not studying for exams. Some suggested increasing the price for examination.

With no further business, Mr. Patenaude voted to adjourn the February 4, 2004 meeting, seconded by Mr. Dionne. All other members voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 3, 2004 at 9:30 a.m. in conference room 280C in the Office of Water Resources on the second floor of the Department of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade St., Providence.