

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
Board of Certification of Operators
Of Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Meeting minutes June 1, 2005

MEMBERS in ATTENDANCE: Rick Dionne, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock, and Tom White

OTHERS in ATTENDANCE: Roger Boltrushek, Robert Blanchard, Woonsocket WWTF
David Gaipo, Brent Herring, Aquarion Water
Paul Nordstrom, NBC
Greg Schultz, DEM Legal
Tara Wiekem and Kevin Venditulli, DEM Legal Intern

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. The first item on the agenda was exam application reviews.

Mr. Patenaude briefed the Board on an application from a Mr. Robert Blanchard for Grade 4 examination. The application noted that Mr. Blanchard was the Assistant Superintendent at the Woonsocket WWTF since August 2004. The application was the first notification to the Board of Mr. Blanchard's position of Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Patenaude noted that Mr. Blanchard met the qualifications of Grade 4 licensure, and that had the City of Woonsocket come before the Board as it should have in August, the Board would have issued a Provisional Grade 4 license with approval to take the examination. Woonsocket Superintendent Mr. Boltrushek explained the hiring procedure, and the reasons for posting Mr. Blanchard in the position of Assistant Superintendent.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to issue a Grade 4 Provisional license to Mr. Blanchard retroactively, and allow him to sit for the Grade 4 exam, which he must pass in order to maintain his position of Assistant Superintendent. Mr. White seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next application was from Mr. Brent Herring, currently employed by Aquarion Services, working at the Bridgeport, CT WWTF, who was seeking Grade 4 reciprocity to become the Superintendent of the NBC-Bucklin Point WWTF. Mr. Patenaude explained that Mr. Herring meets the certification requirements for reciprocity, as he maintains a Grade 4 license in Arizona, which is that state's highest license. The Arizona license was achieved via examination. Mr. Herring's experience appears to be acceptable for licensure, but Mr. Patenaude would need to check with previous employers to confirm the submitted information. Rule 13(F)(2), subsections (a) through (c), require certain criteria for Grade 4 licensure via reciprocity. Mr. Herring meets (a) and (c), but not (b), which requires the applicant have used his or her equivalent license from another state within one year of application. Mr. Schock noted that the intent was to insure the applicant was working in operations at a recent time to the application. Mr. Patenaude noted that Mr. Herring had been working in the WWTF field since 1974, and was working as a manager of superintendents at the Bridgeport, CT, WWTF, and as such he met the intent of the regulations with respect to recent WWTF experience. Mr. Patenaude further explained that any approval by the Board would be contingent on two factors: (1) Verification of Mr. Herring's experience as stated in his application, and that, (2) The NBC will inform the Board in writing that this candidate will, in fact, be offered the position.

Mr. Schock motioned to issue a Grade 4 license to Mr. Herring pending confirmation of past employment and confirmation of NBC's intent to allow him to hold the Superintendent's position. Mr. White seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Patenaude noted that applications were submitted from the Town of Smithfield, but that they could not be reviewed until the town submitted an updated staffing plan.

Mr. Patenaude also noted that an application for Grade 3 examination from Mr. Scott Wilson of the City of Cranston appeared to meet minimum requirements, but that a check on his position within the Cranston WWTF would be made before approval was officially granted.

The next order of business was the review of the May, 2005 minutes. A number of minor were proposed.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the CLOSED minutes as amended. Mr. White seconded the motion. Messrs. White, Kurdziel, Patenaude and Schock voted in favor, with Messrs. Dionne and Wright abstained, as they were not present at the May meeting. With 4 of the 6 members voting in the affirmative, the motion passed.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the OPEN minutes as amended. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. Messrs. White, Kurdziel, Patenaude and Schock voted in favor, with Messrs. Dionne and Wright abstained, as they were not present at the May meeting. With 4 of the 6 members voting in the affirmative, the motion passed.

The next order of business was the matters of Enforcement Action Updates.

In accordance with § 42-46-5(a)(4), which allows the Board to adjourn into executive session to discuss matters of possible criminal or civil offenses, Mr. Patenaude motioned to close the open session and so adjourn into executive session. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. Messrs. Dionne, White, Wright, Kurdziel, Schock and Patenaude voted affirmative to adjourn into executive session in a subsequent roll call.

Mr. Schock motioned to re-open the session into open meeting. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. Messrs. White, Kurdziel, Schock and Patenaude voted affirmative to re-open the meeting into open session in a subsequent roll call.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to seal the executive minutes of the executive session. Mr. Schock seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the motion passed.

Once in open session, Mr. Patenaude noted that at least two superintendents had allowed operators to work at their facilities without achieving the proper license, even though the individuals all met the requirements for licensure. The Board instructed Mr. Patenaude to send a certified letter to all facilities reminding the superintendents of their responsibilities, and noting that failure to ensure that all operators are certified in accordance with state law will result in enforcement action, beginning with a letter of reprimand.

The next item was the issue of Mandatory Retraining for Renewal. Mr. Patenaude briefed the Board that he had met with Acting DEM Director Michael Sullivan, and that the Acting Director had instructed him to provide an overview of the issue, as such required training was an activity that the Acting Director felt should be considered.

With no further business, Mr. Schock motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 13th at 9:30 AM in Room 280 of the DEM Office of Water Resources, 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI.