

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

MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2005

MEMBERS in ATTENDANCE: Rick Dionne, Julia Forgue, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock and Ray Wright

OTHERS in ATTENDANCE: Traci Pena, RIDEM
David Gaipo, Westerly WWTF
Dan Gorka and Scott Wilson, Cranston WPCF

Mr. Patenaude called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

The first item discussed was the draft December 1, 2004 open meeting minutes.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Patenaude seconded the motion. With all other members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

The next item discussed was the draft December 1, 2004 closed meeting minutes.

Mr. Schock motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Dionne seconded the motion. With all other members present voting in favor, the motion passed.

The next item discussed were the Fall 2004 Exam Results. The results were consistent with previous exams in that there were numerous examinees who did not pass. Mr. Patenaude had the Department of Administration (DOA) provide an "item analysis" for a better understanding of how examinees answered individual examination questions. Mr. Patenaude also noted that in exam reviews, examinees often comment that they do not study or knew the answer but did not answer correctly. Mr. Patenaude is looking for Board members to review the exam item analysis to see if some questions could be worded better or omitted. Mr. Wright offered his services. He would also like to see how many times people have taken the exam. Mr. Patenaude said he would talk to DOA to see about adding a questions on the exam scannable sheets as to how many times examinees have taken an exam. With the Board's discussion complete, Mr. Gaipo had commented that perhaps there was difficulty with the math sections of the exams, and the Board might want to look into this. Mr. Gorka suggested that his facility could prepare a syllabus that the Board could review and offer to put together some time of math tutorial. Mr. Patenaude would also check with New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission to see if there were any courses or assistance they could provide.

The next item discussed was the November 2004 Wastewater Operator I Course. It came to the Board's attention that a number of procedures used in the administration of the course differ from what is understood to be in place by the Board. One such procedure was the administration of the mid-term exam, and the number of times a student may take it. Mr. Patenaude reported that he would be talking to Doug Nettleton, the instructor of the course, on this and other issues, such as course promotion.

The next item discussed was an update on the Freedom Bay Classification. Sometime in the next couple of weeks Mr. Patenaude and Mr. White will be taking a tour of a similar facility in Old Lyme, CT similar to the one proposed by Freedom Bay. Currently, Mr. Patenaude is trying to confirm a time.

Once the tour is confirmed Messers. White and Patenaude will meet with Freedom Bay representative and report back to the Board.

The next item on the agenda was the Assistant Superintendent Position for the City of Warwick. With the retirement of Mr. Donald Benz, the Board sought from the City a new organization scheme to indicate that Mr. Salisbury was not working as the Assistant Superintendent until he received the necessary experience to attain the required license level for the assistant superintendent's position. The Board was waiting for a letter from the City stating that Mr. Doyle would act as the Assistant Superintendent in Mr. Burke's absence. Mr. Patenaude received this letter and noted that the city would most likely come back to the Board once Mr. Salisbury received his bachelor's degree.

The next item discussed was the staffing at the Cranston WPCF. Mr. Gorka wanted to address the need for an Assistant Superintendent and the additional position as Assistant Project Manager. According to a letter submitted by Mr. Gorka, the Project Manager of Veolia Water, Mr. Scott Wilson was hired as acting "Assistant Project Manger," which is not intended to be the Assistant Superintendent. This position will oversee and coordinate Maintenance and Collection in support of Operations. Mr. Wilson currently holds a 2 OIT license. Mr. Gorka noted that with two major projects underway at Cranston (nutrient removal and incinerator improvements) and with SOPs that need to be upgrade feels as though the 2 positions are needed. Mr. Gorka noted that Mr. Wilson would be working exclusively at Cranston. Mr. Schock and Mr. Patenaude had concerns of whether the position was that of a Shift Supervisor or an Operations Supervisor, which according to the Board's definition include duties, which are done after the individual leaves the plant. Mr. Gorka offered that Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Heroux-Yattaw would be working together. Mr. Patenaude expressed great concern in the proposed organizational plan for the city, and noted that he Board would need more information (i.e., detailed job duty descriptions) to make a decision.

Messers Gorka and Wilson then left the meeting.

The next item discussed was an update on Mandatory Retraining. Mr. Patenaude stated that it seemed likely that legislation will again be introduced this year. He is awaiting a meeting with NWPCA, and he hoped some type of resolution could be reached where both parties would be pleased. Mr. Patenaude would like to introduce certain language that would facilitate the issue. Mr. Dionne stated that most operators that he has spoken to are not in favor of mandatory retraining. Mr. Schock said that he would rather work together with NWPCA before it went to subcommittee. The members who were present agreed.

In new business were member reappointments. Mr. Patenaude contacted the Governor's Office to get an update on the notices; they told him that letters for reappointment should be going out soon.

With no further business, Mr. Patenaude motioned to adjourn the January 5, 2005 meeting. Mr. Kurdziel seconded the motion. With all members present voting in favor the motion passed.

The next meeting will be February 2, 2004 at 9:30 a.m. at 235 Promenade St., Room 280 in Providence.