

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

MINUTES OF 3 JANUARY 2001 MEETING

In Attendance: Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude, Jon Schock, Tom White and Ray Wright

Absent: Adel Banoub

Also in Attendance: Traci Lima, DEM

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

The first order of business was the review of the minutes of the December 2000 meeting.

Mr. Schock motioned to accept the minutes. Seconded by Mr. White, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.

The next order of business was the election of officers. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that all Board members had returned their ballots. The vote tally was: 5 in favor of Bill Patenaude, 1 in favor for Tom White and 1 in favor for Jon Schock for Chairman. There was 4 in favor for Bill Patenaude, 1 in favor for Fred Kurdziel, 1 in favor of Tom White and 1 in favor for Jon Schock for Secretary. Mr. Patenaude noted that he was comfortable with the resulting duties of Chair and Secretary, as all of the administration of the Board's work is currently located at and provided by DEM. The original ballots were distributed for review. Mr. Wright commented that he thought the mail-in process for voting was a good way to vote.

Discussion was raised on Adel Banoub's verbal resignation from the Board. Mr. Schock noted that it would be beneficial to appoint a new member soon to prevent any potential quorum issues. Mr. Patenaude noted that Mr. Banoub's desire to resign would need to come in writing so that the League of Cities and Towns could appoint a new member. To that end he would contact Mr. Banoub as to the status of the written resignation. Mr. Patenaude also asked if the Board should provide any guidance to the League of Cities and Towns regarding the appointment; the Board felt that the League would not need such input.

The next order of business was the matter of Mandatory Retraining for Renewal. Mr. White informed the Board that to this date no input has been given from the Narragansett Water Pollution Control Association. Mr. Patenaude expressed concern that with the resignation of Mr. Banoub (who originally raised the issue in 2000) and with no input from the Association, there was no sponsor for the MRR initiative.

Mr. Patenaude motioned to suspend discussion and remove the matter of the Mandatory Retraining for Renewal from the agenda until a formal request and guidance is provided by either the Narragansett Water Pollution Control Association or some other sponsor. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kurdziel. With all members voting in favor, the motion passed.

The next order of business was the matter of the status of the recently approved Messrs. Niles and Soper for Grade 4 reciprocity. Mr. Patenaude noted that with the City of Newport entering into agreement with Earth Tech, Inc. (to begin February 1, 2001), Messrs. Soper and Niles would become Grade 4 operators should they be so employed as superintendent and assistant superintendent, per a December 21, 2000 letter from Newport's Michael A. Martin.

The next item on the agenda was new business.

Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that he had been faxed the Community College of Rhode Island Grade 1 exam results. He noted that most did well. Two individuals who failed had also failed to become licensed within the required one year of employment. A letter was sent to NETCO, the employer of said individuals, noting the company of the issue and requiring immediate compliance with the Board's regulations and state law.

Mr. Wright asked if there was tracking system for courses and exams that the operators enroll. He wanted to know if there is a way that the Board monitors this information. Mr. Patenaude noted that the DEM uses Microsoft's Access®, which is capable of meeting all current and potential future tracking needs. Mr. Wright wanted to know if the Board was ever interested in monitoring operators who would be interested in going for advanced grades, and if there were educational tools for such advancement. Messrs. White and Schock mentioned that some operators were pro-active about increasing their grade, but many are reluctant unless there is a driving force to upgrade such as a promotion. Mr. White also mentioned that perhaps the phrase "Direct Responsible Charge" may be intimidating to some. Mr. Patenaude said certain criteria needs to be met for advancement and more people than ever are now taking the Grade 3 exam because of updates to the on-going regulations.

With regards to proactive tracking of operator ability to improve their licensure, Mr. Patenaude noted that information is give to us by the superintendents regarding new hires and change of status of operators; if this information is not given to us we can not track it. This is why the regulations require such notification by superintendents in its regulations. No further discussion developed.

Mr. White asked about the matter of Scott Duerr of Westerly. Mr. Patenaude informed the Board that the Town of Westerly notified in writing that Mr. Duerr was the superintendent of their facility. As such a Grade 3 OIT license was issued.

The next meeting was scheduled for 9:30am on Wednesday, February 7, 2001 in conference room **B** of the Director's office of the Department of Environmental Management, 235 Promenade St., Providence.