

LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809



REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Tuesday, July 13, 2021, 1:00 P.M.

Physical meeting at

Louisiana Engineering Center

9643 Brookline Avenue

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

and

Virtual Public Meeting Hosted on Zoom

MINUTES

Chair William Finley called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m., Tuesday, July 13, 2021, and commenced roll call.

Present: William Finley (virtual), William Schramm, Melanie Stiegler (virtual), Lloyd Hoover (virtual), Elizabeth McDade (virtual), and David Williamson, Board Members; Mabelle Hall, Legal Counsel; Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary; Mallory Pilié, Project Coordinator.

Absent: Todd Perry, Board Member; Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary.

Guest: Matthew Blasini, GIT.

Quorum was established. Roll Call and Visitor Sign-in are documented on paper and as part of the meeting registration record on Zoom.

Public Comment Period

No comments were forthcoming.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the May 13, 2021, meeting were reviewed. Schramm moved to accept the minutes; Williamson seconded the motion. Finley called for a vote, and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Schramm presented the treasurer's report for May and June 2021. In the Campus Federal Credit Union checking account, for May, deposits were \$6,542.61, and debits were \$11,369.66, for a total ending balance of \$65,613.49; in June, the Campus Federal Credit Union checking account deposits were \$21,400.74, and debits were \$72,018.78, for a total ending balance of \$14,995.45. The total in the Campus Federal savings account at the end of June was \$40,676.38. The total in the Capital One savings account at the end of May was \$161,708.77, and in June, the ending balance in Capital One savings was \$225,113.80. The total in all accounts in May was \$277,995.24, and at the end of June, the total was \$280,785.63. He

explained that the unusual fluctuation in debits and credits in the accounts was created by implementing the board's mandate from the May meeting to move enough money into the Capital One savings account to bring the total to at least \$225,000. He pointed out that, in June, funds were also moved from the Campus Federal savings account to the Campus Federal checking account to ensure that the balance in the checking account was sufficient to maintain board operations. He then focused attention on the graph accompanying the report, pointing out, once again, that the important takeaway from the graph is the upward trends in revenue and total income.

Schramm then reminded board members that the fiscal year 2021-2022 budget was approved at the May meeting. This budget, with actual end-of-fiscal-year transactions, was included in the board members' packets. He pointed out that, while revenue from renewals was slightly lower than originally budgeted in the previous fiscal year, income from new license fees was slightly higher, offsetting the difference. He then explained that adding a new employee prior to the end of the fiscal year increased expenses in salaries slightly, but he noted that board expenses were still under the amount budgeted for the year. Once again, he cautioned that expenses will most likely increase as pandemic restrictions are eased, so the board should be prepared. Williamson moved to accept the treasurer's report; Stiegler seconded the motion. Finley called for a vote; the motion passed.

Finley asked about the report on licensing activity that was included in the meeting packets. Macon reported that renewals are on target overall for the first six months of 2021, and new applications have increased significantly over previous years. Already, 28 new licenses have been approved during the period January through May, and 11 more are recommended for approval for July. She also reported that, as of July 12, 2021, 181 licenses have lapsed beyond three years.

Standing Committees

Application Review Committee: Stiegler reported that 11 applications for license had been reviewed. All, numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 were recommended for approval. She reported that nine applications to take ASBOG exams in October 2021 were reviewed, and all, numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, were recommended for approval. She moved to approve these applications; Williamson seconded the motion. Finley called for a vote; the motion passed.

In preparation for discussing the recent question from Blasini ("Do some types of undergraduate research count at all toward the five-year work experience requirement for both taking the ASBOG Practice of Geology exam and applying for full license?"), Project Coordinator Mallory Pilié addressed the board, presenting materials from two different undergraduate research experiences. She recommended that the board consider allowing up to one year of work experience credit for undergraduate research done outside of courses and university credit. She also suggested the board evaluate undergraduate research activities based on specific criteria and clearly identify the types of research that will qualify. She cited her own experience as a student who was paid to perform research activities during university breaks. She explained that she was part of a team that included professionals from outside the university. After her presentation, she and board members discussed what criteria could be used and whether such research is simply part of one's undergraduate education or whether a distinction can be made between work performed for academic credit and work done independent of such credit. Finley asked Pilié to work with board members Stiegler and Williamson to further explore this issue.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reminded board members that the next ASBOG exam will be administered on October 1, 2021, and that, as of this meeting, six candidates will be sitting for the Fundamentals of Geology exam only, two will be taking the Practice of Geology exam only, and seven will be taking both exams.

He then asked the board if it would be possible at some point, as a kind of perk for having followed through on the GIT experience, to allow those GITs who apply for full license to pay a reduced application fee as they prepare to take the ASBOG Practice of Geology exam. Hall said that the rules as they are currently written do not allow for a reduction in fees. Board members then discussed the possibility of revising the rules to remove exact fee amounts from them. Macon reminded the board that they are required to submit an updated mission statement and report to the state this year and suggested revising the rules not only to allow more flexibility in fee charges, but also to adjust for new goals and strategies that may come about as this new mission statement is written. Finley offered to work on the mission statement and rules changes with Hall and suggested that Pilié may want to become involved as well; Schramm also volunteered.

Compliance Committee: In Perry's absence, Schramm reported on the committee's activity. He said he and Pilié had worked through the list of auditees so she understands the process and will be able to assist with future audits. Brief discussion regarding the audit process then ensued.

The board then took up the question from the agenda ("Through a cooperative agreement, the LBOPG office staff send verification of attendance to participants of the LSU Geology Seminars on Friday afternoons during the academic year. This activity is regular and requires little extra effort on the part of the staff, so they are happy to accommodate the LSU faculty who sponsor the lectures. However, some licensees have requested verification of attendance at other local continuing education events that the board does not sponsor and cannot adequately verify. How should the staff handle these requests?"). The consensus of the board was that each organization should determine how to handle requests for verification of participation. McDade commented that such verification should be the responsibility of the person who needs documentation and not the organization presenting the information. Discussion ensued. All agreed that licensees are ultimately responsible for obtaining documentation. Schramm explained that the Baton Rouge Geological Society provides rudimentary certificates of participation and pointed out that the LBOPG guidelines published online provide examples of eleven ways licensees can document their participation in these events, including receipts, agendas, synopses, and certificates. Hall suggested making two forms: one for event organizers that provides a way for the organizers to submit a list of all participants; and one for the licensees to use. Such forms should include the name, date, host, and location of the event, the name of the licensee, the number of hours, the topics covered, and signed by the host and the licensee. Discussion ensued, with general agreement that such forms could easily be added to the website.

Schramm then reported that he and Macon had updated the online continuing education log sheet, example of completed log sheet, and instructions for completing the log. He invited board members to review the materials and provide suggestions.

Outreach Committee: No report

Office Committee: Macon reported that Dovetail Digital anticipates launching the new website soon. They have had issues with multiple security updates from Treepl, the database software company that created the platform used for the site, so they are waiting until all issues are resolved with those updates

before releasing the site. Macon explained that she and Pilié have been updating both the old and new websites for several weeks, and they find the new system to be easy to use.

Macon further reported that, on July 1, she was contacted by a representative of Sedgwick, the safety management company that contracts with the Louisiana Office of Risk Management, about scheduling “a walk-through of all the board’s facilities” to perform a mandatory safety audit in advance of the 2021-2022 FY insurance assessment. After some discussion, the representative said the audit could be conducted by phone, and he determined from that audit that the administrative office needed both a first aid kit and a blood-borne pathogen kit to bring the office into compliance with the state’s safety codes. Those kits have since been purchased and are now in the office. Brief discussion ensued.

She also explained that she is still working to have surplus equipment transferred to the State. The goal is finally to be added to the State’s database so items can be electronically recorded as surplus and picked up. She told the board that Bill Tripoli had taken care of having two laptop hard drives shredded in accordance with the State’s rules so that those laptops can be accepted by the surplus facility.

Macon then reminded board members that the ASBOG Annual Meeting would be in Little Rock, Arkansas, from October 26 through October 30, 2021. The Administrator’s Workshop will be held on October 26. The annual meeting will be held on October 27. The field trip will be on October 28, and the COE Workshop will be October 29 and 30. She told the board that she plans to attend and would like permission for Pilié to attend as well. Williamson moved to allow Macon and Pilié to attend; Schramm seconded. Finley called for a vote; the motion passed. Schramm asked if Finley was planning to attend; Finley said he did not. Schramm and Williamson told the board they plan to attend. Macon reminded them that one board member needs to attend the annual meeting on Wednesday, October 27, to represent the board in any voting matters. Both Schramm and Williamson expressed willingness to serve.

Macon then reported that she had amended the public records request form and a related certification form according to suggestions provided at the May board meeting and had sent them to Dovetail Digital for inclusion on the new website.

Legal Comments

Hall reported that she is involved in a time-consuming trial that will not be resolved until mid-August and explained that she cannot commit to assist with board-related tasks until the trial is over.

Other Business

Macon announced that this is the time to nominate officers for the next twelve months. Williamson recommended that all officers currently serving continue, as they are performing well. Schramm announced that he would like to serve as chair. Finley called for additional nominations. Discussion ensued regarding the need for new board members, with Williamson mentioning that he had talked with Bobby Raines about the application process. Discussion also included whether one can be both a licensed geoscientist and an at-large board member; the conclusion was that the statute is vague and does not specifically preclude one from serving as an at-large member simply because the person is licensed. The board decided to leave nominations open until the September meeting.

New Business

Schramm suggested adding a web page with current information and job listings. Discussion ensued, with Finley expressing the opinion that the website should be for board business only, and McDade suggesting that such listings could be posted on the board’s LinkedIn site. Macon explained that Pilié has updated the LinkedIn site and is moderating and maintaining it, so the job listings could be easily added.

McDade, who is serving on the search committee to select the new Louisiana State Geologist and Director of the Louisiana Geological Survey, told board members that the committee has selected four finalists from a field of eight or nine candidates. Those four have been recommended to the LSU administrators tasked with the final selection.

Adjourn

The date of the next regular meeting of the board is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 1:00 pm. Schramm moved to adjourn; Williamson and McDade simultaneously seconded; the motion passed. Finley adjourned the meeting at 3:21 pm.