

LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

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



REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 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 Schramm called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m., Tuesday, September 13, 2022, and commenced roll call.

Present: William Schramm, William Finley, Melanie Stiegler, David Culpepper, Lloyd Hoover, Elizabeth McDade, Michael Simms, and David Williamson, Board Members; Warren Bates Jr. (for Machel Hall), Legal Counsel; Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary; Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary; Maria Mata de Leder, Administrative Coordinator; and Mallory Pilié, Project Coordinator.

Absent: Todd Perry, Board Member.

Guests: None.

Quorum was established.

Public Comment Period

No comments from guests were recorded.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the July 12, 2022, regular board meeting were reviewed. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. Finley moved to accept the minutes; Williamson seconded the motion. Schramm called for a vote, and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Finley presented the treasurer's report for July and August 2022 and called attention to two charts he had distributed. He explained that expenses (red) and income (green) are both presented with a six-month moving average and pointed out that a clear yearly cycle is evident with peaks around January and troughs around July, surmising that this trend is a fiscal cycle. He further explained that he had added a net difference in income versus expenses as the blue line scaled on the right-side of the first chart and noted that the orange trendline for the net series starts slightly above zero but trends downward below zero, suggesting a steady decline from positive cash flow to negative cash flow over the past three years.

On the second chart, he noted the blue curve (total assets) at the top of the chart plateaued through 2021 and a decline began in March 2022. He also noted the three red arrows at the bottom of this chart where funds were transferred from credit union savings to credit union checking to help cover expenses. The time between the first transfer and the third transfer is one year. He said, if this trend continues, a savings balance of \$20,712 will be depleted in another year (2023). He warned that the board needs to look at the accessibility of funds in the capital one savings account (currently dedicated for restricted use in the event of a compliance hearing) as a backup.

He then reminded the board of the importance of income generated by new licenses and renewals. He said new licenses should start with board involvement in outreach, particularly in recruiting GIT candidates. He added that the board needs to strongly consider changing its stance on providing continuing education to licensees. He said having left this activity to individual licensees has proved problematic, as evidenced by the lack of understanding exhibited by recent auditees regarding what qualifies as geoscience continuing education. He suggested that providing material that will count toward the board's CE requirements would make the continuing education process for the licensees simpler and less expensive. He said the board should invest in providing access to these requirements as a means of solving the problem of declining numbers of licensees. He said a closer review and analysis of expense items must become part of the process to ensure that the most important items are adequately funded, adding that expense priorities will be a consideration for board input. Discussion ensued.

Finally, he said that he finds the currently used year-to-date budget to actual report to be confusing and wants to create a new report that shows the monthly budget and actual spending as well as the total yearly budgeted amounts by category. Discussion ensued, with Culpepper and Stiegler concurring that they would also like to see the full year's budget in addition to the YTD information in the report. Macon pointed out that the report in its current configuration was originally created to address suggestions in a previous legislative audit and was developed through a QuickBooks template by the board's accountant at L.A. Champagne LLC. She asked Finley to visit the board's administrative office prior to the November meeting to help develop a new report that included the information he wants to see.

Williamson moved to accept the treasurer's report as presented; Simms seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote; the motion passed.

Standing Committees

Application Review Committee: Stiegler said three applications had been reviewed, and all three (1, 2, and 3) were recommended for approval. She moved to approve the recommended applicants for license; Culpepper seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion; with none forthcoming, he called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reported that a record number of 22 total candidates would be taking the ASBOG exams on October 7, 2022: 10 FG only; 7 PG only; and 5 both FG and PG. Macon added that, except for one candidate for whom mitigating circumstances prevented attendance at this testing session, all exams had been ordered, and the numbers given represented those orders.

Schramm pointed out that this would be the last pen and paper exam, with computer-based testing slated to begin in March 2023 and said the board would no longer be collecting proctoring fees. Finley said this was another lost source of revenue. Macon reminded board members that requests for verification of license have increased, and the board still charges a fee for providing this verification. Discussion ensued.

Macon further reported that the test will be administered in the tenth-floor training room of the Galvez Building (LDEQ). She said she, Mata de Leder, and Schramm would be proctoring the exams. Additional discussion ensued.

Compliance Committee: Mata de Leder called attention to the charts included in the recent issue of the board's journal. Referring to the first chart, she reminded board members that the total number of randomly selected auditees for the 2022 year was 24, which constitutes 2% of Louisiana's active licensees. She referred to the second chart, which shows most of this year's auditees (nine) reside in Texas, while three reside in Louisiana. The rest, with only one or two in each state, are distributed among eight other states. She also reported that a majority (14) of the selected auditees have passed the audit process; two chose to retire rather than complete the audit, two chose to allow their licenses to lapse rather than complete the audit, and six auditees remain under review. She expects before the next meeting one more auditee will have completed the audit successfully. Additionally, the 2023 audit list will be presented at the November meeting.

Schramm agreed with Mata de Leder's report, adding that the demographic information developed by Pilié indicated that the licensee base is aging. Pilié provided the specific details from that information: 38% of the licensee base is in the age group 60-69 years; the group 70-79 years represents 8% of the base population. She pointed out that the 8% number of 70-79-year-olds is the same percentage as those 30-39 years. Discussion ensued, with Schramm adding that other states are experiencing the same issues. Pilié explained that the greatest numbers of Louisiana licensees who live in other states aligns with the states with which Louisiana has reciprocity, except for Florida, which represents the state with the fifth largest percentage of Louisiana licensees. She suggested approaching Florida one more time with the request to enter into a reciprocity agreement. Macon agreed that sending them a new request may be timely. Williamson suggested that sending requests to other states that turned Louisiana down previously may be an option. Additional discussion ensued.

In response to Schramm's request for a report on the board's letter to Louisiana State agencies regarding the role of the board in regulating geoscience activity in the state, Macon reported she sent out the letter that she and Hall had drafted and which had been approved by the board at the July meeting to nearly 100 heads of other state agencies and major departments within those agencies to explain the board's role. Included were contacts at the various state levee boards, CPRA, LDEQ, LDNR, LDOTD, LSU, LGS, the Capital Area Groundwater Conservation Commission, the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry, and the Louisiana Mineral & Energy Board. She further reported that the recent memo sent to state contractors by LDEQ at the urging of Board Member Todd

Perry has had an impact on increasing the awareness of the importance of license renewal among licensees and of contractors pushing their employees to become licensed or to remain licensed. Discussion ensued.

Outreach Committee: Finley reiterated his previous suggestion that the board provide licensees with continuing education opportunities. He also said that the increase in the number of people applying for and taking the ASBOG exam seems to contradict the decrease in the numbers of students enrolled in geoscience programs in the state but speculated that potential students had the perception that geoscience is limited to oil and gas and, since the oil and gas industry seems to be in decline, they aren't interested in pursuing geoscience degrees. He suggested reaching out to these potential students may be a way to increase interest in geoscience education and careers. Schramm said he would like Finley to put together a plan for such an outreach program for the November meeting and suggested that Finley contact Clare Falcon about opportunities for partnering on continuing education opportunities. Schramm pointed out that the two-day water resources conferences held at LSU in the past charged a nominal fee for attendance, and all the CE requirements could be satisfied by attending. He suggested working with Falcon to bring those conferences back. Discussion ensued, with comments about using social media to reach younger audiences.

Strategic Five-year Plan & Rules Review Ad Hoc: Simms reported that the committee has made progress in identifying areas in the rules that need to be updated and are currently working on a definition of geoscience practice. He said the committee, as part of developing the five-year plan, is also working to make sure the role of licensed geoscientists in the state continues to be recognized by other state agencies. Schramm mentioned a memo sent by the Arkansas board to state agencies in that state in 2010 had been shared and reported that the Arkansas board was auditing the records of other state agencies for compliance with the board's rules. Discussion ensued. Schramm requested that the committee produce a draft of the strategic plan at the November meeting, pointing out that the plan is overdue. Simms agreed and said he would call a committee meeting soon.

Office Committee: Macon reported an extension to the board's existing contract with L.A. Champagne for accounting services has been completed. The contract would have ended June 30, 2021; however, that \$15,000 contract still had \$5,000 remaining after two years, and the State Office of Procurement has agreed to extend the contract until June 30, 2023. Next year, she plans to propose a three-year contract with L.A. Champagne to alleviate the problem of year-to-year contract renewals. Currently, the contract with the Louisiana Department of Justice is a three-year contract that will also end on June 30, 2023, so keeping up with both contracts will be easier if they are on the same timeline.

Macon also reported, as the board had discussed in recent months, ASBOG has been working on a Task Analysis Survey. In early August, ASBOG Director Deana Sneyd sent the link to that survey, and Macon sent that link to 1,254 email addresses, representing all LBOPG active licensees and some retirees, through Mail Chimp on August 11. On August 22, Macon sent a reminder to that same audience. As of August 26, the click-through rate was 12.5% for the original message and 11.9% for the reminder.

Macon pointed out she had included a copy of the recently published LBOPG Journal issue 9 that was posted on the website and announced by email to all licensees on August 26. The issue included items on logging into the website and database; location of information on the new website; new website functionality for licensees and the public; information on the new, live audits and the types of geoscience activities that meet the requirements; a summary of the results of the 2022 CE audit so far; an

announcement of the latest ethics training video; and an introduction to the board's newest staff member, Maria de la Luz (Luzma) Mata de Leder.

She reminded board members she is working on a bio page that will introduce website visitors to board members and office staff and asked those who have not yet done so to send their photos and biographical information to her.

Related to the agenda item regarding Lloyd Hoover's suggestion about coordinating with the Louisiana Engineering Society to open a geoscience session at the upcoming JESC conference in Lafayette, Macon reported she had that conversation, and they are enthusiastic about the possibilities. Macon said she had also spoken with Donna Sentell, the director of LAPELS, and she too is supportive of LBOPG's participation, as both presenters and exhibitors. In anticipation of beginning to exhibit at conferences, Macon said she has been working with a local print shop to come up with ideas for conference table signage and materials.

Board members had several questions about the conference, and discussion ensued about the organization of the conference sessions. Hoover asked the board to decide if they would allow the engineering ethics presentation to count for the ethics hour required by LBOPG. Board members discussed the possibility and agreed that the presentation should be acceptable.

To answer board members' questions, Macon asked Louisiana Engineering Society (LES) Director Mary Claire Ruckert to come into the meeting briefly to address those questions. Ruckert explained that they are currently taking presentation proposals. She said presenters suggest the topics. Schramm said in his experience organizers had a theme in mind and posted a request for presentations that fit with the theme. Ruckert said she would share the LES call for presentations so the board would have a better understanding of the process. Additional discussion ensued. The final consensus was to send an announcement to the LBOPG licensees with information on the JESC conference with the suggestion that, if anyone would like to present on a topic that would be of interest to both engineers and geoscientists, this conference is looking for presenters. Hoover moved to have Macon work with the staff at LES to advertise the conference to the board's licensees; Williamson seconded the motion. Schramm called for a vote; the motion passed.

Macon announced, as directed by the board at the July board meeting, she had increased the online payment convenience fee from \$5 to \$6 on July 18, 2022.

She reminded board members LAPELS had generously offered one of their leased Xerox copiers to the board last year. The copier has made a noticeable impact on the board's administrative work, providing color copies when needed, allowing the ability to print license cards on cardstock, and generally helping to make office work more efficient. The copier will be no longer on LAPELS's contract in early November and will be available for sale at a greatly discounted price. LAPELS IT Director Bill Tripoli estimates the copier will be sold for about \$1000. Macon said she plans to take advantage of this bargain and retain the printer for the office unless anyone objects. No objections were made.

She further reported that the office staff are currently working on the demographic database, culling old files and preparing them to be sent to the archives at Louisiana State Office of Records Management, and several smaller projects to improve office efficiency.

She also reported Amanda Williams, who coordinates the Department of Justice Civil Law Training sessions, has offered to provide a virtual training session for LBOPG. She then asked board members if they would be interested. Board members expressed enthusiastic support for this idea.

Macon reminded board members ASBOG would be hosting a virtual meeting at 2 pm on Thursday, September 15 on the Computer Based Testing registration portal launch. She also reminded them the ASBOG 2022 Annual Meeting would be held in Wilmington, North Carolina, October 24-29, 2022. She said Schramm would be attending to represent the board.

She then reminded the board that this meeting represented Mallory Pilié's last day with them as an employee and congratulated Pilié on her success as a summer intern with an independent oil and gas exploration company in Houston and on her excellent job offer.

New Business

Consulting Services on LBOPG Website

Schramm reported Macon had received calls from the public requesting the names of qualified geoscientists to help with questions and concerns of a geoscientific nature. He asked the board if providing space on the board's website to list geoscientists willing to consult as a service the board could provide. Williamson said the Mississippi board offers such a service. Additional discussion ensued. The consensus of the board was to provide this service. Bates suggested adding a disclaimer that the board does not endorse the licensees on the list. Finley proposed allowing licensees to publish their contact information for public access. Schramm suggested looking at Mississippi's website to see how they provide this information.

Nominations for LBOPG Executive Committee

Schramm asked board members to nominate officers for 2023. Culpepper nominated Schramm as board chair; no other nominations were made. Nominations for the office of vice chair were left open pending whether Todd Perry would be continuing with the board. Simms nominated Stiegler for secretary; no other nominations were made. Schramm nominated Finley for treasurer; no other nominations were made. Nominations were to remain open until the November meeting, at which point the final slate of candidates would be presented and an election held.

Announcement of the Next Meeting and Adjournment

The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, 2022, at 1:00 pm. Williamson moved to adjourn; Culpepper seconded; the motion passed. Schramm adjourned the meeting at 3:33 pm.