**Minutes**

**Louisiana Committee of Certification**

**July 18, 2011**

**Department of Health and Hospitals**

**Alexandria, Louisiana**

Meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

1. Determination of Quorum.

Committee Members in attendance:

Craig Gautreaux (Chairman), David Wittner (Vice Chairman), Mayor Glenn Brasseaux, Bryan Kauffer, Grant Magnon, Tom Owens, Henry Templet and Jake Causey (Secretary and Ex-officio DHH).

Committee Members Absent:

Dennis McGehee

 A quorum was achieved.

Recognition of Visitors and Others:

DHH-OPH staff members in attendance were Dinah Millet and Steve Hoss.

Visitors were: Tom Walton (La Conference) and Pat Credeur (LRWA), Camille Mize, Richard Knighton, John Neilson, Claude Swope, Mary Louise Salley, Merlin Melancon, Flo Dupre, Chris Soileau, Aubrey Peterson.

1. Announcements: There were no announcements.

**MINUTES:**

The minutes from the May 26, 2011 meeting were distributed and reviewed. Motion to accept was made by Glenn Brasseaux and seconded by Henry Templet. Minutes were approved.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:**

Henry Templet will be retiring at the end of July 2011. Chairman will contact Louisiana Conference on Water Supply, Sewage and Industrial Waste, Inc. and request recommendations to fill the vacant position left by Mr. Templet’s retirement.

Tom Owens’ term is expiring August 31, 2011. Chairman will contact the Louisiana Conference pertaining to the re-appointment of Mr. Owens.

**ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT**

Dinah announced that the name and contact information for each member of the Committee of Certification in on the Dept. of Administration’s Board & Commissioners website.

BRCC contacted DHH to start dialogue on developing a technical associate’s degree curriculum for the water/wastewater field. The Administrator and Steve Hoss, the Training Officer, attended a meeting at BRCC to discuss possible courses and to explain the operator certification process.

DHH received a letter for an operator, Danny Clinton, requesting an extension of time to get the 2010-11 continuing education hours After some discussion, it was agreed that DHH should hold all of these type request until the January 2012 meeting at which time the Committee will make a determination.

# TRAINING OFFICER’S REPORT

Steve Hoss provided a training statistics report to each Committee member. In his review of the report, he announced that the Class 1 Water Distribution test has the lowest pass rate overall for the year to date. This test was recently completely rewritten. The Class 2 Water Distribution has the next worst pass rate.

Currently Class 3 & 4 Water Treatment, Class 3 & 4 Wastewater Treatment and Class 3 & 4 Water Production tests are 100 questions. The goal is to have the Class 4 Water Distribution up to 100 questions by February 2012. Then the Class 3 Water Distribution test up to 100 questions.

# SECRETARY’S REPORT

Jake Causey announced staff changes in the Central office and our Regional offices. Several of the new engineers hold their PE. DHH is working on developing policies and procedures to assist in the training of these new employees. These employees do surveys of water systems and look at if a system has a certified operator and if the operator is within an hour of the system. The Ground Water Rule became effective December 2009. At the beginning of 2011 in an effort to implement this Rule, DHH staff began utilizing an electronic software survey tool on site visits to systems. This tool has allowed us to track violations more effectively. In particular the violations for Operator Certification can be issued and tracked. In the past there have been some concerns about the lack of enforcement of the Operator Certification Rule, but this will be tightened up. Also, there have been some cases of water system personnel falsifying records. In these cases we must work with the DA. You must have proof in order to pursue disciplinary action in such cases. Currently we do not require a person that collects bacti samples to be certified and this has contributed to this problem because these people have nothing to lose. We are not sure what other states do but we are considering requiring the people that collect samples to hold current certifications. This is something that is of great concern to me and I want the Committee to be aware of this situation and the possibility for future changes in our rules.

# ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Louisiana Conference: Tom Walton – The annual conference will be held in Shreveport on March 12- 15, 2012 at the Hilton/Shreveport Convention Center. The Water Quality Technical Conference will be held again this year in Alexandria and Baton Rouge. The dates have not been set.

LELAA: Steve Hoss – A chemist from Lafayette tested in April. She passed the exam and the certificate has been issued.

LETA: Dinah Millet – A meeting is scheduled for August 25, 2011 in Baton Rouge to coincide with the LA Conference meeting that is scheduled.

LRWA: No Report

**OLD BUSINESS**

Rule and Training Committees have not met. Dinah reported that the Rule Committee has reviewed and discussed the entire rule and has drafted some proposed changes. The next step would be for the Rule Committee to go back through the draft revisions to make sure the proposed language is clear. Also, recently David McCay indicated that he would like to talk to the Rule Committee before they finalized the changes they want to propose.

Education Alternatives – At the last meeting which was held in Shreveport, Dinah opened a discussion on the current Operator Certification Program policy to only accept GED and high school diplomas from schools approved by the Louisiana Department of Education (La DOE). This policy has been in effect since 2002. Currently, the La DOE does not recognize any online GED or High School programs. A committee to review this subject was formed. Dinah reported that Barbara Monroe had done some research on the subject but was not at the meeting to make a report. Craig reported that he had done some research also and found that there were many accreditation associations for college online courses but there was a large gap in secondary education online training accreditation. There were references to a Distance Education Training Council and a Council on Online College and Schools. Dinah stated that until the Committee changes their policy, DHH will continue to accept high school diplomas and GED from schools recognized by the La DOE, and home schools approved by the La DOE. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn was made by Glenn Brasseaux and seconded by Tom Owens. The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

The next Committee of Certification meeting will be August 25, 2011. There will be

an executive session to discuss possible disciplinary action against two operators.