

Minutes
Louisiana Committee of Certification
May 22, 2013
Bienville Building
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM.

ROLL CALL:

A. Determination of Quorum.

Committee Members in attendance were:

David Wittner (Chairman), Dirk Barrios (Vice-Chairman), Tom Walton,
Tom Owens, Greg Shelden, Jake Causey, and Dennis McGehee.

A quorum was achieved.

Recognition of Visitors and Others:

DHH-OPH staff in attendance: Steve Hoss and Jim Mooring.
There were no visitors in attendance.

B. Announcements: This is a special called meeting.

MINUTES:

The minutes from the March 11, 2013 meeting were distributed and reviewed. A motion to amend the minutes to mention that LA Conference was to survey its membership regarding the Operations Specialist title and report the results at the LRWA Annual Conference in July was made by Mr. Barrios and seconded by Mr. Walton. The motion carried. A motion to accept the minutes with amendment was made by Mr. Barrios and seconded by Mr. Walton. The minutes were approved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

David Wittner reported that David McCay believes changing to the Operations Specialist title will require a legislative change to the Revised Statutes. The chairman mentioned that to our knowledge Mr. Marios Papadopoulos did not attend any classes, did not speak, nor did he take the WWT4 examination at the LA Conference Short Course. Mr. Walton confirmed that information. It was reiterated that Mr. Papadopoulos was given the choice to fulfill his requirements at either of the two annual conferences (La Conference or LRWA) held in 2013 should he wish to have his WWT4 Certification reactivated. It was suggested that the Program send a letter to Mr. Papadopoulos reminding him that LRWA annual conference in July will be his last opportunity to comply. Mr. Wittner stated he has received no further information regarding the arrest of

Mr. Brown of Rayville. Mr. Mooring informed the Committee that the Program has received no further information. The issue regarding Steve Ward has been brought to the Chairman's attention and will be discussed later. The Committee was reminded that the La Conference municipal wastewater and an LMA Committee position will expire in August of 2013. Mr. Mooring reminded the members that for each position three (3) nominees with biographic information need to be submitted for Dr. Guidry's consideration.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

The Administrator, James Mooring, reiterated that it is Mr. McCay's opinion that legislative changes to the Revised Statute would be required to change titles. He reported that the cost of making these changes in the Program's database has not been directly researched but that he is quite certain there would be costs involved. Mr. Causey brought up the issue of minimum educational standards and that the Program has been spending a great amount of time lately defending the Committee's position that a high school diploma or GED must be BESE approved. The Program has answered questions raised by several legislators regarding this issue. The Committee decided to consider the Minimum Educational Requirement Language referenced in the agenda under New Business. A letter containing David McCay's suggested Rule change was reviewed by the Committee. Mr. Causey made the motion to modify the Rule language to say: "A minimum educational requirement of a High School Diploma from a school approved by the La. State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or its equivalent in which a high school is located, is applied to ALL levels of certification. A General Equivalency Diploma ("GED") approved by the La. State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or its equivalent in another state, may substitute for a High School Diploma." Mr. Walton seconded the motion which passed without opposition.

TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Training Officer, Steve Hoss, distributed a report summarizing the 2013 exams to date as well as the previous four years for comparison. Mr. Hoss also informed the Committee that he was currently compiling a list of those operators who have failed to pay renewal fees and that letters would soon be sent to these operators.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Causey reemphasized the magnitude to which the minimum educational requirement issue has been raised. He voiced that he sees an increasing general lack of concern or awareness among operators regarding their responsibilities and how they perform their responsibilities. Many of the systems with deficiencies technically have a certified operator but often the operators are failing to perform basic duties such as sample collection or submitting required reports. The operators have been experiencing no repercussions. He also understands that most operators are doing excellent jobs. Mr.

Causey would like to see more cases brought before the Committee for review to encourage operators to take their responsibilities more seriously. He also voiced concern that some misrepresentation regarding sample collection and results has occurred.

OLD BUSINESS

The Committee reviewed the requested information supplied by Parkview Baptist on behalf of Issac Tony Vincent along with David McCay's opinion that it fulfilled the Committee's request. There was no objection to accepting legal counsel's opinion.

NEW BUSINESS

The Committee considered correspondence provided by Jennifer Khilken, DHH District 4 Engineer, regarding Steven Ward. According to Ms. Khilken Mr. Ward has repeatedly failed to submit required reports. Ms. Kilhlken was contacted by phone during the meeting and stated that her staff has brought the forms to Mr. Ward several times. During these visits the staff explained how the forms were to be filled out but that they still were not submitted.

After much discussion, Mr. Walton made a motion to hold a hearing regarding Steven Ward's certifications. The motion was seconded by Mr. Causey. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Owens and seconded by Mr. McGehee and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

The next Committee of Certification meeting will be held at 2:00 PM, July 8, 2013 at the Lake Charles Civic Center in conjunction with the LRWA Annual Conference.