

LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

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



REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Tuesday, November 9, 2021, 2:00 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 2:33 p.m., Tuesday, November 9, 2021, and commenced roll call.

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

Absent: Lloyd Hoover, Board Member; Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary.

Guests: Luzma Mata de Leder, licensed Louisiana Professional Geoscientist; Gary Fulton, Underground Storage Tank Division Administrator, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ); Clare Falcon, Louisiana State Geologist, and Director, Louisiana Geological Survey; Elizabeth Levy, employee with LDEQ.

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

Schramm welcomed the guests and asked for comments. No comments were forthcoming. Schramm recognized Mata de Leder and thanked her for offering to volunteer her assistance to the board.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the September 14, 2021, meeting were reviewed. Williamson moved to accept the minutes; McDade seconded the motion. Schramm asked for discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote, and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Finley presented the treasurer's report for September and October 2021, summarizing the balances of the board's accounts and reporting the total balance in all accounts is \$280,799.29. He also reported on a graph he had created, showing trend lines over time. He pointed out that income increases from December to July and then decreases. He then mentioned the Capital One savings account, which is reserved for future expenses related to enforcement and hearings. He concluded that the board's finances are stable. Finley turned to the budget and the year-to-date profit and loss report. He noted that a couple of budget items were out of the ordinary: the board's obligation to pay for the new website/database, which has only recently been completed, and the lack of billing from the Louisiana Department of Justice. Finley asked Hall to see if that billing can be updated and reported that Dovetail Digital Marketing, the company that developed the website and database, has recently invoiced the board for the project. He also mentioned that Dovetail has proposed billing the board monthly for IT services and licensing, which would make budgeting for this expense easier in the future. Finley moved to accept the report; Perry seconded. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote; the motion passed.

Standing Committees

Application Review Committee: Stiegler reported that ten applications for license had been reviewed. Numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 were recommended for approval. Application number 3 was incomplete. Williamson moved to approve applications 1, 2, and 4 through 10 and to wait for more information from applicant 3; Culpepper seconded the motion. Because Stiegler's application for license was on the list, she recused herself from the vote. Schramm called for any additional discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote; the motion passed.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reported the ASBOG exams were administered on October 1, 2021, and that a record number, 16 candidates, took the exams. He said the results of the exams were not yet available, but he anticipated reporting on the results in January.

Compliance Committee: Perry began by expressing his satisfaction that the board now has no vacancies, all nine positions are filled. He then turned to the continuing education audit. He explained that 2% of the active licensees are randomly selected for audit. Currently, that number is 22 licenses. He said the goal is to have 100% of the audited licensees in compliance, though during the trial audits preceding this first official audit, that was not the case. Schramm added that the committee determined that any licensee who failed an audit would automatically be audited the following year as well. He clarified that the 2% is for new audits. Schramm also reminded board members that the board has approved policies and procedures covering the continuing education audit process. Williamson moved to accept the list of 22 auditees for 2022; Simms seconded. Finley asked if the 22 randomly selected auditees could conceivably be randomly selected the following year; Perry and Schramm both agreed that they could, because the audit is meant to be random, with no exceptions. Schramm then called for a vote; the motion passed.

Outreach Committee: No report. Schramm suggested that Finley talk with Mata de Leder, who has an interest in working with his committee. Finley agreed to do so.

Office Committee: Macon reported on the annual ASBOG meeting. She said the Administrator's Workshop provided valuable information. Of particular interest was additional updates on the computer-based testing (CBI) initiative, which is currently slated to launch in March 2023. Discussion of the CBI ensued, with enthusiasm.

Macon then reported that she would be attending the Louisiana Department of Justice Civil Law Training on December 7 after she learned from Williamson how much had changed since she last attended. She provided two examples from Williamson:

- “Does our notice of meetings certify that the agenda is limited to one of the reasons stated in the COVID guidance? It was emphasized several times that the meeting needs to be certified in accordance with the guidelines.” Macon said the board should probably prepare to return to in-person attendance.
- “Is the name of the LBOPG custodian of public records identified on the LBOPG website? It was mentioned that the custodian should be identified and their contact information placed on the website.” Macon said she is trying to get that information added to the website.

Macon then reminded board members to send her copies of their certificates once board members complete the annual state ethics training. She also mentioned that the financial disclosure statements will be coming due in May. She also mentioned that the state is now offering sexual harassment training, and that 2018 legislation requires all state employees to take the training annually. Louisiana Legislative Act 270 stipulates that all state agencies must adopt policies to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, including a requirement to have employees take the state online training course. She said she would find a link to the training so the board could be in compliance. Williamson added that the DOJ training sessions are valuable and suggested other board members attend.

Macon reported R.S. 37.23.2, the statute that required us and every other board to report complaints about the entity to the Louisiana State Legislature (both the House and the Senate) and to the committees that created the legislation has been repealed. We no longer are required to report those 0s every quarter, and the letter we received especially emphasized that we are no longer to give out the legislative contact information for complainants to contact the legislature directly.

She told board members that Dovetail Digital Marketing is in the process of completing the minor tasks that remain for the new database and website and have created a series of “how-to” screens to guide us through several scenarios that may arise.

She then reminded board members that McCreary must be reappointed in January and that, once the reappointment form is submitted, no changes to the position, including raises, can be added. She asked, on behalf of the office staff, that a raise be given to the administrative staff.

Discussion of the logistics for taking up the issue of staff raises in executive session ensued. Hall reported that, to go into executive session, the board needs a vote of two-thirds of the members, each individual member’s vote must be recorded in the minutes, and a motion that explains why the board is going into executive session. Perry then moved to go into executive session to discuss 2022 staff pay raises. Williamson seconded. Schramm called for the vote:

Schramm, yes
Perry, yes
Finley, yes
Stiegler, absent
Culpepper, yes
Hoover, absent
McDade, yes
Simms, yes
Williamson, yes

Having received at least two-thirds majority affirmative votes, the board then went into executive session.

Return from Executive Session

Perry moved, in regards to agenda item 6.e.iv, Request for Staff Raises, the board provide five percent raises for McCreary and Pilié and a ten percent raise for Macon. Williamson and Culpepper seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote; the motion passed.

Legal Comments

Hall reported that the FARB conference in January will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, and that Macon would be one of the presenters.

Other Business

Schramm moved to discussion of the Strategic 5-year Plan. Perry moved to appoint a special committee, the Rules and Strategic Planning Committee, to develop the 5-year plan and potential rules changes and submit a report by February 15 in anticipation of being presented at the March board meeting.

Williamson seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. He then called for a vote; the motion passed.

He then asked the board members to think about the committees on which they would like to serve and said he would like to finalize committee membership at the January meeting. Perry then asked that four members be appointed to the Rules and Strategic Planning Committee immediately because the work needs to begin before the January meeting. McDade, Culpepper, Simms, and Finley volunteered to serve.

Adjourn

The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 1:00 pm. Williamson moved to adjourn; Perry seconded; the motion passed. Schramm adjourned the meeting at 4:18 pm.