

LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS
9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809



REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Tuesday, July 11, 2023, 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, July 11, 2023, and commenced roll call.

Present: William Schramm, Michael Simms, Melanie Stiegler, Kaycee Garrett, and David Williamson, Board Members; Mabelle Hall, Legal Counsel; Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary; Maria Mata de Leder, Administrative Coordinator.

Absent: David Culpepper, William Finley (attended via Zoom), Lloyd Hoover, and Elizabeth McDade, Board Members; Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary; and Seija Meaux, Project Coordinator.

Guests: Joe Golden, representing InLumon.

Quorum was established. Schramm read from the statute that created the board.

Public Comment Period

Joe Golden introduced himself and deferred to speak until later in the meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the May 9, 2023, regular board meeting were reviewed. Schramm called for discussion; none was forthcoming. Stiegler moved to accept the minutes; Garrett seconded the motion. Schramm called for a vote, and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Finley presented the Treasurer's Report for May and June 2023, reporting that May was a break-even month, while June was more expensive because of the payroll taxes paid during the month. Finley said he is trying to find a way to equalize extraordinary expenses, so they don't come as a surprise. He reported that the board's progress toward its goals will be increasingly expensive so cutting those expenses is not the solution. Instead, he suggested the board more aggressively recruit new licensees. Toward that goal, he suggested adding continuing education opportunities to encourage licensees by facilitating access to continuing education content.

Finley directed attention to the need to draw funds from the CFCU savings account to keep funds for expenses in the CFCU checking account and commented that the need may arise to move funds from the restricted account at Capital One to support board functions. He reported that this drawdown is beginning to stabilize, with longer periods between needed transfers and smaller amounts required to meet the needs of the board for immediate funds. He also mentioned that the interest paid on the Capital One account is inadequate in comparison to the balance carried. He suggested that the board may need to investigate other investment opportunities for these funds. Schramm asked what the Campus Federal Credit Union interest on savings is currently. While he did not have the precise figure, Finley pointed out that the rate has been less than that paid by Capital One. Schramm agreed that investigating other ways to invest the restricted amount is a good idea.

Finley then turned attention to the budget for the new fiscal year that began July 1. He asked Macon if she had seen his changes; Macon asked about the proposed \$10,000 revenue stream from interest; Finley responded that he plans to invest \$150,000 of the restricted funds in a Certificate of Deposit (CD) making 7% interest per year. She asked about the change to the contractual annual fee budgeted for legal services; Finley said he based the change on costs incurred in the previous fiscal year. Macon reminded the board that the budget needs to be in place as soon as possible; Finley said he would work on finding appropriate investment options.

Finley moved to approve the latest version of the budget as it is, with the understanding that it may need to be amended later. Stiegler seconded the motion. Schramm called for additional discussion; none was forthcoming; he then called for a vote. The motion passed.

Standing Committees

Application Review Committee: Stiegler reported that the committee reviewed applications for two licenses and five testing requests (three for Fundamentals of Geology only, one for Practice of Geology only, and one for both exams). She said the committee recommended all for approval: 1 and 2 for license; and 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for examination. Discussion of the timeline for online registration for the examinations briefly ensued. Board members were informed that additional applications for testing may appear on the list for the September meeting because the cutoff for registration is now closer to the October testing date. Stiegler moved to accept these recommendations; Williamson seconded the motion. Schramm repeated the motion, called for discussion, and, when no discussion was forthcoming, called for a vote; the motion passed.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reported that he and Schramm had collaborated on a presentation, "Tips for Taking the ASBOG FG and PG Exams." They shared the slide presentation with the board and requested feedback from the rest of the board members. They plan to share this presentation with testing candidates and others later via Zoom. Stiegler asked if the presentation file could be shared with board members. Schramm agreed that sharing the file could be beneficial. While talking about the board's presentation, Williamson and Schramm explained that, in addition to study materials already on their website, ASBOG is close to launching a series of study videos for the FG exam. Schramm also emphasized the opportunity for candidates to create study groups through their interactions in Zoom sessions. After discussion, Schramm and Williamson selected Wednesday, August 9, 2023, from 6 pm until 8 pm, as the date and time for the Zoom presentation.

Compliance Committee: Mata de Leder reported that, as of the date of this meeting, 17 auditees have passed the continuing education audit, three are inactive with expired licenses, one is retired, one is deceased, three have not responded at all, and four are currently under review. Schramm commented that these numbers are representative of the entire population of licensees. He pointed out that the number of inactive, retired, deceased, and nonresponsive licensees represent 33% of the total pool of auditees. Discussion ensued.

Schramm asked Macon to prepare a new list of randomly selected licensees for the 2024 audit.

Outreach Committee: Finley suggested adding more continuing education presentations on the board's website. He pointed out that the board had historically elected not to provide these types of opportunities; however, he now feels the time has come to add relevant presentations to facilitate licensees' ability to meet the continuing education requirements. He also mentioned continued outreach to universities to educate the next generation of geoscientists about the importance of licensure. Schramm asked if Finley thought the board

should consider hosting a conference to help licensees with continuing education opportunities. Finley agreed that such a meeting could be beneficial. Hall also agreed and suggested offering these opportunities for a small fee. Discussion ensued. Schramm asked Finley to prepare a list of topics to present to the outreach committee for planning this type of meeting.

Strategic Five-year Plan & Rules Review Ad Hoc: Simms reported that he is attempting to set up a committee meeting soon, and he is preparing a document to submit to the full board for feedback. He said that, since meeting in person has been difficult to arrange, he hopes to send documents that have already been discussed in committee to those members for edits, comments, and final changes. Hall and Finley have both created documents that just need to be finalized. Hall suggested removing the statutory changes from the committee's charge; Simms objected. Discussion ensued.

Schramm called for measurable progress with completion within one or two meeting cycles.

Office Committee: Macon reintroduced Joe Golden and asked him to describe InLumon's database system. Golden talked about the database product his company builds for boards like LBOPG. He recognized that the cost of this product (\$30,000 per year) is currently not within LBOPG's budget but asked that members consider it for the future. Finley explained that the board has already begun the process of creating a similar design. He said he would be interested in continuing the conversation with InLumon if that platform can somehow communicate with the system the board has already developed. Golden said the systems should be able to communicate, and the process should be seamless. He and Finley continued to discuss the possibilities for continuing education and verification processes; they agreed to continue the conversation beyond the meeting.

Macon showed board members the database pages that are under construction and reminded the board that Dovetail Digital receives a monthly fee to provide whatever services are needed. She reported that Dovetail Digital is continuing to work on the continuing education reporting pages for the existing database. She showed them the functionality that has already been established and the new features that are currently being tested. Discussion ensued.

Macon reported that Mary Claire Ruckert, the director of LES, had provided an update on the increase in rent that will take effect in 2024. Recapping her report from May 2023, Macon reminded the board that the average cost per square foot per year to rent office space in Baton Rouge is \$20.40, with a range from \$19.86 to \$26.24. The Office of Facility Planning estimates LBOPG's "usable square footage" at 663 sq. ft., which is broken down into 196 sq. ft. of actual office space and 467 sq. ft. of common area. Currently, the board pays \$5.69 per square foot per year, which totals \$3771 per year, paid monthly at \$314.25. Macon then reported that the LEF Board is considering an incremental rent increase over

four years, beginning in April 2024, when our current contract ends. The monthly rent will increase from \$314.25 to \$380 in that first year of the new contract and will increase by 5% each year to plateau in the fourth year of the five-year contract.

Macon reminded the board that the ASBOG Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 24 through October 26, and the Fall COE Workshop is scheduled for October 27 and 28 in Spokane, Washington. She told them the Administrators' Workshop will be on Tuesday, October 24, and she would like to attend. Schramm asked who else wanted to go; discussion ensued.

She then told the board that she and a board member recently discovered that state agencies are not allowed to reimburse state travelers for the cost of rental agencies' "fuel service fees." She urged them to return rental vehicles with the required amount of gas in the tanks to prevent being charged these fees. Discussion ensued.

Finally, she reported that, as the board decided at the May 2023 meeting, the board's membership in FARB (the Federation of Associations of Regulatory Boards) has been cancelled.

Legal Counsel's Comments

Hall brought up two points:

1. She suggested the board pass a motion to find a legislator to sponsor the statute changes, including fee increases. Stiegler moved to authorize the board chair to contact a legislator regarding changes that need to be made. Williamson seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion. With no discussion forthcoming, he called for a vote. The motion passed.
2. Hall announced that Act 201 was recently passed by the Louisiana legislature. She explained that this act allows for boards and commissions to meet virtually for up to one-third of their meetings each year. For LBOPG, that would allow the board to conduct a virtual meeting twice a year. Participation in these meetings can be both virtual and in-person. She pointed out that virtual meetings allow those with disabilities to participate more easily.

New Business

Agenda Item 9(a): "A licensed Louisiana Professional Geoscientist with LDNR asked if the board provides guidance to licensees on producing cross sections." Board members agreed that, while this guidance is not the board's mission, they would help if needed. However, Garrett had already responded to the LDNR employee's request by providing information on where to find this guidance at LDNR.

Agenda Item 9(b): Nomination of Board Executive Committee Officers for 2023-2024. Simms nominated Schramm for board chair; Schramm nominated Finley for board treasurer; Finley and Schramm nominated Simms for vice chair; and Schramm nominated Stiegler for board secretary. Williamson moved to close the nominations and accept the

slate of officers; Stiegler seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion; there was none. He then called for votes. The motion passed unanimously.

Schramm then asked new board member Kaycee Garrett to choose the committees on which she would serve. She selected both the Outreach Committee and the Compliance Committee.

Announcement of the Next Meeting and Adjournment

Schramm read the mission statement of the board into the record and reminded board members to participate in their committees and to make progress toward goals. The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 1:00 pm. Williamson moved to adjourn; Stiegler seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 4:39 pm.