



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING
GEOLOGIST LICENSING BOARD
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

DATE: Thursday June 8, 2023
TIME: 10:00 AM
LOCATION: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

BOARD MEMBERS: **Casey Hanell**, LG/EG, State Geologist, Chair
Carla Brock, LG/HG, Vice Chair
Thomas Tebb, LG/EG/HG, Secretary
James Struthers, LG/EG, Member
Eileen Webb, LG, Member (Late)

STAFF MEMBERS: Sydney Muhle, Program Specialist
Debra Allen-Bâ, Assistant Administrator
Elizabeth Lagerberg, Assistant Attorney General

1. Call to Order

Chair Casey Hanell called the meeting to order at **10:02 AM**.

2. Roll Call

Program Specialist Sydney Muhle conducted roll call. All Board members were present, except for Board Member Eileen Webb who arrived late.

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Muhle informed the Board that items 7.1 and 7.2 were not ready for discussion and requested they be moved to the September 2023 meeting agenda.

Vice Chair Carla Brock made a **MOTION** to approve the order of the agenda with the requested amendments. Secretary Thomas Tebb **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 4-0.

4. Approval of Minutes - Board Member Webb arrived at 10:04 AM.

4.1. Regular Meeting minutes for March 9, 2023

Secretary Tebb made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as presented. Board Member James Struthers **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

5. Old Business

5.1. Specialty Exam Review Update

Staff will provide an update on the specialty exam review.

Ms. Muhle informed the Board that staff received feedback from the most recent spring examinations and would share the data with the subcommittees reviewing the Engineering Geology (EG) and Hydrogeology (HG) exams. She said the contract for psychometrician services to assist in updating the exams, which was signed pre-pandemic, had expired. She said funding for this contract was still available, and staff was working on a new contract to rewrite the exams.

Ms. Muhle said both subcommittees would be conducting initial precursory reviews of the exams, with the EG subcommittee working alongside the Oregon board, who co-owns that exam.

ACTION ITEM: Program Specialist Susan Nieves to schedule time for subcommittees to meet.

5.2. Outreach Discussion

Board members will provide updates regarding outreach activities.

Secretary Tebb recalled that there was no funding for travel. Ms. Muhle clarified that was correct through the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2023, and effective July 1, 2023, there would be funding for the Board Members to travel for outreach to universities.

The Board discussed the challenges and barriers to increasing the workforce in the field and the benefits of bringing in younger licensees. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Elizabeth Lagerberg discussed the need for outreach regarding available opportunities for joining the industry, outside of schools.

The Board and staff discussed publishing a newsletter, as they had in the past. Vice Chair Brock suggested including a de-identified summary of closed complaint cases, including lessons learned/letters of education. Assistant Administrator Debra Allen-Bâ said that staff would be able to facilitate the publishing of a newsletter, and that the Board would need to provide the content.

Action Item: Staff to reach out to Oregon Board staff regarding structure behind their newsletter to see if a similar process can be established.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to reach out to colleges and universities to begin scheduling Geology outreach for this fall.

Agenda Item: Revisit Outreach Discussion once universities calendars have been released.

5.3. Set Board Goals

This will be a continued discussion setting goals to meet the priorities set by the Board at the previous meeting.

Secretary Tebb asked about the court case regarding similar content to the policy statement regarding titles of Geologist, Hydrogeologist, and Engineering Geologist. AAG Lagerberg said the Board may ultimately want to have a Washington Advisory Code (WAC) update to provide clarity. The Board discussed a goal for WAC review and update, particularly focusing on when specialty licenses are required. AAG Lagerberg reviewed the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and determined the Board has the authority to designate the specialties of geology to be licensed.

The Board narrowed down the 2023 goals to:

- WAC review and update; particularly focusing on when specialty licenses are required
- Specialty exam review and update
- Participation in fall National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) Conference in Spokane
- Outreach: Newsletter, campus events/visits

ACTION ITEM: Staff to reach out to California Board staff for lessons learned regarding the same issue with their HG specialty license.

6. New Business

6.1. Board Vacancy

Board staff will provide an update on the recruitment to fill the Boards vacancies.

Ms. Muhle announced that Carrie Gillum has been appointed as a member of the Board. She said the public position is still vacant, and staff is exploring additional routes of outreach to find more interest.

6.2. Spring Exam and Score Release Update

Staff will provide exam statistics for the spring exam session.

Ms. Allen-Bâ shared the 2020 through 2023 ASBOG exam pass rate data for Washington state compared with country-wide percentages.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to provide data on pass rate data over the past 10 years (or as far back as possible) to determine if there is a pattern to the pass/fail rate.

6.3. Discussion of ASBOG Testing Centers in Washington State

Staff will provide a report of Washington state testing centers.

Ms. Muhle said there are eight Washington State testing centers located in the cities of Mount Lake Terrace, Fife, Olympia, Camas, Spokane, Liberty Lakes, Pasco, and Yakima.

7. Complaint Cases for Review*

7.1. 2022-03-0414-00GEO

This item was tabled for the next meeting.

7.2. 2022-03-0415-00GEO

This item was tabled for the next meeting.

7.3. 2022-07-1043-00GEO

Ms. Muhle read the Case Manager Report to the Board on behalf of the case manager, Secretary Tebb. Secretary Tebb added that it seemed like it had been an honest mistake that was corrected as soon as the respondent was made aware of it.

Board Member Webb made a **MOTION** to close the case with a letter of education. Vice Chair Brock **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

7.4. 2022-08-1182-00GEO

Ms. Muhle read the Case Manager Report to the Board on behalf of the case manager, Secretary Tebb. Secretary Tebb said this is an example of where more clarity is needed in the WAC. He said it seemed like the respondent was qualified but was lacking the specialty license per the WAC.

Board Member Struthers made a **MOTION** to close the case with a letter of education. Vice Chair Brock **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

8. Reports

8.1. Committee/Task Force Reports

None.

8.2. Central Investigations and Audits Unit (CIAU) Reports

8.2.1. Complaint Status Report

Ms. Muhle reviewed the Complaint Status report.

8.3. Licensing Customer Support Services (LCSS) Reports

8.3.1. Licensee Count Report

Ms. Muhle reviewed the Licensee Count report.

8.4. Boards, Commissions, and Outreach Reports

8.4.1. Action Item List

Ms. Muhle reviewed the Action Item List and provided updates on the status of each item.

9. Public Comments

The public may address the Board on matters within the Board's jurisdiction, either verbally during the meeting or by submitting written comments. The Board is limited to directing staff to study the matter further or requesting that the matter be rescheduled for discussion and consideration at a later time.

Members of the public who address the Board verbally are limited to one three-minute comment. In lieu of a verbal comment, individuals may submit their comment in writing at least two days prior to the meeting by emailing DOLBoards@dol.wa.gov. Written comments are limited to no more than 500 words and will be read by staff during this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Muhle read a written comment, submitted by Jeff Phillips, regarding the practice of geomorphology, in particular fluvial geomorphology. Per Mr. Phillips, the practice of fluvial geomorphology is specialized and has limited overlap with the practice of geomorphology. However, fluvial geomorphologists are required to be licensed geologists to work on river projects. The education, training, and experience required for the Department of Licensing (DOL) Geologist License are not sufficient to include the practice of geomorphology, in particular fluvial geomorphology. Mr. Phillips presented several issues for the Board to consider related to having river projects included under the umbrella of a geologist license and said having the practices of fluvial geomorphology covered under the Washington State Geologist License is not appropriate and should be reconsidered.

10. Conclusion

10.1. Announcements

None.

10.2. Requests for Future Agenda Items

Chair Hanell requested Jeff Phillips' comments be added to the agenda for the September meeting.

10.3. Review Action Items and Items for Next Meeting

Ms. Muhle shared the new action items from this meeting:

- Ms. Nieves to schedule time for EG/HG subcommittees to meet.
- Staff to reach out to Oregon Board staff regarding structure and content behind the newsletter to see if a similar process can be established.
- Staff to reach out to colleges and universities to begin scheduling Geology outreach for this fall, to be completed this summer.
- Staff to reach out to California Board staff for differences in practice with the various specialties and their requirements and allowances for HG.
- Staff to provide pass rate data on specialty exams over the past 10 years, or as far back as possible.

- Staff to provide delineation of licensees that pass specialty exams on Licensee Count Reports.

Ms. Muhle shared the future agenda items requested during this meeting:

- Agenda items 7.1 (2022-03-0414-00GEO) and 7.2 (2022-03-0415-00GEO).
- Discussion: Professional license requirements for Geomorphology, specifically Fluvial Geomorphology.

11. Adjournment

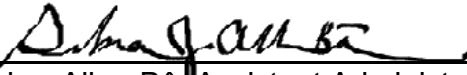
Chair Hanell adjourned the meeting at **11:40 AM**.

Next Board Meeting:

September 14, 2023

10:00 AM

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Submitted by: 
Debra Allen-Bâ, Assistant Administrator

September 14, 2023
Date

Approved by: 
Casey Hanell, Board Chair

September 14, 2023
Date