

Washington State Geologist Licensing Board meeting transcript

June 8, 2023

Hanell (00:00:04):

All right, so welcome everyone. It is now 10:02 AM, and I'm calling this Special Board Meeting of the Geologist Licensing Board to order. The board will provide an opportunity for public comment during the meeting. As a courtesy, we encourage participants to mute their mics, or your phone if you called in, when you are not speaking to reduce the background noise. One challenge is remembering to unmute your microphone when you are speaking. Also for board members, to help us capture information correctly, please state your name when making comments. Thank you. So we'll move next to roll call. Sydney, will you please call the role?

Sydney (00:00:49):

Absolutely. Chair Hanell?

Hanell (00:00:52):

Present.

Sydney (00:00:54):

Vice Chair Brock?

Carla Brock (00:00:55):

Present.

Sydney (00:00:56):

Secretary Tebb?

Tebb (00:00:59):

Present.

Sydney (00:01:01):

Board Member Struthers?

Struthers (00:01:03):

Present.

Sydney (00:01:04):

And board member Webb?

Webb (00:01:08):

Present.

Sydney (00:01:08):

Alright. We do have a quorum.

Hanell (00:01:12):

All right. Thank you, Sydney. So we'll move to item three, which is the approval of the agenda as sent out. So we'll ask for a motion and then a second, and then discussion. And then we will... Oh, Sydney, go ahead.

Sydney (00:01:33):

Yes. Unfortunately we realized yesterday that there was an issue with a couple of our cases that we need to get corrected before they can be approved. So we are requesting to pull items 7.1 and 7.2, and those will be pushed to the next agenda.

Hanell (00:01:52):

Okay, so I'll ask then for a motion for approval of the agenda as proposed amended by Sydney.

Carla Brock (00:02:10):

This is Carla Brock. I make a motion to approve the agenda as amended by Sydney.

Tebb (00:02:15):

This is board member Tab, I'll second.

Hanell (00:02:20):

Excellent. Any further discussion on approval of the amended agenda? Okay, hearing none we'll call for a vote. All in favor say "aye."

Tebb (00:02:36):

Aye.

Carla Brock (00:02:36):

Aye.

Webb (00:02:36):

Aye.

Speaker 1 (00:02:42):

Any opposed? Say "Nay." Alright. Hearing none. Motion carries. We have an approved agenda as amended. So we'll move to item four. Approval of the meeting minutes from our meeting on March 9th. I'll ask for a motion to approve meeting minutes.

Tebb (00:03:18):

Chair Hansel. This is board member Tebb. I make a motion to approve the minutes.

Carla Brock (00:03:25):

This is board member Struthers. I second that motion.

Hanell (00:03:30):

All right. Is there any discussion on the minutes? Any clarifications that people noticed or corrections or suggestion?

(00:03:47):

All right. Hearing none, we'll move to a vote. All in favor of approving the minutes, please say "aye."

Struthers (00:03:55):

Aye.

Carla Brock (00:03:55):

Aye.

Tebb (00:03:55):

Aye.

Webb (00:03:55):

Aye.

Speaker 1 (00:04:02):

Any opposed? All right. Hearing none, we've approved our meeting minutes from our March 9th meeting and we'll welcome Eileen. Good to see you this morning.

Eileen (00:04:17):

Good morning. Thank you.

Speaker 1 (00:04:23):

All right, so moving through our agenda. We'll get to our old business. First up is item 5.1, an update on specialty exam review. I'll ask Sydney to please take this topic.

Sydney (00:04:42):

Thank you, chair Hanell. I wanted to provide an update on the specialty exams and the review of the specialty exams. I should say. As the board is aware, the board has set up two separate subcommittees to review the engineering geology and the hydrogeology specialty exams. We were able to dig in. Staff has completed a lot of analysis behind the scenes on the exams, where some of the pain points are with the exams, the questions that are continually answered incorrectly, the questions that are continually answered correctly and completed a lot of that analysis. We also got a lot of good feedback from the most recent spring examination and we were able to narrow down a couple of things to help us see that maybe the problem isn't quite as massive as what we thought it might be initially. So have a lot of good data to share with each of those subcommittees, behind the scenes.

(00:05:50):

As the board is aware, we did have a much larger contract that did include the psychometrician services to review the specialty exams and we were able to dig in and figure out what happened with that. That contract was signed pre-pandemic and then was put on hold during 2020 when everything else shut down and that contract has since expired. We cannot get it back up and going, it's done. It's over with. So we have started the process to get a new contract that will only be for the psychometrician services on these exams. That money has been set aside within the program and there is still available. So we are working on getting that contract going and the process for that. We have been told that that contract would be approximately a year out, unfortunately, just with the way that state government works and all the steps that we have to go through, it'll take us about a year to get that contract up and going.

(00:06:51):

So in the meantime, the engineering geology subcommittee had previously decided in conjunction with the Oregon board who co-owns that exam to set aside some time to do just an initial precursory review, get everyone's minds wrapped around the current state of the exam, and if there are questions that can be easily swapped, especially with the analysis, the staff was able to complete some of those pain points if there are questions that we can easily exchange in and out without compromising the exam integrity. And so what we are going to be asking is for both subcommittees to do that. We did complete that analysis on both exams. So we're going to be asking both subcommittees to set aside separate times for quorum and appearance issues. We won't have you guys come in and do them at the same time, but so that we can ask you guys to have that initial review.

(00:07:58):

And then we'll get together on the EG side, we'll get together with the Oregon board and see what we can swap out where. And we've already had discussions with the Oregon board staff on what that will look like. So it'll just be as we get closer, we'll set aside a date that works on everybody's calendars and get that moving forward. And then same thing on the HG side, but a little simpler because it's only us. Exam security does dictate that that review needs to happen in person. We can't share that electronically. So Susan will be reaching out to each of the subcommittees over the next couple of weeks to see if we can find dates in the next few months that we'll work on everyone's calendars. So with that, I would be happy to answer any questions.

Hanell (00:08:54):

All right, hearing none, thank you so much for that update, Sydney, and very excited that those reviews are moving forward. I know it's been something we've been trying to solve for a while, so thank you so much for your work and helping to move it forward.

Sydney (00:09:11):

A great team working on it, so we're excited to finally get it moving for you guys.

Speaker 1 (00:09:18):

All right, we'll move to item 5.2 in our old business. That's the outreach discussion. So I'll ask for any board member that has done outreach activities, please to report out either on outreach activities or outreach strategy going forward.

Eileen (00:09:52):

Casey, this is Eileen. I think this is where the outreach committee might have a report.

Hanell (00:10:00):

Fantastic.

Eileen (00:10:02):

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I think this is where they... Maybe that's later on. I don't know, but this seems to be that place.

Hanell (00:10:10):

Yes, I would agree.

Tebb (00:10:19):

This is board member Tab. I seem to recall a conversation around a budget associated with not enough funds for us to go out and talk to some colleges. I don't know whether that has ever brought back, but thought that's where we left it, that we were short funds to do some of that college outreach, but I might be mistaken.

Sydney (00:10:44):

So on that, yes, for the remainder of this fiscal year, that is correct, but that is only through June 30th. So for next fall we have begun having discussions with the budget office and they're making sure that we have appropriate travel funds in there for all of the travel that the board wants to do in the coming fiscal year.

Tebb (00:11:08):

Great, Thank you. I guess I'll just make one observation. We're having, in the Department of Ecology, having a real tough time hiring hydrogeologists with a license and I don't know why that is. I don't know if the other state agencies are having similar troubles there, but I know that we are in Eastern central Washington, so anything we can do to support applicants to get licenses or encourage junior geologists to get their licenses I think would be time well spent. There is a bow wave of older geologists like myself that'll be timing out, heading out, and we really need to encourage that sort of next generation.

Hanell (00:12:10):

Yeah, I can speak to that. On the engineering geology side, at least at the Department of Natural Resources, getting a candidate pool that has any applicants with that license coming in has been a significant challenge actually for years. And I'm curious how that hiring is in the consulting world as well, if there's those same struggles. One piece of feedback has just been salary that the state offers and so that's not necessarily something the board can address, but certainly encouraging junior geologists and educating our next generation of geologists and the universities about licensure and about the benefits of pursuing that early on. I fully support that and those outreach activities.

Carla Brock (00:13:15):

I can speak to the consulting world and I can say that we have the same challenges that you do in government. We have a hard time recruiting and hiring folks who are already licensed hydrogeologists. Certainly there are some, but I think that one thing that we are working on is kind of this best practices document that kind of describes professional practice of geologists versus engineering geologists versus hydrogeologists. And I think there is a lot of confusion around the requirements and consulting for having a hydrogeology specialty license. A lot of people think that the work that they do falls squarely under the practice of geology so that they don't need to go to the extra effort and cost of obtaining a specialty hydro license. So I think I agree with both of you, more communication around the need and the usefulness and yeah, would be helpful.

Struthers (00:14:28):

Yeah, we have similar- this board member Struthers. Yeah, we have similar problems on the engineering geology side and private sector. It's just really hard to find people with a license already. They tend to command a pretty high salary when you do find them. And we've kind of adopted a strategy of identifying candidates pretty much right out of school and then pushing them through a training or mentoring program that's fairly aggressive.

Hanell (00:15:09):

This is board member Hanell, following up on your comment, Carla, around some of the confusion that is out there around what work requires what license or what specialty. I know I've heard similar feedback on the engineering geology side of things and I know it's been a conversation among the board over the years and I'm curious if it's worth conversation on any role that the board could play in helping to clarify that. I know we kind of steer clear of interpreting law, but if there's any way the board could support clarity for people out there that are wondering what work requires what license.

Sydney (00:16:07):

Chair Hanell, our AEG Elizabeth Lagerberg has her hand up and I have a feeling it's going to be something related to that.

Hanell (00:16:16):

Very good. Elizabeth.

Elizabeth (00:16:19):

Actually it was just on general outreach. This is just on a personal note. My son has three of his best friends, got degrees in geology and other states and came here and didn't know what kinds of opportunities there were for geologists. I don't know what kind of outreach that you can do for that, but again, it wouldn't do any good because for schools, because they came from other schools, but they ended up, one of them got his RN and went into nursing and another one ended up going and getting a master's in something else. And so you're losing people that are here that aren't aware of what opportunities there are and so then they go do something different. So I don't know how you handle that, but there's got to be definitely, I agree with you guys. You need more outreach to get people into the field, I think.

(00:17:21):

And as far as telling people when you have to be licensed, I don't know, I feel like you guys all have a pretty good handle on that, but I would suggest when you get people that are doing hydro, I think we have an example of somebody doing hydro this last month in one of a letter of education, encourage people that are doing it to get licensed, have some kind of a spiel that you can give that says, "look, it's not that hard and you have this great experience and we need more people licensed in hydrogeology" so that you're ready when those things come up so that your letter of education is more encouraging people to get licensed because they have an opportunity. So, that's all.

Tebb (00:18:13):

Oh, I'm sorry.

Sydney (00:18:15):

Go ahead, Tom.

Tebb (00:18:18):

I think the letter you're referring to was one of my corrective action letters. There was a geologist who was doing some hydrogeology and I think the outcome of that case was to letter of education and encourage that person to seek their hydrogeology specialty license. So I wholeheartedly agree.

Carla Brock (00:18:46):

I know we don't pose a newsletter anymore and we don't really have a good way of getting news snippets or things like that easily out to either licensees or I guess people who might be interested in

licensure. But I think people could learn a lot from the decisions and recommendations that we make when we review complaint cases. And I wonder if there's a way that we could, without sharing details or names, but somehow share the summary of our conclusions of those with a broader audience. I mean, I know they're available here if people dig into the meeting minutes of the board meetings, but I wonder if there's a way we could also share a short summary of those things with a wider audience.

Elizabeth (00:19:42):

Yeah, I would say from a legal perspective, it's okay if you had a newsletter, it's okay to lay out those situations and say "this type of activity is considered, we had sent out a letter of education in this sort of situation," and again, as long as you don't put the names in, you can say, "here's a type of complaint we received and here's the response," or there's ways to do that. But without a newsletter, I'm not sure exactly how you get out to people other than having maybe on your website interesting facts or something that might engage people.

Hanell (00:20:35):

Arlene, I see your hand up.

Elizabeth (00:20:38):

Yeah, thank you.

Eileen (00:20:39):

I didn't realize that this board ever even had a newsletter. Thanks, Carla. When was that? What decade? What happened? Why don't we have one? What? It sounds exciting.

Carla Brock (00:20:54):

Long, long time ago, in the first five, 10 years of licensing board or...

Sydney (00:21:02):

I mean, it was within the last 10 years. I couldn't tell you exactly.

Eileen (00:21:06):

Is it something that we'd want to resurrect? Is that something that the Department of Licensing is able to provide for us or anything?

Carla Brock (00:21:18):

If I can be so bold, I can answer that. Yes. If you produce it, we will figure out how to distribute it. I think in terms of resources, from the agency's perspective, what we can probably do is we can try and make it look presentable. So in terms of formatting and proofreading, we can help with that. But in terms of content, that would be on the board to create. But obviously we can absolutely support you in how to distribute it and get it out there.

Eileen (00:21:57):

Do you have a professional organization in the state of Washington that puts out newsletter? You could also, they could include board licensing, board news or something like that.

Carla Brock (00:22:13):

Yes. Engineering... Engineers do they put out, I think it's quarterly or semi-annual, one or two other, but it's pretty lengthy. I don't know that we can get something like that.

Eileen (00:22:25):

You'd probably get lost in there. No, I was just thinking that if they put out a geology newsletter within the organization, you could just have a section in there for your guys' news. But if you think it would get lost, then that's not going to do any good. Another option might be to combine your design boards and have a newsletter that goes out that addresses landscape, landscape architecture, geology, is that it? I can't remember. Yeah, I think that's it for those that could come together as a reasonable newsletter.

Tebb (00:23:23):

This is board member Tab. There is a hydrogeology symposium that's I think offered every other year. And I know that we set up a booth typically or have set up a booth at that function, but we really don't have the... It would be nice if we had some statistics or something that, or like you say, talking points or one pager that talked about the differences between a geology and hydrogeology license and why it's important to pursue the specialty if you're in a particular field.

Hanell (00:24:12):

Are there other board member... Or, sorry, this is Chair Hanell. Are there any other board member opinions or thoughts on the idea of working towards a newsletter? Is it something that the board would want to take up for further discussion or possibly set as a goal? Or does that feel like we want to focus our efforts on a different type of outreach? Vice Chair Brock.

Carla Brock (00:24:46):

The Oregon Geologist Board has a really nice newsletter. We've probably all seen it. I think it's really useful. I'd certainly be willing to pitch in and help prepare content for a newsletter. What I'm worried will happen is that we'll do it for a year or two and then we'll lose interest and-

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:25:04]

Speaker 2 (00:25:03):

What will happen is that we'll do it for a year or two and then we'll lose interest and I don't think that provides benefit to the licensees, so we'd want some commitments that we could keep it going, but that's my thought.

Speaker 3 (00:25:24):

Board Member Webb, was your hand up?

Speaker 4 (00:25:29):

Yeah, I'm not hearing enthusiasm and excitement, so it doesn't... I'm with Carla about... It would take the outreach committee probably bearing the brunt of a lot of the creation of it, and I'm not hearing a lot of excitement about it. So anyway, that's just all I have to say about it.

Speaker 5 (00:25:53):

This is board member Struthers, I think the concept of a newsletter is a pretty good one. I find the Oregon one to be also very useful, but I shared Carla's concern that we could fail to generate material for it.

Speaker 3 (00:26:17):

Sydney.

Sydney (00:26:22):

I am hearing from the board that you guys are at least interested in exploring the concept of a newsletter. So, I think what we as staff can do is we can reach out to the staff with the Oregon board and see what their structure and their framework is behind the scenes to bring all of that content together and then bring that back to the board for you guys to look and see if there's a way to modify it to work for us.

Speaker 3 (00:26:51):

That would be great. Thank you, Sydney.

Speaker 6 (00:26:57):

This is Board Member Tebb, I would support that as well.

Sydney (00:27:01):

We can do that.

Speaker 3 (00:27:07):

Brian, is there any other discussion on outreach for this meeting?

Speaker 6 (00:27:26):

Do we have a plan for this fall or do we have another meeting between now and then that we can choose a school or two to visit?

Sydney (00:27:38):

We'll have another meeting in September and at this point the universities are all pretty much out or getting close to being out for the summer and just working with them with some of our other boards. They haven't been willing to set calendars or anything like that because they don't even know what their calendars are going to look like for next year. So, they told us reach out late summer and so we can certainly add geology to the list and reach out to the colleges and universities late this summer when they have a better idea what their calendars are going to look like for the semester.

Speaker 6 (00:28:12):

Great, thank you.

Speaker 3 (00:28:13):

All right, this is Chair Hanell. Any other discussion on outreach? All right, hearing none. Let's shift to topic 5.3, which is the idea of a continuing conversation in this meeting about setting goals for the board and using that to help kind of guide our work. So I'll turn that over to you, Sydney.

Sydney (00:28:52):

Move this over. So just as a quick recap, the board did establish some priorities previously. We just haven't drilled those down into specific goals to work on for this year. And to preface this, I understand we are halfway through the year, so at this point we're basically setting a couple of things that we can work on for the latter half of the year and then looking ahead to 2024. The other thing is that the last meeting of the year, for this group, that will be in December, we'll have this discussion again for 2024, but these priorities and goals will at least give us a foundation to bring back to the board and plan for '24 going, okay, these are the priorities that were set. Do we need to refine those at all looking ahead and then look at the goals, this is what we're able to accomplish, this is what needs to move forward and just make minor tweaks moving forward.

(00:29:48):

So, it's just getting this initial foundation and then I think these discussions will be much, much faster, but that will be an ongoing thing at the end of each year is to have a wrap up of what was accomplished during the previous year and then looking ahead to the next. The priorities that this board did set were to establish a process for the specialty exam review, which is in progress and we'll keep the board posted on that. Clear policy statement on titles of geologist, hydro geologist and engineering geologist, participation in the COEs and the charter completion. And so wanting to start with that, see if there are any adjustments within that list that the board is like, now that we've had some of these discussions, let's tweak this or I feel like we need to add that and then we'll pull those over. I think from what I'm hearing, I think we'll be able to drill down these goals pretty quickly. So, are there any priority changes or shifts or tweaks that anyone would like to see?

Speaker 6 (00:31:03):

This is board member Tebb. On the second priority about a clear policy statement, I think there was recently a case involving the engineers that I think either settled or was resolved, but that did not clarify how the term engineer is to be used. And maybe Elizabeth can articulate this a little better than I can. So

I don't know if that muddies the water, so to speak on our intent to have a clear policy statement here. But it would be probably worthwhile to hear from Elizabeth if she can recall that case.

Speaker 8 (00:31:43):

Yes, I'm intimately familiar with that case. Right now, the plaintiff has asked the Supreme Court to look at it. I don't think the Supreme Court will look at the decision, but essentially, the issue that they brought before the Court was use of the term engineer and whether you had to be licensed to use the title engineer. The Court ended up in the... The Court of Appeals ended up saying that the plaintiff had no standing to bring that case. So, you're right, it did not get decided.

(00:32:24):

There was no decision made on the issue of use of the title engineer, standing means whether you have a case that you can bring before the court. The board of engineers is going to start working with the agencies and other stakeholders to try to clarify how the use of the term engineer is going to be better defined. And I think the idea is eventually they're going to create an RCW that has a better definition of when you can use the title engineer. So they're going to go for an actual RCW. With respect to this clear policy statement on engineers, on geologists, hydro geologists and engineering geologists, I believe that in order to get to where you want to be, you'll eventually probably need at least a WAC on that because just a policy statement is not... It's difficult to enforce policy statements. The preference is that if you're going to have something that you're going to use for enforcement purposes, it should be in a WAC rather than in a policy. But policy is a great place to start. So, start out with the policy, get it worked out, and then once you feel like you've got a good concept, then you can start putting it into WAC getting the stakeholder input and that sort of thing. But yeah, the engineer decision did not help, so which is fine because it's nice. It's better for the stakeholders to determine how that should happen rather than a judge who really knows nothing about engineering. So, it all worked out for the best, I think.

Speaker 6 (00:34:16):

Thank you, Elizabeth.

Sydney (00:34:21):

Hearing that these priorities are still the overarching umbrella that the board would like to focus on, what I can do is... Pull these over to the next slide, just so we can keep everything nice and clear. It sounds like from what Elizabeth is saying, that if the board is in support, one of the goals won't be met in 2023. But one of the goals that we can have on the list and be working toward is a WAC review and update. I will preface that by saying from the board staff side, we've actually been running into a couple of issues within the WACS that we would eventually like to bring to the board anyway, so we can build those in as part of the overall WAC update as well. It's a couple of clarification issues that until an issue gets into the mud, you don't realize it's muddy.

Speaker 6 (00:35:24):

Yeah, this is Board Member Tebb. I thought when I was preparing my materials to present this issue that the WAC was fairly clear about when the use of a title of the geologist would be required relative to

licensing, but maybe it just needs to be beefed up a bit because we're not achieving the goal that we want. I'll defer to the rest of the board on how they want to proceed here.

Speaker 3 (00:35:58):

This is Chair Hanell. I feel like the current WAC is pretty clear on when you need to use the title of geologist or not. I think it's a little bit muddy when it gets into where geology and where the specialties overlap and when a specialty endorsement is required versus just the geologist license. That seems to be where the confusion that I am hearing resides.

Speaker 6 (00:36:41):

Yep, I would agree with that.

Speaker 5 (00:36:49):

This is board member Struthers. I had a question for Chair Hanell. Just for clarification, you're talking about efforts to delineate the limits of practice?

Speaker 3 (00:37:07):

Yes, this is or Chair Hanell. So, delineating when an engineering geology license would be required versus a geology license or when a hydrogeology license would be required versus a geology license.

Sydney (00:37:46):

So with that, I'll go out on a limb and just say continuing [inaudible 00:37:52]

Speaker 3 (00:37:53):

Oh, sorry, Sydney. I see a couple hands still. Deb and then Eileen.

Speaker 9 (00:38:02):

Which one of us do you want first?

Speaker 3 (00:38:06):

We'll start with Deb. I saw her hand first and then we'll go to Eileen.

Speaker 10 (00:38:09):

Well, I took my hand down, but no, thank you Casey. I was going to just make sure that we had statutory ability to clarify that in rule and so, this was a question mostly directed at Elizabeth to make sure that we can include that in WAC and if that is the case, and this seems like the smartest direction forward, rather than trying to create a policy because in actuality we can't enforce policies. We can enforce WACs. That was my only question. I'll put my hand down.

Speaker 8 (00:38:48):

You're asking if the board has authority to create a WAC from the RCW? I want to look at it to be certain, but I imagine it is something that you need to do that you're supposed to do in order to be able to enforce it. I'm sure that the statute defines that there are different forms of practice, but probably not enough information so that you can actually enforce it. I'll take a look at it and make sure, but I can't imagine that you don't have that authority.

Speaker 3 (00:39:31):

All right. And then, Eileen.

Speaker 9 (00:39:34):

Yeah, thank you. I was wondering if there's any lessons that we can learn from California. They're the only other state that has a hydro at least specialty and there's... I think just two other states that have the engineering geology specialty for helping us with anything that we're looking at being challenged with. Just a thought, maybe a chat with their administrator if they seem to have the same kinds of issues over and over again that maybe they resolved them by certain kind of language or something, just a thought. And with that thought, if that would be something that our administrators of our board would be willing to communicate with their administrator to look at some ideas. Thanks.

Sydney (00:40:33):

That's absolutely something we can reach out to them on.

Speaker 5 (00:40:42):

Yeah, this is Board Member Struthers. My understanding of the, and we may find this is incorrect, but my understanding of the California CEG licensure is that it's a title licensure and that they do not restrict the practice of elements of engineering geology by geology licensees. So, I found it to be kind of an interesting thing.

Sydney (00:41:25):

Okay, staff can reach out to them and get specifically what their requirements and allowances are and bring that back to the board just if for no other reason than for information.

Speaker 9 (00:41:39):

Yeah, thank you.

Sydney (00:41:43):

So on the goals, we'll continue with the specialty exam review. Again, understanding that this is going to be one that continues well beyond '23. As far as participation in the COEs, again, staff has let the agency know that this is a high priority for the board and travel in general is a high priority. We're moving forward with making sure that that is included in the budgets as best and as much as we can allow within the program. We'll bring any information back that we continue to get on that. But as far as we

know, that will be allowed moving forward. For the goal, I guess... For '23 participation in the fall conference in Spokane [inaudible 00:42:48].

Speaker 3 (00:42:56):

This is Chair Hanell. Sydney, is it correct that at least the request has been for travel budget for all board members to attend the fall conference in Spokane?

Sydney (00:43:10):

That is correct. The full board as well as hopefully a couple of staff members as well.

Speaker 9 (00:43:21):

Is that for the COE only? Right?

Sydney (00:43:26):

That would be for the entire ASBO conference.

Speaker 9 (00:43:30):

Okay. Field trip, the meeting, I'm thinking that whoever our delegate is the only person that would participate in the meeting. You might want to keep that in mind as well.

Speaker 2 (00:43:44):

I mean, I would encourage everyone to participate in the meeting just because we only have to send one person, but it's interesting to listen to the entire meeting and hear what all of the things that go on there. If we're there anyway and we have the availability to do it, I would encourage people to attend some or all of the meeting.

Speaker 9 (00:44:02):

I agree. I guess what I was thinking, and maybe I misspoke, is that we only have one person that votes on stuff, but yeah, I think anybody can... I believe any board members can attend [inaudible 00:44:16] licensees?

Sydney (00:44:18):

Yeah, that is correct. And that's the way most of the national organizations operate is that you'll have a voting delegate and probably an alternate, in case something happens the delegate can't attend. But then any other attendees also participate and listen, they just don't cast the vote. It's just that person who's going to cast votes or anything like that for four. All right, and then... Person on the right spot and then just the charter completion. So are there any other goals that the board would like to set for the remainder of this year? Again, understanding we're already halfway there, but even looking down the line into '24 that we can begin laying the groundwork on?

Speaker 8 (00:45:12):

Sorry Sydney, just to circle back, I wanted to let people know that you have, under 18.2.20.050, the board has the authority to designate specialties of geology to be licensed under this chapter. So, there you go. You have the authority.

Sydney (00:45:30):

Thanks, Elizabeth.

Speaker 3 (00:45:30):

This is Chair Hanell. Just consideration, I think this set of goals is great and will move us forward for the rest of 2023. But in looking forward in 2023 into 2024, proposing a goal related to outreach, be that continued discussion on the newsletter, be that campus visits, but a renewed focus, I would say, on outreach activities.

Speaker 6 (00:46:21):

This is Board Member Tebb. I wholeheartedly support that.

Sydney (00:46:33):

Okay. I think that is a very healthy list and that certainly gives us as staff a much better direction and focus as we're supporting you guys in the background and helps us as we make requests for budget or any other asks of the agency that helps us tie these back in to the board's goals and ultimately into the agencies as well. If there's nothing else to add, we'll move forward with these.

Speaker 3 (00:47:11):

All right. Thank you, Sydney, and thank you board for great discussion. That set of goals looks fantastic again and excited we're moving forward, especially on the specialty exam review piece and making solid progress there. We'll move now to item 6.1 in new business, a board vacancy update. Sydney, will you please take this topic?

Sydney (00:47:41):

Absolutely. As the board is aware, after we had already posted the agenda, our new department of licensing director Marcus Glasper, did make an appointment to this board. Carrie Gillum will be joining the board July 1st, 2023. I did receive a question about her appointment and that it is not the full four years and that is because Ms. Gillum will be filling an unexpired term for us. And so after that, if she chooses to stay with the board, she'll have the opportunity to request reappointment to the full four-year term as well. And Ms. Gillum is on the call today, at least she was, I hope she wasn't called away, but give her an opportunity to introduce herself to the board before she is officially with us for the next meeting.

Speaker 7 (00:48:35):

So yes, I am still here. Carrie Gillum. I'm not exactly sure how much information I should give about myself right now. I'm currently working for the City of Tumwater. I'm a licensed hydro geologist. I think I've been licensed hydro geologist since 2016, but I'm working for the City of Tumwater as part of their water utility and I'm responsible for the delivery of water to the community here and keeping up and making sure that it's working every day. I'm very excited about being on the board. I'm especially excited about all the outreach communication that's being proposed. I would like to very much be included with that. I wasn't sure how much I could put my hand up and say, Hey, include me. But yes, I do get the opportunity here working for the city to do a lot of outreach and I would love to be able to use my experience here to do that as well with the board. So, hello. And yes, if there's any questions, feel free to ask.

Speaker 6 (00:49:45):

Welcome, Carrie.

Speaker 7 (00:49:46):

Thank you.

Speaker 9 (00:49:49):

Yeah, I just want to say, did I pressure you too much?

Speaker 7 (00:49:53):

Actually, not. Eileen, I needed it. I really did. But yes, it was through your encouragement that I really heavily considered it and I'm glad that I did.

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Speaker 11 (00:50:03):

Encouragement that I really heavily considered it. And I'm glad that I did because I was very interested in, now that I have the license, "What is it like on the other side?"

Speaker 12 (00:50:10):

The other side?

Speaker 11 (00:50:11):

The other side. Yes. Kind of weird. That's behind the scenes.

Speaker 12 (00:50:15):

That's good. So just in context for everyone else, the city of Tumwater reached out to the citizens and asked if we wanted to participate in a survey, sort of what our tap water might have in it, and I think it was looking for lead and some other things.

Speaker 11 (00:50:38):

Was it like a proper sampling?

Speaker 12 (00:50:40):

Yeah. And of course I'm like, "Yeah, sign me up. Of course I would do this." And so they dropped off bottles on my porch and I followed all the instructions and put the bottles back out, which were collected. And turns out my water's awesome, right? It's great. But I took the opportunity because the outreach came out from Carrie in the email, I think it was an email, right? Or something. And I reached out to her and said, "Hey, you're a geologist, guess what? You might want to do this thing." So yeah, well welcome aboard. I'm so glad. Now I know that my pressure works.

Speaker 11 (00:51:20):

I don't know if it's Sicily pressure. It's gentle coaxing.

Speaker 12 (00:51:23):

Yeah, nudge, nudge.

Speaker 11 (00:51:26):

And like I said, if you had not said anything, I would've not necessarily known of the opportunity. So that was just a form of outreach that was needed. So thank you.

Speaker 12 (00:51:36):

[inaudible 00:51:36] Yes, outreach. Anytime we can find opportunities.

Speaker 11 (00:51:37):

Yes.

Speaker 12 (00:51:39):

Oh, you're welcome. And thank you for joining.

Speaker 11 (00:51:41):

Yes, thank you.

Speaker 3 (00:51:45):

This is Jair Hinnel. Welcome, Carrie. We're very excited to have you joining our board and very excited about your enthusiasm about outreach as well. So looking forward to working with you on the board.

Sydney (00:52:00):

And so in addition to Ms. Gillum, we do have one other vacancy that is our public member position. And unfortunately we still do not have any applicants for that position. Staff is working behind the scenes. This is not the only board facing that issue right now and it's director and governor appointments. We're just not getting the interest in our boards and commissions at the moment from the public member side. So staff is working behind the scenes, building some additional relationships through some non-traditional routes, things that we haven't tried before to see if we can get some additional interest. So as we make progress on that or have additional applicants, we will certainly keep the board informed, but as of right now, that position remains vacant.

Speaker 3 (00:52:41):

All right. This is Jair Hinnel. Thank you for that update, Sydney on our board vacancies. Let's move now to item 6.2, the spring exam and score release update, and we'll turn it over to Deb for this topic.

Speaker 13 (00:53:07):

Thank you so much. Sydney, are we going to display the statistics on that? Thank you. There we go. It's always easier to talk when there's a visual. So we completed our spring examination, so we did coincide, I think we were off by one day with ASBOGs, their testing of the fundamentals and the practice of examinations. At the same time we were doing the engineering geology and the hydrogeology specialty examinations. We had a team that was proctoring at the DOL offices. Some of those participants in that proctoring are on this call and I'd like to call out my colleagues, Lupe Ramos and Becky Dickerson for their fantastic work in one, getting our candidates ready to take all of the examinations and then just their care and assistance in making sure that all of the candidates were able to sit for the examination and it worked out really well.

(00:54:21):

We did the hydrogeology and the engineering geology on the same day, but we did it back to back, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. And we were able to do it in the DOL offices, so we were able to save on costs. So also a good thing. So in terms of the pass rates, for the, let's see, I'm looking at the fundamentals. For all jurisdictions, it looked like there was only 65.7% of the applicants or the candidates that passed the examination. However, in Washington, we had 74.5%. That was pretty good. In terms of the practices of geology, the all jurisdictions were 80.3% in Washington was a hundred percent. So I've got it, let me see, I have in my own notes.

(00:55:19):

ASBOG let us know that for the fundamentals of geology nationwide, there were 752 candidates that took that examination. So for total candidates that passed, that equated to 494 candidates practices of geology. So again, across the nation, 407 candidates that took that exam with 327 that passed. So that's pretty good. The areas of study that they did were so general and field geology, 21% of the questions for the FG were in that area. And for the PG it was 20% mineralogy, petrology and geochemistry. And if I get these wrong, I hope you don't grade me on this.

(00:56:18):

We had 11% of the questions were in the FG and 5% of the questions for the PG sedimentology, stratigraphy and paleontology, 12% for the FG, 6% for the PG, geomorphology surface, oh, I can't even say that. Surface processes and quantary geology, 13% for FG and 8% structure. Tectonics and seismology, 11% for FG and 8% for the PG hydrology. So there are some hydrology questions that come onto these tests. There was 12% of the examination questions for the FG, 19% for the PG engineering geology consisted of 11% for the FG and 19% for the pg. And then economic geology and energy resources, the FG exam had 9% and the PG exam had 15%. So all toll 100% of the questions.

(00:57:28):

I have our neighboring state statistics, I'm not sure if anyone was interested in that. If you would like to, I can share that information. If not, I don't have to. We're curious how we did compared to our neighbors. California had 60 candidates that took the examination for fundamentals of geology. Oh no, I'm sorry. They had 142 candidates total take the examination. 60 failed, 82 passed. So their pass rate was 57%. Idaho had a total of nine candidates take the fundamentals with four failing and five passing. Oregon had 19 candidates take the examination. 16 passed and three failed. And then Washington, we're right in there with 51 candidates that took the examination. We had 38 pass and 13 fail, so 74% passing.

(00:58:43):

Practices of geology, again, we fared really well. California had 74 candidates that sat for the examination total. 57 passed, 17 failed Idaho had four candidates take the examination and they were 50 50. So two passed and two failed. Oregon, seven candidates sat for the practices of geology with six passing and one failing. And then Washington, we had 32 candidates sit for the practices and 100% passed that exam. So we did pretty well. We also have pretty healthy numbers compared to our neighbors. Let's look at the specialty exams. If you can move to the next slide Sydney.

(00:59:37):

So for the engineering geology examination, we had 13 candidates that sat for that exam. Our pass rates, unfortunately, were really not looking so great. We had 38.5% that passed. We did do better than Oregon. Oregon had two candidates sit for the examination and none of those candidates passed. Let's go to the next slide. So for hydrogeology, again we had 10 candidates sit for the examination and we only had a 30% pass rate on that. So those are not great. I think that definitely tells us that we probably need to work on that exam. Carly have a question?

Carla (01:00:32):

Yeah, thanks. I think when we looked at these scores last fall, we talked about looking farther back than just the past few years to get a better idea. I don't remember if we did that in December. No, we would've done it in March, so I don't think we've done it yet, but it would be good to go back like 10 years or even a little more.

(01:00:53):

I'm not sure that looking at scores across Covid and it helps us to identify problems with the test. I think if we look at a wider range or a larger date range and scores, that might be more helpful. I mean this is

helpful of course, but I'd like to understand if this is a problem that we have with the exams or if we're just seeing some natural variation in pass rates that we have seen before.

Speaker 13 (01:01:28):

I'm going to put that on my action item list. Carla, I don't think it made it on the actions last time. I think that we have, I'm not sure how far back, I don't know that we have necessarily 10 years worth of data, but I know easily back to 2016. But I will find as far back as I can go. Anything beyond that will we require going through the archives and I'm not sure that we have the capacity for that, but whatever we have readily available, I will pull that data.

Carla (01:01:58):

Thanks. I think that will be helpful.

Speaker 13 (01:02:02):

And with that, I think that is all the information that I have. If you have questions, please feel free.

Speaker 3 (01:02:10):

And this is Jair Hinnel, I think in the newsletter we were talking about, I don't know if those are available anywhere, the old ones, but they used to have the pass rates in those as well, like the number of candidates that took the test, the number that passed. And so there might be, if those are still available anywhere and haven't been archived, an easy place to mine some data from.

Speaker 13 (01:02:36):

Okay.

Speaker 3 (01:02:38):

And also if I recall, it might've been in our meeting with Oregon about the engineering geology exam or in one of our board meetings. I forget, but I thought Deb, you shared a stat that there have been 71 people that have obtained their engineering geology endorsement since it's been a thing since 2001. Does that sound,

Speaker 13 (01:03:10):

That sounds really, that sounds familiar. I would have to verify. Probably need to look through that because I don't have that statistic with me right at the tip of my, but it was not a very large candidate pool over the course of the history of it. You're correct. And that was between, and Washington actually has, we have far more candidates that sit for the examination on engineering geology than Oregon does. So makes sense. It's not a huge number. Which is also why we're happy that we're able to do it within the DOL facilities and save in terms of costs of administering that examination. That helps so that we can focus our efforts then in terms of looking at reviewing the examinations and making sure that they're still defensible.

Speaker 3 (01:04:14):

Right. Any other questions from the board around examination results? All right, hearing none. We'll move to item 6.3, discussion of ASBOG testing centers in Washington and we'll turn this one over to Sydney.

Sydney (01:04:39):

Thank you. This will be a rather quick one. At the last board meeting, the board had requested a list of ASBOG testing centers in Washington state now that we have transitioned to computer-based testing. We have eight testing centers around the state. They're in Mount Lake Terrace, Fife, Olympia, Camus, Spokane, Liberty Lakes, Pasco and Yakima. And so with that I can answer any questions, but that was a quick one that the board wanted returned.

Speaker 13 (01:05:14):

That's a good spread. That's a really good spread around the state I think. Is that just all of the places that Prometric has testing centers or did we pick? That's just all of them?

Sydney (01:05:28):

Yeah, that is determined by Prometric and that's where they have theirs in Washington.

Speaker 13 (01:05:34):

Cool.

Speaker 3 (01:05:41):

All right. Thank you Sydney. So now we'll move to item number seven, complaint cases for review. And just a reminder, we had modified our agenda at the beginning to remove item seven one and seven two. So we'll turn this one over to Sydney.

Sydney (01:06:04):

And since Tom is on the road, I will pull up his case manager report and read it for the board. The complaint summary for 22071043, the geologist licensing board and department of licensing received a complaint regarding a person practicing the profession of geology in the state of Washington as defined in statute and rule without a valid professional license. It is alleged that the person who stamped at least 14 scientific reports as a professional geologist without a valid geologist license. The facts are that the person to whom the complaint was filed against is currently licensed as a professional geologist with a hydrogeologist endorsement in the state of Washington before and after the complaint and corrective action was filed.

(01:07:05):

The person acknowledged in written form on August 4th, 2022 that his professional geologist license and specialty endorsement expired and that he was unaware and he had not paid his annual licensing fees during the period of June 8th, 2020 through November 2nd, 2020, in which he signed at least 14

professional geological reports and documents with an expired license. The person explained that his place of business moved while the renewal notice would have been sent out. The person acknowledges that his license had expired but that it wasn't intentional, rather an oversight on his part. The respondent renewed their license and has a current active license with an expiration date of June 7th, 2024, and the case manager recommends that the board close this case with a letter of education.

(01:08:12):

I don't know if Tom has anything to add to that.

Tebb (01:08:16):

No, thank you. That was a great summary. I think there was a bit of an oversight on this person's part. It sounded they acknowledged the fact that they had let the license lapse and had to do with their place of business being relocated. And so I think it was an honest mistake and it was corrected as soon as they were made aware of it. So that's my recommendation.

Sydney (01:08:55):

So then with that, we just need a motion from the board to approve closing the case with the letter of recommendation. Sorry, letter of education.

Eileen (01:09:07):

Hi, this is Eileen. I so move that we approve as recommended.

Carla (01:09:17):

This is Carla. I second the motion.

Speaker 3 (01:09:19):

All right, any further discussion? All right, we'll call for a vote. All in favor say aye. Aye.

Speaker 14 (01:09:33):

Aye.

Carla (01:09:33):

Aye.

Tebb (01:09:33):

Aye.

Speaker 3 (01:09:40):

Any opposed? All right, hearing none. Motion carries and we'll move to item 7.4 and turn it back over to Sydney for a summary.

Sydney (01:09:57):

Thank you. This is going to be case number 2022081182. The complaint summary is the Washington State Geology Licensing Board received a complaint regarding a possible unlicensed practice of hydrogeology by a licensed geologist. The complainant suggested that stamped reports with an active geologist stamp that contained professional work that shall be performed by a licensed hydrogeologist. The facts are in accordance with the solid waste regulation under WAC 173351490. Geological reports are required to include hydrogeological interpretations, low path analysis, geochemical interpretations, hydraulic testing and analysis, background water quality determinations and groundwater statistical calculations. The hydrogeological conceptual model developed in a hydrogeological study under WAC 173351490 forms the foundation for the design and performance of the detection monitoring system at landfills and any subsequent groundwater monitoring in the event of a release. Without a well-defined hydrogeological conceptual site model based on a properly completed hydrogeological study, the monitoring network may not be protective of groundwater by ensuring that a release to groundwater from a landfill could be identified and or remediated.

(01:13:36):

The respondent is a licensed geologist with the state of Washington who appears to have engaged in the unlicensed practice of hydrogeology. The Department of Ecology's Solid Waste Program in the eastern region office in Spokane has received several hydrogeological reports stamped solely by the respondent since at least May of 2020. And under the impression from written and verbal communication to ecology staff that the respondent was a licensed hydrogeologist. The respondent submitted several reports of explicit hydrogeological nature to Ecology's solid waste program between May, 2020 and January of 2022 with titles such as Hydrogeologic Work Plan and Hydrogeologic Study that included hydrogeologic interpretations and are intended to set hydrogeologic framework for groundwater monitoring and the regulated landfills. In accordance with Washington Administrative Code, the solid waste regulation WAC 173351490 173351140, and 173351300. These reports are required to include hydrogeological interpretations, flowpath analysis, geochemical interpretations, hydraulic testing and analysis, conceptual models developed in the hydrogeologic study under WAC 173351490 forms the foundation for the design and performance of the detection monitoring system at the landfill and any subsequent groundwater monitoring in the event to release.

(01:13:36):

Without a well-defined hydrogeologic conceptual site model based on the properly completed hydrogeologic study, the monitoring network may not be protective of groundwater to ensure that a release of groundwater from the landfill is identified or remediated. I reviewed the materials sent and have the following observations. There's some ambiguity between the definition of what a professional geologist is able to perform and the sub-discipline of hydrogeology and the profession of hydrogeologist. In my opinion, the respondent is qualified to perform the tasks of a professional hydrogeologist, but is lacking the specialty certification license as required by Washington State Law and the Geologist Licensing Board.

(01:14:15):

My recommendation is to send a letter of education to the respondent describing the requirement of specialty licenses for the practice of hydrogeology in the State of Washington. Failure to do so may result in further action by the Geology licensing board and could result in suspension of his geology license. The letter should encourage the respondent to pursue his hydrogeology specialty license in the state of Washington so that he can continue this type of work within his professional practice. The respondent seems very qualified to take the Hydrogeologist specialty exam and the recommendation is to close with a letter of education.

Tebb (01:14:58):

Yeah, this is board member [inaudible 01:15:00]. Thank you Sidney for reading all the way through that. You did really well with some of-

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Speaker 15 (01:15:03):

Sydney, for reading all the way through that. You did really well with some of those terms, so hat's off to you. Again, I think this is related to the topic at hand that we had earlier, the discussion in the board meeting. So this is an example of where I think a little bit more clarity is needed, and in this case, I think the respondent was qualified after reading and reviewing those reports. This was lacking the specialty license. So that's my recommendation.

Speaker 3 (01:15:40):

Right. This is Chair Hinell. Is there a motion to approve?

Speaker 16 (01:15:48):

Yeah, this is Board Member Scruthers. I move to approve this finding.

Carla (01:15:54):

This is Carla. I second the motion.

Speaker 3 (01:16:07):

Right. The motion has been moved and seconded. Any additional discussion? All right. Hearing no further discussion, we'll move to a vote. All those in favor, please say aye. Aye.

Carla (01:16:26):

Aye.

Speaker 15 (01:16:26):

Aye.

Speaker 3 (01:16:31):

Any opposed? All right. Hearing none, the motion passes. So with that we'll move to item eight on our agenda, which are some report outs from licensing board staff and we will turn it over to Sydney to facilitate.

Sydney (01:16:57):

Thank you. We do not have any committee or task force reports other than what has already been covered earlier in the agenda. For our complaint status report, we currently have one case that is still in investigation, four that are under management review, two of which I believe were just closed out, for a grand total of five, so there will be one forthcoming. Under our licensee count for our geologist licenses... And I just realized that graphic got very far off. I apologize. The new way that we're trying to present the agendas and that did not translate well.

(01:17:48):

So right now for a total number of geologist licenses in the state we have 2,346, and then under our specialties, those numbers got very far off. I apologize. If I'm reading it correctly, it looks like... I cannot read that correctly. I apologize. Let's see if I can pull it up in our packet and I can read those.

Speaker 17 (01:18:27):

Do you need some help Sydney?

Sydney (01:18:28):

No, I just had to pull it up so that we could read it. So for engineering geologists, we have a grand total of 238, hydrogeologists we have 438, and those who have both, the engineering geologist and hydrogeologist, is a total of 91, for a total of 767 specialty licenses. So were there any questions on the licensee count? And those are all of our new licensees as of May 8th, 2023. I will not read through them as they're all in your packet.

Speaker 3 (01:19:12):

This is Chair Hinell, just a quick question on that, Sydney. I see it looks like those are the new geologists that have been licensed. Do we have the new specialty endorsements listed anywhere?

Sydney (01:19:31):

I do not know if... No new endorsements. So the endorsements were not included on this list.

Speaker 3 (01:19:40):

Okay. So for those that passed the specialty exams this last time around, they'll be on our list for next meeting?

Sydney (01:19:47):

Yes. I will make sure that those are on the list for next meeting.

Speaker 3 (01:19:51):

Okay, thank you.

Sydney (01:20:02):

Before I dive into our action item list, just a quick report out from the Board Commission Outreach Unit. We did receive a request from the committee that is assisting with planning for the ASBOG meeting regarding utilizing our licensee contact abilities for outreach for the event. I did dig into that. We cannot do a blanket email to all of our licensees just because agency policy, the information that we collect for contacting all of our licensees. Because of issues that the agency has had in the past, we just cannot send blanket to all of our licensees because it's not communications that they signed up for, as far as outreach for the event. But what we can do is utilize our listserv to send out information regarding the fall ASBOG event, and so that is a communication tool available for that group. And I know several of our board members are assisting with that, so just wanted to share that, that anything we can send out on our listserv we are happy to do.

(01:21:11):

The other thing is that we have received a request from the board for additional budget reports. We are working on those. Our budget manager is having conversations with all of our chairs and vice chairs to develop a robust report that will include the information the board actually needs. So wanted to make sure that the board was aware that that was not ignored or anything like that. We are aware of it and we are working on compiling a report behind the scenes. That will be something that the board will be able to effectively use moving forward.

(01:21:49):

And so reviewing our action item list, the exam committees will review and go over the exam results in the question banks and we'll be reaching out again over the coming months to set up those meetings. Researching whether there are any issues with verifying candidates for licensure or whether they're qualified based on the curriculum, that is still in progress and being researched. Program funding, structure presentation, again, that is in progress. We are working on building that to bring back to the boards.

(01:22:28):

Checking on the specialty exam frequency to administer the exam cost, budget, et cetera, that is still placed on hold just because of the shift to computer-based testing. We only have one exam cycle to gauge how much that's going to cost, the budget involved, the staff time involved, all of that. So we really just don't have enough to be able to offer a clear perspective on what the department can support as far as increasing the frequency of the specialty exam administration or changing the timing on that. So as we have additional statistical information to provide in a better analysis bring back to the board, we will do that.

(01:23:12):

The charter review is also still in progress. Strategic planning for outreach is in progress, as well as the outreach planning student outreach best practices document. All of that already discussed today. The task analysis survey results from ASBOG, that is, again, still on hold pending. We had hoped that we would hear something from ASBOG before this meeting that indicated they were hoping to have it to us by the end of May, and that did not happen. So as soon as we get that information from ASBOG, we will make sure it gets forwarded to the board.

(01:23:50):

The hydrogeology scope of practice is still in progress with committee of Tom and Jim. Updates for our new board member, that is an agenda item that has now been completed. As far as the public member, again, we'll keep the board posted as we move forward, but that item will be coming off the list after today. Reallocation process with the budget for COE attendance. Again, that is in progress. We have emphasized to the agency, in particular our budget manager, that that is probably one of the top priorities for the board moving forward, and emphasized the need for attendance at those moving forward so that hopefully we don't get in that situation again.

(01:24:38):

Also provided the list of testing centers for ASBOG CBT exams, so that item is now complete and will be moving off. And then we did ask Oregon about releasing their testing information earlier, and together we all decided that there were some potential issues with releasing prior to when ASBOG released their scores, so we ultimately released the same day. But we did put that ask out there and it ended up working out with the computer-based testing. ASBOG completed theirs much faster, and so the timing worked out with when we were able to complete scoring and all of that. So with that, I'd be happy to answer any questions. Okay.

Speaker 3 (01:25:33):

All right. Thank you for that report out, Sydney. Appreciate the status updates. So we'll move to item number nine. Public comments. You can see the sideboards up on the screen here, but I'll just reiterate. The public may address the board on matters within the board's jurisdiction, either verbally at this time 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 our board staff. Written comments are limited to no more than 500 words and will be read by staff during this portion of the meeting.

(01:26:27):

I know we do have one written comment today, but do we have any audience members, members of the public who wish to bring an issue to the board today? All right, hearing none, Sydney, I'll ask for you to read our written comment for this meeting please.

Sydney (01:27:07):

Thank you. This is a comment that was submitted by Jeff Phillips. Hello, I am a geomorphologist with an MSC degree in fluvial geomorphology and 16 years of professional experience. I would like the DOL Geologist Board to consider the following public comments regarding the Washington State geologist license as it pertains to the work in my field. The practice of geomorphology, and in particular, fluvial geomorphology, is specialized and has limited overlap with the practice of geology. Despite that fact, federal agencies, state agencies, tribes, and other organizations are requiring fluvial geomorphologists to be licensed geologists to work on river projects. By river projects I'm referring to a wide range of projects including river and stream restoration, fish passage, bank stabilization, floodplain restoration, and enhancement dam removal, irrigation diversion improvements, and many others.

(01:28:17):

As you are aware, Washington State has a long list of professional licenses to ensure that specialized services are provided by people that are appropriately educated, trained, and have the experience to complete the professional task covered under the licensure. The education, training, and experience required by the DOL geologist license are not sufficient to include the practice of geomorphology, and in particular, fluvial geomorphology. Working in rivers inherently requires a great deal of risk due to the dynamic nature of many ravine systems. This risk is multiplied when working in federal emergency management agency special flood hazard areas and/or in populated areas where private property and infrastructure are at risk. In most circumstances, this work is required to be stamped by a Washington State licensed professional engineer or LG.

(01:29:21):

There are several issues to consider relating to having river projects included under the umbrella of the geologist's license. One, geologists are not trained to be river practitioners. The field of geomorphology is an optional course to meet educational requirements, not required coursework, or experience in fluvial geomorphology is not required. The geologist education and training is focused on the science of geology and geologic investigations.

(01:29:53):

Two, the field of river restoration and other river related projects has expanded immensely in the past few decades. The field of fluvial geomorphology is large enough in Washington State to be considered under a separate licensure, particularly given the risks associated with the work. Three, the LG requirement limits the number of qualified fluvial geomorphologists that can work on specific projects. It also limits the number of qualified applicants for state agency positions and consultants working on restoration projects.

(01:30:31):

In summary, I believe that having the practice of fluvial geomorphology covered under the LG is not appropriate and should be reconsidered. My personal opinion is that a professional license for geomorphology similar to that found in other areas would be an ideal solution. A short-term option that would resolve issues for fluvial geomorphologists could be to notify the community of river practitioners that those activities are not covered under the geology license. Thank you for your consideration in this matter, Jeff Phillips.

Speaker 3 (01:31:11):

All right, thank you for sharing that comment, Sydney. I would suggest that we add this topic to the next board agenda for board discussion. Open to other suggestions from board members.

Speaker 17 (01:31:36):

I agree. I agree, Casey.

Speaker 3 (01:31:44):

All right, let's add this comment as a discussion item for our next meeting.

Sydney (01:31:52):

Absolutely.

Speaker 3 (01:31:56):

All right. With that, we'll move to item number 10 on our agenda. So 10.1. Do any board members have announcements they would like to share at our board meeting today? All right. Hearing none, I will just share one more very warm welcome to Carrie Gillum. Looking forward to Carrie joining our board officially on July 1st.

(01:32:34):

Item 10.2. Do any board members have items they would like to request for our next agenda? All right. Hearing none. I would just reiterate the discussion of the public comment. We've had some takeaways from this meeting and action items I think that we'll want to continue to follow up on next meeting, so we'll keep those going. Then item 10.3, review of action items for the next meeting. So I'll turn that over to you, Sydney.

Sydney (01:33:28):

Okay. Hopefully I captured all of them and I'm going to ask Sandra. Sandra was kind enough to share a list with me, but if I don't catch any, if she would please come off mute and fill in any blanks that I miss. First, we are going to be having Susan schedule time with both subcommittees on the specialty exam review to get that completed with staff. I'll also be reaching out to the Oregon board for their structure and content for the newsletter and returning that to the board. We'll reach out to the colleges and universities to begin scheduling geology outreach for this fall and we'll complete that later this summer.

(01:34:12):

We'll reach out to the California board on the differentiation between the practice with the different specialties and how they handle each of those. We will return some statistical data to the board regarding the specialty exams and taking a broader historical look at those examinations. And then adding discussion and consideration on the public comment to the next agenda. Sandra, did I miss anything?

Sandra (01:34:50):

I'm not sure. So I also have, as far as an action item, staff to provide licensees that passed specialty exam. Nope, you did cover that. I apologize. Revisit the outreach discussion once university calendars have been released. And then I think that's everything.

Sydney (01:35:08):

Thank you.

Speaker 3 (01:35:08):

Carla.

Carla (01:35:15):

I think this is related but maybe a little bit different. As far as recruiting new board members, the state issues a monthly report about openings on boards and commissions, and it doesn't look like we're on it.

Sydney (01:35:33):

Those are governor appointed positions and this board is appointed by our director. So that announcement only includes the governor appointed.

Carla (01:35:43):

Is there a separate list of open positions for DOL director appointed?

Sydney (01:35:53):

I know that we released it somehow, and Deb might be able to provide additional information on where that is located specifically.

Speaker 18 (01:36:05):

I'm not sure that that is something that we've included in the past. I think it shows up on our website as a vacancy, but, Carla, that is definitely one of the areas that we're realizing we've got gaps in. So I know Sydney alluded to having some other avenues that we're looking at. One of them is to include those vacancies and then the announcement on careers.wa.gov. So that is something that one of our other boards here at the Department of Licensing have recently started doing, and we're hoping that that will hit a broader audience. So more to come.

(01:36:46):

We're really hopeful. There's inroads with some of the small business groups that our administrator is a member of, and we're really looking for how we can fill those positions without having those vacancies, because as Sydney had indicated, this isn't the only board or commission that is lacking those public members.

Carla (01:37:17):

Thanks.

Speaker 3 (01:37:24):

All right, this is Chair Hinnel. Any other questions or comments on action items and items for the next meeting? All right, hearing none. I'd like to give a big thank you to Sydney, to Deb, to Elizabeth, to all the board staff for all the information today. And just seeing the goals and seeing that we are making progress is extremely helpful. So appreciate all of your efforts and thank you so much to all board members for all your participation today and looking forward to our next meeting. So with that, the time is now 11:40 and this meeting is adjourned. Take care.

Sydney (01:38:20):

Thank you.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:38:21]