

Washington State Geologist Licensing Board meeting transcript

September 14, 2023

Chair Casey Hanell (00:00:03):

Go ahead and get going. So we'll call the meeting to order. It's now 10:00 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 mic or your phone when you are speaking. Also, for board members, to help us capture information correctly, please state your name when making comments. Thank you very much. And I'll ask Susan to call the role.

Susan (00:00:48):

Sorry. Chair Hanell?

Chair Casey Hanell (00:00:54):

Present.

Susan (00:00:56):

Vice Chair Brock?

Carla Brock (00:00:58):

Present.

Susan (00:00:59):

Secretary Tebb?

Tom Tebb (00:01:00):

Present.

Susan (00:01:00):

Board Member Gillum?

Carrie Gillum (00:01:06):

Present.

Susan (00:01:08):

Board Member Struthers?

James Struthers (00:01:10):

Present.

Susan (00:01:12):

And Board Member Webb. Wonderful.

Eileen Webb (00:01:15):

Here.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:01:19):

Excellent. We have our full board here today. Exciting. So next on the list will be approval of the agenda. So do we have the agenda to pull up on the screen?

Susan (00:01:39):

I can pull it up. Just give me one second here.

Sydney (00:01:48):

Susan, I have it up.

Susan (00:01:50):

Oh, thank you kindly.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:01:56):

So it was also in your board packet, so hopefully you've had a moment to review. We'll take a chance just to look briefly at it and then I'll need a motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting.

Eileen Webb (00:02:17):

When are you ready for the motion?

Chair Casey Hanell (00:02:22):

I am ready to entertain a motion when someone is ready to make it.

Eileen Webb (00:02:26):

I so move that we approve the agenda as presented.

Carla Brock (00:02:32):

I second the motion.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:02:36):

All right. The motion has been made and seconded. All in favor, please say aye.

Eileen Webb (00:02:42):

Aye.

James Struthers (00:02:42):

Aye.

Carla Brock (00:02:42):

Aye.

Tom Tebb (00:02:42):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (00:02:44):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:02:46):

Any opposed? All right. Motion carries. We have an agenda for today's meeting.

(00:02:57):

Next on our agenda is approval of our meeting minutes from our June 8th, 2023 meeting. So we'll have a motion, we'll entertain a motion to approve those meeting minutes.

Eileen Webb (00:03:21):

I move that we approve the meeting minutes from June 8th, 2023.

James Struthers (00:03:28):

This is Board Member Struthers. I second that motion.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:03:32):

All right. The motion has been moved and seconded. Any discussion? Right, hearing none; take a vote. All in favor of approving the board minutes from June 8th, 2023, say aye.

Eileen Webb (00:03:50):

Aye.

Tom Tebb (00:03:51):

Aye.

Carla Brock (00:03:51):

Aye.

James Struthers (00:03:51):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (00:03:51):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:03:55):

Any opposed? All right. Motion carries. We've approved our minutes from the June 8th, 2023 meeting and we will move to number 5 on our agenda and I'll ask Sydney to present this item please.

Sydney (00:04:19):

Thank you, Chair Hanell. I wanted to take a moment to welcome our newest board member. I know you all got to meet Board Member Gillum at the last meeting, but now she is officially a member of the board. So I wanted to give her an opportunity to introduce herself, but just a little bit of background. Board Member Gillum is from Olympia and has been a licensed geologist since 2017, as well as a hydrogeologist since that time. And she currently works for the city of Tumwater as a water resources specialist. So please join me in welcoming Board Member Gillum and I'll give her a moment to introduce herself.

Carrie Gillum (00:04:55):

I just want to briefly say that I'm honored that I was selected and I really look forward to making some positive contributions. This is kind of exciting to be able to see the other side of licensing and yeah, very, very hopeful that I can make some positive work in this capacity.

Tom Tebb (00:05:22):

Welcome. Congratulations.

Carla Brock (00:05:24):

Welcome.

Eileen Webb (00:05:24):

Yeah, welcome.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:05:26):

Glad to have you here Carrie. All right, and then we'll move to item 5.2 and I'll ask Sydney to present this item as well, please.

Sydney (00:05:44):

Thank you. It is my pleasure to introduce the Department of Licensing Director, Marcus Glasper, to the board. Director Glasper joined the department this past spring, and I will turn it over to him to tell you all a little bit more about himself.

Marcus Glasper (00:05:59):

Great. Thank you. Well, good morning everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself. As was said, my name is Marcus Glasper and I use he/him pronouns. I've been in my role now for a little over five months coming up on that six-month mark where you can no longer claim that you're new. So it really has been great to have the opportunity to meet a lot of the folks on our advisory and regulatory boards. That was one of the things that was quite new and impressive to me, of how many boards and commissions we sort of have with the Department of Licensing. So it's been great to have the opportunity to meet all of you.

(00:06:52):

As you can see here, I'm southern-grown, hailing from the state of Louisiana, where I was reared and got my undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering. I moved to the Tri-Cities shortly thereafter to work for the Department of Energy at the Hanford nuclear cleanup site where ironically I had the opportunity to work directly with many geologists. So sort of like coming home today. In fact, I had several geologists and hydrologists on my team, so it was great working with them during those 10 years that I was at the Hanford nuclear cleanup site. I did do that for about a decade before coming to work for Washington State Government in 2003.

(00:07:47):

I've moved around a bit over the last 20 years in state government with licensing being my fourth agency. My 30-year career really just has taken me some interesting places, from nuclear waste where I started here in Washington state, to prisons, to taxes, to gambling, and now I'm here working in licensing. But I think one of the things I just wanted to mention to you, out of all of these experiences, I think they've all grounded me in public service, which I have always believed to be my calling. And licensing truly is a great fit as we touch the lives of almost every Washingtonian, nearing almost 8 million people in the state of Washington.

(00:08:41):

As you can imagine, even though I've been here for a little over five months, I'm still learning as the breadth of licensing mission is extensive, as I said, even with all of the boards and commissions and all of the various different professions and professional licenses and businesses that we help and support in this state. But some of my focus areas over the next couple of years really kind of boil down in a few areas. One, I want to kind of step back and look at our agency's strategic framework. I really want to

understand what guides our work and our decision-making, and work collaboratively to make improvements. I think it's also important that we look at the future of the agency. We want to prepare the agency for future stability. As you probably know, we have a central role in collecting revenue for the transportation system as well as for our business and professions. And I really want to make sure that we are on the right track for a stable future.

(00:09:53):

We also really have a central role in supporting Washington's traffic-safety platform. So whatever partnerships we can do in advancing traffic safety on Washington roadways, we want to make that a priority as well. And because I'm here talking with you, of course, we definitely want to prioritize supporting our businesses and professions because that is central to making sure that residents of the state of Washington have what they need to thrive in this state. We want to make sure we look at our own infrastructure to make it easier for our businesses and professions to obtain licensure. Customer experience, again, touching almost 8 million Washingtonians here in the state: customer experience definitely would be key because we are truly the face of state government. And internally, I want to make sure that we are ensuring that we have a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture here at the Department of Licensing. We have to make sure that we are reflecting the culture and the values that we want to project so that we can serve the people of Washington in the best way possible.

(00:11:08):

And then finally, operational excellence. That's just kind of who I am as a person, always looking at continuous improvement and what can we do to make things more efficient and better for the people that we serve. So that's just a brief overview of me and some of the things that have been on my mind and priorities for the Department of Licensing. I totally look forward to working with you all in the future, but I do want to take the opportunity to just thank you for your service to this board, to your profession, and ultimately the residents of Washington for the work you do to help our licensees as well as our consumers. So with that, I hope you enjoy the rest of your meeting and I'm happy to take any questions if you have any.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:11:57):

Board Member Webb.

Eileen Webb (00:12:00):

Hey, I just wanted to say thank you so much for coming to our meeting. I don't think we've ever had a director come to our meetings before. This is really good. I appreciate it.

Marcus Glasper (00:12:11):

Well, thank you. Thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:12:18):

Other questions? Comments out there? Board Member Tebb?

Tom Tebb (00:12:23):

Yeah, I want to echo what Board Member Webb mentioned. Thank you so much, Director Glasper for spending a little bit of your busy day with our board this morning. So as Board Member Webb mentioned, it puts a finer point on the work we do and the fact that we have a director that's interested in the boards and our profession. So excited to have you today for a few minutes and appreciate your work out at the Hanford site. Some of us have spent a little bit of our careers out there as well and I appreciate all of that effort to work on that historic and legacy issue that we have as a result of our nuclear weapons program. Thank you.

Marcus Glasper (00:13:13):

You're quite welcome. Yeah, I definitely learned the importance of geology working at the Hanford site and how much this profession supported me in my work in the tanks-focus area. We were really looking at stabilization opportunities. We had to ensure that we were not disrupting tribal areas and tribal lands, and so geology was a key component to that work. So thank you for all you do.

Eileen Webb (00:13:48):

I was there 11 years, so I got all that.

Marcus Glasper (00:13:50):

I don't want to take up any more of your time. Again, I am here. I'm always available if you have questions or want to chat about something. One thing I do know is that my philosophy here at the Department of Licensing, is that we need to do this work together. So I am looking forward to our partnership and collaboration in serving the residents of Washington. So I won't take up any more time of your meeting, but it's so nice to meet all of you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:14:27):

Likewise. Thank you so much, Director Glasper for joining us and the added bonus of you intersecting with geoscientists in the past. That's really awesome. So thank you. Have a wonderful day.

Marcus Glasper (00:14:38):

Thank you. You too.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:14:45):

All right, we'll move to item 6 on our agenda this week: old business. And our one old-business item to discuss is continuing our outreach discussion. So I'll invite the board to share any updates on where we're at with outreach opportunities and visiting universities. Sydney.

Sydney (00:15:20):

Thank you. I did want to take the opportunity to share with the board. This came in Tuesday evening, so we really haven't even had a chance to jump on it, but we did receive contact from the University of

Washington requesting outreach from the board. So we'll be getting in touch with them, seeing what dates they're looking at, what courses, and then we'll reach out to the board for availability. But did want to put that on the board's radar that we were very excited. We've been working in the background to try and research who the best person to contact was and they found us.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:15:55):

Awesome. That's good news. If my memory is correct, which it may not be, so I might need a little help here. Weren't we putting together a document that had all of the universities and people, plugging in contacts where they knew a person that would be a good contact at each of the universities?

Sydney (00:16:24):

I think that was an idea that had been floated by the board, but we didn't have any of that information. We can certainly start working on that document if nobody else has.

Eileen Webb (00:16:34):

We have that.

Carla Brock (00:16:36):

Yeah, it exists.

Sydney (00:16:37):

It does?

Eileen Webb (00:16:37):

Yeah, I created that a couple of years ago.

Sydney (00:16:41):

Okay. We'll find it in the files-

Carla Brock (00:16:43):

Yeah, I think Kathy was the...

Sydney (00:16:44):

... in the archive somewhere.

Eileen Webb (00:16:45):

It might've been before your time. It exists. It's pretty thorough.

Sydney (00:16:51):

Okay. We will find that and get that circulated out to the board.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:16:57):

And if you have trouble finding it, Sidney... Carla or Eileen, do you think you have a copy of it somewhere that Sydney could reach out and you could pass it along?

Eileen Webb (00:17:11):

It's a little outdated. Could use a little updating. I'm sure that there's been some shifts in faculty and pandemic things.

Sydney (00:17:24):

I am sure it'll give us a great reference point to start from. And so we'll plug in whatever additional information we have and then get it circulated back out to the board for any updates you guys may know of and then we'll just keep working on updating it from there.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:17:42):

Excellent. Other comments or discussion from the board on board outreach opportunities and visiting universities? Board Member Tebb?

Tom Tebb (00:17:54):

Yeah, thank you Chair. I would just need a little bit of advance notice to try to get something on my calendar. I'd be happy to go to wherever, but I just need a little bit of advance, probably a couple of weeks, if at all possible. Thank you.

Sydney (00:18:13):

Absolutely.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:18:23):

All right, other board member comments, questions around outreach opportunities? All right, hearing none, we'll look for that follow-up with the contact list and start to update that as appropriate. And it sounds like you may have some opportunities in the future to get to university, which is exciting. Board Member Tebb.

Tom Tebb (00:18:54):

Sorry, Chair. I think there's some materials as well. If I recollect some of our previous visits that we have some handouts and some information about licensing and things of that sort. So I would imagine that there would be a packet or a collection of documents that we would have when we'd make this visit. So I don't know if we need to review or refresh those. I think Board Member Webb makes a great point about some of this documentation maybe being pre-pandemic and so there could be an effort really to review that information and make sure that it's dusted off and up-to-date.

Eileen Webb (00:19:44):

So Carla and Jim should have that collection of things that everything that I had I gave to them. So Carla, Jim, if you want to forward that to our current admins, that'd be great. Thanks.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:20:03):

And then Deb, I see your hand up.

Deb (00:20:11):

Thank you. I was just going to inform you all that we do have the pamphlets that have been used in the last outreach as well as the list that both Carla and Eileen were referencing. So I can help Sydney to unearth those. We do have them saved. They may need a little bit of updating, but at least we're not starting from the beginning.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:20:39):

Sounds great. Thanks. Any last thoughts on our old business with outreach discussion prior to moving to our new business? All right, hearing none, let's move to our new business item 7 on our agenda and item 7.1. So if the board recalls, we had some input from a member of the public from our last meeting that was provided in writing with respect to fluvial geomorphology and geomorphology, and that was included in the board packet for this month. And in general was concerned about, it seems like twofold: one, the requirements for a geologist's license to perform fluvial geomorphology work; and a suggestion of creating another license that was specific to geomorphology or fluvial geomorphology. So having received that comment at our last meeting, we decided we would take that in and take up a discussion in this meeting with respect to that comment. So I'll open the floor for feedback from the board. Board Member Tebb?

Tom Tebb (00:22:31):

Yeah, I looked into the materials a little bit and I recognize that, like with any professional discipline, there are specialties, if you will, within the broader fields of the classification of geology and those related disciplines. I thought the issue could be somewhat similar to some of the other issues that have been brought up around wetland scientists or hydrologists. And in this case I think there is a reasonable merit to consider maybe some other specialty license, maybe within the context of the geology licensing program. Or I'm also intrigued with the idea of the certification and how that might be a potential solution here. So I was intrigued by the information and I'm interested in what other board members think, but I appreciate the person who brought this to our attention.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:23:52):

Board Member Struthers.

James Struthers (00:23:55):

Yeah, I had a couple of comments on this. The fluvial geomorphology seems to my mind to be kind of one of those crossover areas of practice. There are some people that I've observed working in this field

that practice it on the hydraulics, almost like an engineering-type discipline. But I've also seen a geologist practice in this area as well. And so I think one of the things that is worth putting a little bit of thought into is how we would resolve if the board were to go down the road of looking at a certification or a specialty in this. Two things: how would we resolve that overlap in discipline? It's not unheard of. I mean engineering geology is there in that same space. But also how many actual practitioners do we have in this, and is it numerically something that we can justify a separate program for?

Chair Casey Hanell (00:25:15):

Board Member Brock?

Carla Brock (00:25:19):

Yeah, I think that would be an interesting data-gathering exercise. My read of the WAC, I think it would require revision of the WAC. Because right now geomorphology appears to fall under the definition of geology, and the practice of geology seems to encompass geomorphology. So I think that that would just be a significant endeavor. And so depending on the number of practitioners, it may or may not be something that's worthwhile.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:26:11):

Board Member Struthers.

James Struthers (00:26:13):

Yeah, I concur with Board Member Brock on that. It does seem that geomorphology is something that's reasonably covered under the current existing licensure and the people who specialize in this often have advanced graduate coursework. It's part of the curriculum that I've seen come out of the University of Washington, for example. That's fairly difficult courses. So they have the background and kind of do this as a subspecialty.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:26:55):

Board Member Webb.

Eileen Webb (00:26:57):

So I have a question about this topic. Is part of this discussion prompted because we've received a significant number of complaints about these practices? And I'm just wondering if there's some concern here or alarm that is part of this. I just don't know. I'm just asking.

Sydney (00:27:26):

I can address that. From the board staff perspective, this is the only comment we've received regarding geomorphology in any sort. But I don't know if we get a lot of customer-service calls regarding it and I can work with our licensing team to see if this is in fact the only one we've received and see how common it is.

Eileen Webb (00:27:50):

Thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:27:55):

Board Member Brock.

Carla Brock (00:27:58):

I wonder, there's a comment in this public comment that says that the LG requirement limits the number of qualified applicants that can work on projects. And I wonder if our education requirements to become an LG are too stringent for somebody that has a geomorphology background or education. And if that would be easier for us to provide some flexibility in educational requirements if geomorphology is going to fall under the umbrella of geology.

Susan (00:28:47):

Board Member Webb. Okay. Board Member Gillum.

Carrie Gillum (00:28:58):

Yeah, I just kind of had the similar thought on what Board Member Brock was saying of, because I was very much stuck on that comment of where organizations were requiring a licensed geologist. And even though it seems like they're talking about how they would want to have maybe a specialty licensing for the geomorphology, and yet we have seen that geomorphology is covered under geology licensing. It would seem like then it'd become a specialty. So then they're still running into the problem though, it sounds like from what I'm reading, they're not able to become a licensed geologist. That's what I was kind of getting from this public comment letter. So I would be very curious to know. It's like, well, what kind of educational background are these particular individuals going and getting that doesn't allow them to become licensed geologists then and be able to just work under that and therefore be able to work for those organizations that are requiring it?

Chair Casey Hanell (00:30:09):

Board Member Struthers.

James Struthers (00:30:12):

Kind of along that line, is anyone aware of any educational programs out there that provide a bachelor's in geomorphology specifically that isn't covered under the umbrella of a geology license? It seems like it would be an anomaly in the university system.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:30:38):

Yeah, I'll build on that a little bit. It seems like geomorphology both in the educational system and within our law is pretty squarely in the practice of geology. The way our law is written and the way the educational system is set up and depending on what the practice...

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:31:04]

Chair Casey Hanell (00:31:03):

Depending on what the practice in fluvial geomorphology is, say it's actually getting into engineering design of logjams or something like that, that potentially could intersect with engineering geology because in our definition of engineering geology, we include broadly environmental geology and to address some of the concern in the public comment around geologists not being trained to be river practitioners and possibly a concern in there that people that are licensed geologists are doing river work when maybe they don't have training to, our law addresses that as well. And just because you have a license, you are not licensed to practice something that you don't have education and experience in doing. So that would be a case where if there was a practitioner out there advertising they could do the work or do the work because they are a licensed geologist but they don't have education and experience in it, then that's a complaint to the board and not within the laws we have set up to address.

(00:32:14):

So my read is the law clearly includes geology, or sorry, geomorphology and fluvial geomorphology within the definition of geology possibly intersects with engineering geology, depends on the education and experience of the person and that their practicing within their scope of expertise. And I'd say I'd have a concern with setting up another certification or specialist license when we don't have, really, a scope of what the need is out there. Are we talking 20 people, a hundred people? And just extrapolating from where we're at with engineering geology and hydrogeology and what goes into administering a specialty, I think we'd want to be really well-informed on the breadth of the need before we pursued a path of creating another subspecialty of geology. Board member [inaudible 00:33:30].

Tom Tebb (00:33:30):

Yeah, thank you for the board discussion on this topic and I'm in full agreement without understanding the depth of this concern. If it's just one individual or if it's 20, I think it's premature to pursue a specific course of action, but I do appreciate the fact that this is another area, like we've talked about where we have these crossover issues that can be tricky. So appreciate the conversation. Thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:34:12):

Sydney.

Sydney (00:34:15):

Thank you. So I guess one question I would have for the board, and please forgive my ignorance, geology is such a highly technical field that so many of us on staff, we will never come close to understanding even a fraction of what you all do, but it is geomorphology, one of the areas that is already covered and really going to rely on the people who participate in the COEs. But I know that the ASBOG exam kind of drills down on some of the subcategories of geology and is geomorphology one area that is already addressed in the ASBOG exam? Okay.

Tom Tebb (00:35:03):

Yes.

Sydney (00:35:04):

Okay, thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:35:06):

Which I think's... Oh, go ahead.

Sydney (00:35:10):

Oh, go ahead.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:35:14):

I was just going to say, which speaks even further to it is a specific topic covered in the licensing exam, which speaks more towards the appropriateness of having a license to practice in that field. Board member Struthers.

James Struthers (00:35:35):

And kind of to piggyback on that, the similarity between the existing licensure provisions and kind of what's being proposed here. The guidance that the commenter provided is a link to a scheme of licensure certification in this area that very closely matches how the geology license is structured in terms of a degree that's acceptable to the certifying entity. Geology is oddly one of the degrees that's listed in that category as well as a experiential requirement in practice. And so that combined with the area of overlap and as geomorphology is a core requirement of geology licensure, I think it makes me question the need for an independent certification in this area, especially with potentially very small group practitioners.

Sydney (00:36:51):

So what we can do as a next step, if it's okay with the board, is we'll work with the licensing team just to kind of get our arms around if this is a common question that we get and then bring that information back to the board and allow you guys to go from there. But it kind of sounds like this may be an area that's already covered and doesn't really need to be addressed unless it does become really big problem.

Tom Tebb (00:37:23):

Yep, I think that's fair.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:37:27):

Agree.

Sydney (00:37:28):

We'll bring that information back at the next meeting.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:37:36):

All right, any other discussion on item 7.1? All right, thank you for the rich discussion there. Let's move to item 7.2 and I will ask Sydney to present this item please.

Sydney (00:37:59):

Thank you. So this is a discussion on the ASBOG annual meeting field trip and COE workshops for the end of October in Spokane. There had been previous discussions with the board indicating a desire for the full board or if not the full board, as many board members as possible to attend the full week for ASBOG. We did receive a call from ASBOG a couple of weeks ago indicating that they simply don't have the space at the conference venue to accommodate the full board attending.

(00:38:40):

They really do plan for just a maximum of two representatives from each member board to participate for the annual meeting and the board administrator portion of that. For the Council of Examiners discussion, that is a separate piece that because a lot of staff members go home at that point because we're not experts and we can't provide input on the examination itself, that then there would be space for the board to attend.

(00:39:18):

So ASBOG did ask us to have that discussion with the board that they would not have the space available for the full week. However, would welcome whatever input from the board is possible for the Council of Examiners. The annual meeting does have a virtual attendance option, so you would still be able to get the information, offer input, things like that, but they just don't have the physical space in the room for the annual meeting portion.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:39:54):

Thank you, Sydney. Board Member Webb.

Eileen Webb (00:40:01):

Do they give us numbers or just something vague like, not everybody? Did they say, we have two spaces, one space, three. Anything?

Sydney (00:40:10):

They said they really do plan only for one board member and up to one staff member to attend the annual meeting. And then the administrator portion, which is staff focused on Monday and they really don't have additional space beyond that for each of the boards.

Eileen Webb (00:40:32):

Thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:40:36):

Board member [inaudible 00:40:37].

Tom Tebb (00:40:38):

Yeah, I'm happy to forfeit my opportunity for other board members if they so desire.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:40:49):

Board member Brock.

Carla Brock (00:40:54):

I just wanted to clarify that there's five days of activities. One is the administrator's workshop, which board members never go to. One is the annual meeting, which one board member has to attend as a voting delegate either in person or virtually. Then there's a field trip and then there's two days of the Council of Examiners. So the annual meeting is what Sydney is talking about, right? Where we only want to send one person. The other three days, the field trip and the two days of the Council of Examiners I think is what, personally, I would encourage as many people as possible to attend. It's a Thursday, Friday, Saturday of that last week in October. So I just wanted to clarify about the week and what the activities are.

Sydney (00:41:46):

Yes. And so on that portion, that is where the program's budgetary concerns come into play, especially from the staff perspective because our job is to be good stewards of the licensing dollars and that is 100% of what funds the program. So from that we can certainly make the ask of the agency, we are not the decision makers when it comes to that. In some ways that complicates our lives and in other ways, we like not having that pressure, but we can certainly make the ask of the agency for as many as would like to and are willing and able to attend.

(00:42:29):

With that said, though, the agency can tell us no because they are the stewards of that. So if it works out that all six board members are willing and able to attend, we can certainly put that ask forward. We would just ask that the board understand that decision does not lie with us and we need to be able to show a compelling reason why we would need to send all six other than proximity. And so we would just ask that you help us make that argument and that ask to the agency, but ultimately the agency can still tell us no and just ask that you help us out with that and be willing to offer a contingency for us of maybe two to three board members attending instead.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:43:16):

Board members Struthers.

James Struthers (00:43:20):

So looking at that time slot, it's probably very unlikely that I will be in a position to attend during that time. I have quite a few work conflicts that are going to probably take me out of state during that time period.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:43:41):

Board member Brock.

Carla Brock (00:43:44):

Sydney, will the state pay for the voting member to attend the five days of activities and then beyond that it's just questionable?

Sydney (00:43:55):

Yes. So that's a relatively easy ask that we can put forward to the agency and I don't foresee any struggles getting that approved. We are going to request that one staff member attend as well for the administrator's workshop. And then the annual meeting, we have not had a staff member attend since pre-pandemic. 2019 was the last time a staff member attended and we've had four years of no relationships being built with the other boards and the other administrators. So it would be nice to reestablish some of that and help get some of these questions and research a little more easily for the board. We find that very helpful across some of our others and it'd be nice to be able to have that resource available to this board as well.

Carla Brock (00:44:41):

So maybe we should decide on our voting delegate and then find out who else is available and interested in going to the rest of the activities and then talk about the budget and whether or not we want to make the ask.

Sydney (00:44:56):

Yeah, that would be perfect.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:45:01):

So just as an additional piece of information, I've been asked to speak there as in my capacity as the state geologist. So I will be there in my capacity as the state geologist and supported financially through that venue, not through the Department of Licensing, but just as a piece of information, I will be there for that purpose. I would be happy to be the voting member. However, that also provides an opportunity, I think, for someone else to be funded as the voting member to be there and attend. Board member Webb.

Eileen Webb (00:45:54):

I'm always willing to go, so I'm going to toss my hat into the ring, but I also recognize that if anyone wants to go as our voting delegate, that certainly could be someone else. But I do want to be there for

at least the council of examiners. And if fundable the field trip as well, I'm more than happy to be the voting delegate. But if someone else wants to do that, I will back off. So there's that.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:46:29):

Board member [inaudible 00:46:31].

Tom Tebb (00:46:32):

Yeah, I similarly have a schedule conflict issue. So again, I will recuse myself from the selection process here.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:46:53):

Board member Brock or board member Gillum, are you available and interested in putting your hat in the ring for being our voting member?

Carla Brock (00:47:07):

I am. I think it would be cool if Carrie could go. When I went to my first annual meeting, it was with Eileen as the voting delegate. So if Casey were there and he were the voting delegate and Carrie could also go just to see what the annual meeting was all about, I think that would be super helpful. That would give her some exposure without the responsibility of being the voting delegate without understanding really what's going on. That's my recommendation, if she's available. I'm certainly willing, I'm planning to go to the field trip and the Council of Examiners, whether DOL is going to fund it or not because I feel like it's very important, but I'm happy to skip the annual meeting.

Carrie Gillum (00:48:00):

Yeah, my thoughts, thanks Carla, was that I don't know if necessarily my first year... I just now getting into this appointment if I'm necessarily wanting to be the voting person, but I am curious about doing at least maybe even virtually attending this and kind of just seeing what it's all about and how it works. I think that would be very beneficial, especially if I was to participate in more of a capacity in the next one that we have.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:48:37):

Board Member Webb.

Eileen Webb (00:48:42):

Just my little opinion that you might want to go next year as the voting delegate because first years, you need to be able to know enough about the board and what we do to be able to represent us, right? So while you have maybe some trepidation of being that voting delegate this year, I would say for sure next year, get yourself on the list. That's just my little opinion for you.

Carrie Gillum (00:49:22):

You haven't steered me wrong yet, so I'm thinking that might be good advice.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:49:37):

All right, so kind of narrowing in on the conversation, both board member Brock and board member Webb are available and interested in being the voting member, board member Gillum, would you be interested in physically attending if I was the voting delegate and you were there? Or do you have a preference to attend virtually to see what's going on this year?

Carrie Gillum (00:50:09):

I'm thinking I'm going to probably lean more towards virtual attendance this year so that I can understand more. And then, yeah, just the potential for being gone for that long, I may or may not be able to for the entire week. So if it may be that if it's for a certain few days and physical attendance is suggested, then I might be able to do that.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:50:40):

Okay. So the options we have before us, that we're trying to sort out, figuring out if the board would like board member Brock to be our voting delegate, board member Webb to be our voting delegate. And then those seem to be the two options really coming forward at the moment. Discussion.

Tom Tebb (00:51:20):

Well, I guess I would ask each of the potential candidates here who's gone to more conferences and maybe trying just to balance that out. I don't know quite how to. Both board member Brock and board member Webb are more than qualified to represent the board. I'm comfortable with either one. I just don't know how to make this selection, so I'll just throw that out there.

Carla Brock (00:51:51):

I mean, like I said, I don't feel strongly about attending the meeting and if DOL's only going to fund one person and we can send Eileen and then I can pay to go myself and that means there's three of us there. I think that's more meaningful to ASBOG, to have as many people there as possible. So that makes the most sense to me. But again, whatever the group thinks is best is fine with me.

Eileen Webb (00:52:25):

I feel strongly. I always enjoy the networking and being able to bring information back, but I also understand I've been a couple times and Tom, you're not able to potentially throw your hat in the ring?

Tom Tebb (00:52:50):

Unfortunately, no. I've got a bunch of work products. I'm just slammed with some of my stuff, so I'll try to dial in, I think. If I can attend virtually on some of the components, but Thursday and Friday are probably the two tougher days for me. But I will propose that we make a motion for accepting Carla's suggestion if she still feels that's something that she's willing to do. And Eileen, that you would be our ASBOG voting board member.

Carla Brock (00:53:35):

I mean, I hope that Sydney is still going to ask.

Tom Tebb (00:53:38):

Yeah, of course.

Sydney (00:53:39):

I'm still going to put forward the ask. And that is a much easier ask to send one additional person for just those last few days at the end of the week to offer that expertise, especially given the proximity. That's a much easier ask than six people.

Carla Brock (00:53:56):

And Carrie, I think you should think about it and maybe talk to Eileen more about it. And if you can go for the field trip and the two days of Council of Examiners because it's so close, this meeting jumps around the country, so it's really convenient that it's in Washington and it's a really cool process. And so if there's any chance that you can get away for three days, I think we should talk more about that because it's a good opportunity to get involved and maybe one that won't be as feasible if the meeting's on the East coast next year or whatever.

Carrie Gillum (00:54:35):

And I am certainly very much considering that. And like I said, if there's an opportunity to maybe do both where I can have some virtual attendance and some in-person, whatever suggestion that may be most feasible for the board and myself.

Carla Brock (00:54:50):

Yeah, the annual meeting is the only one that has a virtual option. The other three days are mandatory in person, so.

Eileen Webb (00:54:58):

You can't do the field trip virtually. I could drag you around on my tablet and show you where we [inaudible 00:55:06]. But yeah, I mean if anything, even one day of the council examiners, most people can't make both days, honestly, that do participate. There's a lot of people that catch flights the last day and so they're leaving at all odd times of the day. But that's a good recommendation. At least one day, if not both of the COE.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:55:35):

All right, so hearing the discussion, I think we're ready to entertain a motion. Board member Ted, we kind of already went down this path, which is good, but entertain a motion to nominate board member Webb as our voting member for ASBOG for the upcoming annual meeting.

Tom Tebb (00:56:00):

I'm happy to make that motion to advance board Member Webb as our ASBOG voting member for the annual meeting coming up in October, 23rd and 28th.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:56:16):

Is there a second?

Carla Brock (00:56:20):

I'll second the motion.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:56:21):

Motion board Brock seconds the motion. Any discussion? Board member Webb?

Eileen Webb (00:56:33):

I would like to see if there can't be an ask to at least support Carla's expenses.

Sydney (00:56:43):

Yeah, we will absolutely put that ask forward to the agency and hopefully be able to cover that. I don't foresee any issues, but again, I'm not the decision maker, but we'll put that ask forward, absolutely.

Eileen Webb (00:56:59):

Good. Because I mean this is a special case where it is in our state and there should be at least an exception this year for sure. I'll just ask for the moon. Let's see what comes back.

Sydney (00:57:13):

But we are going to put that ask forward, especially given the proximity. This is going to be less expensive than previous ones where we have sent to, but those were also pre-pandemic. So it's going to be a discussion with the decision makers, but we will do our absolute best to make sure she's covered.

Eileen Webb (00:57:30):

Great, thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:57:35):

All right, any other discussion from the board? All right, we'll call the vote on nominating board member Webb as our voting member. All in favor say aye. Aye.

James Struthers (00:57:50):

Aye.

Sydney (00:57:51):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (00:57:51):

Aye.

Carla Brock (00:57:51):

Aye.

Tom Tebb (00:57:51):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:57:53):

Any opposed? All right. Motion carries. Congratulations Eileen.

Eileen Webb (00:58:01):

Thank you. And Carla.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:58:07):

All right, let's move to new business items 7.2. And I'll ask Sydney... or Deb to present this. Oh, wait, we have to make motions on votes. Yeah.

Sydney (00:58:20):

Yep, we got to direct the votes.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:58:22):

All right. Sydney, please present.

Sydney (00:58:24):

I will do my best. The slate of candidates is before you. The other items to be voted on are an amended 2023 budget and then the 2024 budget, 2025 budget. And then last year's annual meeting minutes.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:58:48):

All right. Is there any board discussion on these items?

James Struthers (00:58:59):

Yeah, I believe there's a correction that could be made to the 2022 annual meeting minutes. Under our state it states that we didn't have any licensure complaints during the 2022 period and I believe that's inaccurate.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:59:23):

Do we have any board staff that can speak to that, if we had any complaints in the 2022 time period?

Sydney (00:59:35):

I know we had complaints in 2022 because we have two of them for the board to consider at this meeting. But that said, I will reach out to our complainant investigations team and get the accurate numbers and then make sure I get them over to ASBOG to ensure they were reported accurately.

Chair Casey Hanell (00:59:58):

Thank you. Additional board discussion on any of the items in front of us that will be voted on at the upcoming annual meeting. Board member [inaudible 01:00:23]?

Tom Tebb (01:00:25):

Yeah, I'm assuming that these budgets, they're available on ASBOG's website or something. I don't recall them being as part of our board member packet. Is that an accurate assumption? So it's a little bit of homework on my part or were they included and I just missed them?

Sydney (01:00:44):

I believe so but I'm looking. They were included as part of the packet. Page am I on? They begin at page 27.

Tom Tebb (01:00:52):

Okay. Thank you.

Sydney (01:00:58):

No, correction, I guess it's just a really brief summary. So it's only a single page and it doesn't go into detail on what the amendments are. There are notes at the bottom. It looks like they were tied to exam production.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:01:28):

Additional board discussion. All right. Hearing none. Do we need a motion for each topic, Sydney, under 7.2 or do we need a motion for just the vote on the entire thing?

Sydney (01:01:58):

Yeah, I think we can do one motion for slate.

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [01:02:04]

Deb (01:02:01):

Before slate.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:02:03):

Okay, so I'll entertain a motion to approve voting in the affirmative on all of the topics with the asterisk that will verify the 2022 Complaint Issue and bring an amendment forward to the annual meeting amendments if one is needed.

Deb (01:02:22):

I so move what you said.

Carrie Gillum (01:02:30):

I second.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:02:32):

And the motion has been moved and seconded. Any additional discussion?

(01:02:40):

All right, hearing none, all in favor indicate by saying aye.

Deb (01:02:47):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (01:02:47):

Aye.

James Struthers (01:02:47):

Aye.

Speaker 1 (01:02:47):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:02:49):

Aye. Any opposed? All right. Motion carries, and we'll move to Item 7. 3 in our new business, a report out of historical data from specialty exam pass rates. And I'll ask Deb to please present this item.

Deb (01:03:15):

Thank you. So do we have that on the next slide? The chart, Susan ... Thank you. All right. So the board had asked if we could please get the last 10 years of examination records. Going back through, it was not readily available to pull out, particularly the specialty exam information for the last 10 years. So I went back as far as our records were retained. So we do have past records going back to 2017, which I think gives us a pretty good illustration of how well we're doing. So as you can see, it looks like our past rates for the fundamentals and for the practices of geology have remained pretty steadily high compared to the rest of the nation. We do have a tendency to be a little higher on those pass rates. From spring of 2017 to the spring of 2023, the fundamentals has fallen a bit. But when you look at the practices, we're still right there, pretty high up, and our candidates are passing with no problems when it comes to the practices. Are there any questions about this slide before we move to the next?

(01:04:43):

Okay, so we'll go ahead and look at the next slide. So with specialty, the story is a little different, as we can see. And this is what we've been talking about in the past meetings, about where the need to really take a look at our specialty exams. Those rates have fallen quite significantly from 2017 to currently. So when first collected the data in 2017, engineering geology wasn't great at 50% but that still looks a lot better than 38.5%, so we're definitely seeing that we're having some issues. The same can be said for the hydrogeology exam where it's really started to slowly take a dive.

(01:05:49):

But I think that again illustrates the need for us to really dive into the exam, start looking at where we can at least bring in new questions from our question bank and before we can start the work with the psychometrician, we can at least look at how we can rotate in those questions. But this is a great illustration, even if it's not 10 years, it gives us a good picture into what's going on with our test results. Any questions about this slide?

Chair Casey Hanell (01:06:25):

This is chair NL, I'll just make a comment that these pass/fail rates are similar to when licensing first started, pass/fail rates were reported out in a newsletter actually that came out from the licensing board. And the general percentage overall is low, and then ... I could do the math, I suppose. It'd be interesting to add them all up and just look at the aggregate, what pass/ fail rate is. Because if you look at fall of 2018, 100% of the people passed but that was one person.

Deb (01:07:07):

Right.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:07:08):

Or even in spring of 2017, we look at 50%. That means one person passed and one person didn't. So for my thinking, it's a little bit hard to look at trend over time and say, "The pass rate is going down." I would say pass rate is generally lower than what we would expect and I think looking into the exam may hopefully help with that. And also looking into information that we can provide about what the training and experience you need is prior to taking the exam. So it's been a problem since licensing occurred, I know that because I experienced it firsthand early in my career.

Deb (01:07:51):

Good point. You look at it and you think, "Wow, 50%." But you're right, based on two candidates doesn't give us enough of a picture of what we can expect.

James Struthers (01:08:04):

And this is board member Struthers. This is a problem that at least in the engineering/geology examinations dates back into the late '90s. Coming out of Oregon, the pass rates historically down there for the old Oregon test before we joined forces with them were pretty abysmal. Typically to 20% to 30%.

Carrie Gillum (01:08:40):

[inaudible 01:08:38] information.

Deb (01:08:45):

So again, I think this gives us a picture into ... Some insight. Oregon has begun taking a look, their board has met twice now, to dig into reviewing the question bank. I think we need to schedule some time and do similar, and start to look at those questions and see how we can dig into changing some of the questions and seeing if we can make sure that the examination is still relevant to the profession.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:09:22):

And this is chair NL. Some of that outreach has already been received from the board, I believe board member Struthers and I are the subgroup looking at the engineering exam and we're kind of working to get that scheduled on the calendar.

Deb (01:09:41):

Excellent.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:09:47):

Board member Gillum.

(01:09:53):

You're on mute.

Carrie Gillum (01:09:57):

Sorry about that. Something I was noticing like you were talking about with some of them we had one person, therefore 100%. If you do look at similar years, like I was just looking at the hydro in particular, we have 10 to 12 people who, if you look at those years, it's interesting. How it started maybe at 53%, then we started going to 70s, 80s, and then it started dropping into the 50s and 30s. I'd be very curious too to know what was going well in those 70% to 80% years of testing that then made it change. We went down, up, and then down again. So I'm very curious about the trends for those testing periods.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:10:46):

Yeah, I'd be curious if there was some sort of pandemic effect with the recent test rates going down. My memory serves correctly, like historically hydrogeology has had a higher pass rate than the engineering geology exam. Board member Bra.

Sydney (01:11:09):

I just wondered if we kept track of which version of the exam we gave each time and if we could correlate pass/fail rates with the specific examination.

Deb (01:11:21):

I absolutely have those. I can definitely add that to this chart. I'm always a little hesitant to put out there too much because then candidates will say, "Well I don't want to take the A exam or the B exam. I think that we have enough of a bank of questions that it would be interesting to see if we can come up with three examinations so that we're rotating more readily. That might be something. And I'm going to go on record to say I am not a psychometrician, but I have heard that it is probably better to have more than two versions of the examination. So this is where working with that psychometrician to help us to manage our resource bank may also help to yield better results.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:12:23):

All right, is there any further board discussion on the topic of specialty exam pass rates? All right. Hearing none, let's move to Agenda Item 8, complaint cases for review. I believe we have two this meeting and both will be presented by board member Struthers.

James Struthers (01:12:57):

Thank you chair NL. So there are two complaints that are listed on the agenda. They basically stem from the same series of events in the same path of reporting. The issue at hand is two licensees in geology, in the state of Washington, received a complaint for their work related to the impacts of stream restoration work on groundwater storage. And more specifically, the complaint revolved around the fact that a memo provided to their client was not stamped by either practitioner, and also that the practitioners in question were not ... There was concern that they were practicing beyond the scope of their certification as they're licensed as geologists but not certified in hydrogeology.

(01:14:07):

And so in review of this case, I guess I'll go into the nature of the work that was in question. So the basis of the complaint was a memo that talked about the impact specifically of groundwater storage as a result of the construction of water works, such as engineered log jams and things like that. Basically the report did produce a recommendation on what improvements would provide the greatest quantifiable increase in potential restorable water to the system. And I think that played fairly heavily into the concern that they were practicing outside their scope. My interpretation looking at this is that there were two WACs that came into play. The first is 308-15-075, which calls for reports and recommendations to be stamped. It's probably the simplest of the two potential violations at hand.

(01:15:33):

The work in question was not labeled as draft or clearly marked as draft. The recommendations were presented as preliminary in nature. But my reading and interpretation of the WAC is that the even preliminary recommendations of a preliminary nature do require sealing by the licensing. The second WAC is 308-15-053 2B, which bears on the scope of practice. Based on my reading of the work products, and the authors do provide an estimate in the potential increase in groundwater as a result of the proposed work, and then recommendations on which of those elements of the project would provide the greatest increase in that groundwater storage.

(01:16:33):

My read of the typical types of projects involved in the practice of hydrogeology suggests that ... Or basically, I'll just read it to you. "The typical applications include regional or basin groundwater resources quantity, quality, and characteristics as well as the evaluation of potential impacts by past, present, or future activities on the quality and quantity of groundwater." My interpretation of reading that is that this work would definitely fall into the practice of hydrogeology and require a specialty endorsement. So the end, my understanding is that the registrants have been spoken to about the issues involved in this case, and the recommendation that I've got is that this case be closed with a letter of education on these two subjects.

(01:17:43):

Does anybody have any questions?

Deb (01:18:00):

Good job. Thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:18:03):

Yeah, appreciate the summary. And no questions from me.

Speaker 2 (01:18:12):

Do you need a motion, chair?

James Struthers (01:18:15):

I do believe we'd need a motion to adopt the ... To close these two cases with a letter of education, as recommended.

Deb (01:18:27):

And we will need two separate motions. One for each case.

James Struthers (01:18:30):

Right. And so we'll begin with the first of the two cases, which is 22-03-0414-00GEO.

Speaker 2 (01:18:37):

Yeah, I'm making a motion for case 2022-03-0414-00GEO. Motion to accept the recommendation from board member Struthers.

Carrie Gillum (01:19:04):

This is Carla, I second the motion.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:19:09):

All right. The motion has been moved and seconded. Any further discussion? Hearing none, we'll call the vote. All in favor say, "Aye." Aye.

Deb (01:19:20):

Aye.

Sydney (01:19:20):

Aye.

Speaker 2 (01:19:21):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (01:19:21):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:19:25):

Any opposed? Right, motion carries, and we'll entertain a motion for the second case.

Eileen Webb (01:19:39):

This is Eileen. I'd like to move that we approve the recommendation for 2022-03-0415-00GEO as presented.

Speaker 2 (01:19:59):

Second.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:20:02):

All right. The recommendation has been moved and seconded. Any further discussion? All right. Hearing none, take a vote. All in favor say, "Aye." Aye.

Eileen Webb (01:20:15):

Aye.

Deb (01:20:17):

Aye.

Speaker 2 (01:20:17):

Aye.

Carrie Gillum (01:20:17):

Aye.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:20:19):

Any opposed? All right, hearing none, motion carries. Thank you very much for your work on that, Jim. All right-

James Struthers (01:20:31):

It's been a pleasure.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:20:35):

We'll move to Item 9 on our agenda, some report outs and Sydney will present Item 9.

Sydney (01:20:46):

Thank you. We'll start with Item 9.1, our committee and task force reports. The only one we have going right now is the two separate committees to review the specialty exams. Only update we have is that the hydrogeologist exam review is scheduled for next Friday, the afternoon of the 22nd. And then we are working on scheduling the half day for the engineering geologist review. Part of the reason for the delay is because this is a very large review from what we've heard from Oregon on the engineering geologist review is they've met twice, each for a half day, and it took both of those meetings to get through their review. And so we anticipate something similar on our side as well. So we will start with the first scheduled one and then plan accordingly from there. So I'm happy to answer any question.

(01:21:50):

All right. Hearing none, I'll move on to the complaint status report. If you can go to next one ... There we go. So our complaint status as of August 22nd, so from January last year through current, we have two that are case closed status, one that is currently in investigation, two that were in management review which the board just approved for a grand total of five cases. And for our licensee count report, I won't go through all of the categories but as the board can see for our geologist license, we have 2369 licensees total including all of our inactive and inactive retired as well as expired. And then under our specialty endorsements, we have 241 for the engineering geologist, 445 for hydrogeologist, and 86 who carry both for a total of 772.

(01:23:08):

And again, I won't go through the full list but here is a list of the new licensees including endorsements since the last board meeting. And a trend chart showing our first issues versus our renewals. Moving on to Item 9.3 ... 9.3.2, excuse me, for our Fall Exam update. ASBA is going to be hosting computer-based examinations once again, they're opening two dates for them this go round. That was a lesson learned from the spring exams, they found that a lot of locations could not accommodate all of the examinations in one single day, so they opened up two windows. So it will be Friday, October 6th and then Monday, October 9th for the FG and the PG. For the specialty exams, we will be hosting them at the DOL facility on Black Lake Boulevard, October 6th. I believe our engineering geologists will go first in the morning and they currently have four registered to take the exam and then hydrogeology will follow in the afternoon with seven currently registered. Are there any questions on the exams before we move on?

(01:24:25):

Okay. All right, so this is a report that the board has been requesting for quite some time, and we apologize that it took so long to get it. But we have been working on getting it compiled and getting thorough information to you. We didn't want to bring anything that was not thorough and complete. And I apologize, my computer is taking a minute to load. I'm sorry, we've had computer issues plaguing us all week, so it is just taking a second for my report to load on my side so I can ...

(01:25:16):

I apologize. It is just throwing a temper tantrum and completely freezing on me.

Deb (01:25:51):

Is there something we could share for you, Sydney?

Sydney (01:25:56):

Possibly. I'm just trying to get it to pull up and my computer is going extra slow. There we go. I managed to get it. Okay, thank you for your patience. So part of what we wanted to provide to the board is an understanding that the geologist program and the funding for it, this is funded as a dedicated fund program, meaning that the fund is required to be self-sufficient. So licensing dollars pay for the entire program, the program does not receive any general fund money. So no tax dollars go to help fund the program. It is 100% the licensing dollars. Spending authority for the fund is granted by the legislature to the Department of Licensing, but that only represents one part of the formula. Regardless of the dollar amount that the legislature says that can be fully spent, the program cannot spend anything that it does not earn.

(01:27:01):

So if the legislature ... To throw a number out, if the legislature were to say you can spend up to a \$1 million for the program, however we only have \$750,000 in revenue, we cannot spend that additional \$250,000 because we don't have it. So we have to spend what we have. The program has been operating at a gap for some time and that is why ... And I apologize, I'm getting the piece, I'm not sharing

anything because this was provided in the packet. And so I'm just going to hit the highlights for the board.

(01:27:40):

So the program has been operating at a gap for quite some time, which has greatly reduced the amount of additional funding that was available to the program and reduced any wiggle room that the program might've once had. With that, we've had a lot of questions, particularly with the spring COE when we were not able to send anybody. The question was why and where is that money going? And so that is why this report is coming. And we did receive questions as we were planning for funding for the annual meeting and the Fall COE, is there any wiggle room that will allow participation in that grant? We did have that discussion and it ended up not being a factor, but the reason behind why we would not be able to send the full board financially is that we basically wipe out the money that has been earmarked for travel for the year. So that would mean no participation in any other COEs, the remainder of the biennium, travel for university outreach, things like that. That's all greatly impacted by this.

(01:28:49):

So for the biennium, the program started with a fund balance of \$325,000. The projected revenue that we are hoping to bring in is \$780,000. However, the program is also projected to spend \$860,000 to operate, and so that would leave a balance at the end of the biennium for \$245,000. With that ending balance, the program is statutorily required to maintain \$110,000 and that represents three months of operating expenses. So if we were to bring in absolutely no additional revenue, we have to be able to keep the program up and running for three months until something can be sorted out. That's statutory requirement for all of our dedicated funds.

(01:29:38):

So as we spend down the biannual fund balance, when we have those large gaps and eat into what that fund balance is, we do create those gaps. And that's where things like fee increases come into play. The faster the fund balance is spent down, the sooner those fee increases come along. The greater those gaps are, the greater the fee increase to help maintain that fund balance and to ensure that the program has a healthy future.

(01:30:13):

What makes up the spending for the program? That doesn't include program personnel, so the licensing team, us, investigators, all of those pieces. However, the program does not fund 100% of those pieces. For example, myself and Susan, we support five different programs, so our contribution is broken up by those five different programs. Examinations, technology, and licensing software. So not just the Polaris program for licensing, but everything down to telephones for customer service line, just the computer systems to help run everything. All of that gets broken down across all of the different programs that each piece touches.

(01:31:05):

And then also other agency support. So that includes legal, every time we need to reach out to the assistant attorney generals on questions regarding the program, the licensing dollars, pay for all of that. Facilities, we do still have to have offices to work in, things like that. Management, legislative support,

monitoring bills, all of those things help make up the bulk of the program spending. There are other considerations such as legislative implementation, state employee incentives which were required for all state employees. And I know a large portion of this board is state employees. So anything that the legislature approves as part of the budget and as part of the employment contract with the union, that all impacts the program dollars. And then inflation is another factor that unfortunately is just outside of our control but I know everybody is seeing rising costs everywhere and here is no different.

(01:32:09):

The amount of these allotments is based on different factors depending on the impact to the program. So if there's an impact based on licensee count for example, the geologist program being a relatively small program versus the real estate program being one of if not our largest with several thousand licensees, versus the geologist program where we're looking at a couple thousand licensees. If the impact to the program is going to be proportional based on that, then allocations are made based on that proportion.

(01:32:45):

However, if support is going to be provided equally, so it's going to be the same amount of work for all of the programs that something touches, then it's broken out equally. So if it's monitoring bills, that it's going to be an equal amount across all of-

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Sydney (01:33:03):

It's going to be an equal amount across all of the programs that somebody is looking at, then that is charged equally. So we do adjust based on those factors. Board staff does believe that we are also missing out on some funding opportunities and are working with some of our other program partners to dig into that. That includes things like only charging a one-time, late renewal fee regardless of how late someone is or only requiring a single year of renewal fee to be paid in order for somebody to renew their license. So, if somebody is five years expired, we still only require them to pay a one-time renewal late fee, and then the one-time renewal fee itself, they don't pay for those five years that they were missing. And that is very abnormal compared to our other programs. The other licensee groups require that each year be paid, so each back year of licensing fees be paid and then they will also charge a late fee for each year and that accumulates. So, little factors like that, they can ultimately have a big impact.

(01:34:14):

So, we're looking to see what those impacts are. We do keep data on that and we're just having to extrapolate it from the system. So, as we have that information we'll certainly bring it back to the board, but we do think that that's an area where some revenue is being left out. We're looking at those, we are hoping to bring a WAC update to the board for you all to work on with us. There are some other areas in licensing where we feel that the WACs could be a little bit clearer and then we would also like to include this as part of that. I tried not to go too in depth because you did all have this report, but I'm happy to answer any questions that you all have.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:35:08):

Board member, Tebb.

Tom Tebb (01:35:12):

Thank you for this report, very informative and interesting. My question I think is, how does this, well first of all, are we seeing a decline in renewals? I think on one of the charts I thought I saw a decline and how does that affect our sort of basic operating level? And then the second question is, are we comparable in terms of our fees and costs with other states, say like Oregon or other licensing states. Are our fees average, are they below average, are they higher than other states? I don't have a good sense of that. Thank you.

Sydney (01:36:06):

So, with the renewal rates, you're right, I believe I also saw the same chart where there has been a slight decline, but we did not look at that as part of this report. We can certainly add that to the list of statistics that we are working on bringing back to the board and get that information back to you, taking a little bit broader look at it hopefully. As far as the licensing rates, and I'll ask Deb to step in if I misspeak, but I believe we do keep an eye on what the licensing rates are across the different states. However, it does not directly impact the decision on what the fees will ultimately be because we do have a responsibility to fund the program regardless. So, it is a factor that is considered but it's not necessarily a deciding factor. Am I correct on that Deb?

Deb (01:37:04):

You are correct, Sydney. We are cognizant of the licensing fees in other jurisdictions, but it does not factor into how we charge. I can tell you in terms of the program, the smaller the licensing base, unfortunately the higher the fees tend to be, to support that program. Some of our programs with very small licensing bases end up having fees that are quite a bit more to continue to support that program where you have cosmetology license where it's \$35, because you have over a 100,000 licensees. Makes sense when you compare it to only 2,300 geology licenses. But I think that over time, we have seen a decline in the geology licensee numbers. We can definitely bring that to you at the next meeting so that we can show that trend. That's really where this board can influence, getting out there and encouraging and doing more outreach to encourage more for upcoming geologists to go through the licensing process. If we have a healthy licensee balance, we have fewer licensing fees.

Tom Tebb (01:38:37):

Yeah, I agree. We haven't really gone anywhere in three years in terms of travel and yeah, we want to get out there but if we don't have a budget to do, it's a spiral in the wrong direction. So, thank you very much, very informative.

Deb (01:38:57):

And I think, board member, Tebb, I think that one of the areas that we look at is how we can cut costs in other ways. Our virtual meetings have been a great way for us to save money and those cost savings then directly impact your licensing fees. So, when we aren't pushing to be in person, traveling around the State to do board meetings, we save money. If we can figure out ways to do virtual outreach, we're

going to save money. So, I think sometimes we have to start to think outside the box and not say what we can't do, but think about what we can do on our limited budget. So, there's absolutely ways we can make an impact.

Tom Tebb (01:39:43):

Good comments, thank you.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:39:47):

This is Chair Hanell. I'm curious if you have a sense of how much discretion the budget office at Department of Licensing has versus what's statutorily required when it comes to funding some of the shared services and what goes into the decision where it's going to be a flat fee from each program regardless of size versus some sort of scale, based on program size for cost sharing for shared services.

Sydney (01:40:25):

So with that, we do have a new budget officer who joined the agency shortly before I did last year. I think she's been with us since April or May of '22. And she dug in and was looking at specifically that and specifically for the geologist program. This is a program that she's taken a keen interest in and it has reviewed all of those. So, if it's something that she doesn't have a choice and it has to be charged a flat rate across all of them, she does, but if she can make any adjustments, she's been able to do some of those things. So, that has resulted in a cost savings. We don't know specifically what that full cost savings is going to look like until the end of the biennium because this is really going to be the first year that we have those numbers. But, I do know that she's been able to make some of those adjustments based on that.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:41:25):

Thank you. And then one additional question. I know we are a small program, you have a sense of where we are within the scope of licensed professions in Washington. Are we the bottom 10% in size? Are we mid-range? We're obviously not one of the top ranges, but just to help our board have perspective on where we fall in terms of program size in comparison to the other licensed professions in Washington.

Sydney (01:42:01):

I'll call on Deb for this one because I'm not as intimately familiar with all of the licensing professions. I do know geology is one of the smaller, it's not the smallest by any stretch. I think you guys tend to fall probably in the upper portion of the small programs, but I will let Deb answer that for sure.

Deb (01:42:20):

No, that's a great question. I really don't know. My inclination would be that you probably do fall within that lower licensing number. I definitely think we can get that and bring that back to you just for informational purposes. We do have a few smaller programs and they're facing the same difficulty with their licensing fees and facing fee increases. One of the conversations we'll probably start to have next year is that we had some legislative changes that came about with House Bill 1301, in this last session

that asked for us to do... It's not exactly regulatory reform and I hate to say that, but it is a review of licensing basis and we were asked to audit 10% of our licensing programs each year over the course of this bill. So, those are information that we will be gathering based on that and which programs will be looked at first, we can share that information as we have more available.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:43:38):

Excellent, thanks Deb. Other board questions or discussion with respect to the budget overview?

(01:43:48):

All right, thank you very much for that overview. I'm looking forward to continuing the discussion. So, with that we'll move to item 9.4.2, which I believe Susan will be presenting.

Susan (01:44:12):

Yes. So, the board requested some information about a newsletter and asked that staff reach out to the Oregon Board staff to find out about their structure. So, I included their fall newsletter in the packet, so you guys got to see an example of what it looks like. They are created through Microsoft Publisher, they're distributed quarterly to registrants. They're about four pages in length with dedicated items such as news events, new licensees, lapse licensees. Some of the struggles that they have with the newsletter is getting board members to contribute and finding compelling content. And then, Vice Chair Brock brought up our webpage. There's a DOL webpage for news and updates for geologists. And I reached out to our web team and they would welcome anything that the board would like to contribute to the page for the licensees with stuff that pertains to the geologist profession or to licensing. So, those are two options that the board can discuss in regards to additional outreach for the licensee base.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:45:44):

Board member, Brock.

Carla Brock (01:45:47):

I wonder about the website updates. What would the process be? Would it have to be something that the board agreed to? Is that kind of a... Or is it just, we can provide content and your web people can upload it? What would the process be I wonder?

Susan (01:46:04):

Well, the web team said that we should create a process, get a process in place for it. So, if somebody from the board wanted to compose something, our unit, Sydney and I would review it and edit it possibly for content and we would send it to the web team and they may have to edit additionally like formatting to get it posted to the website. But when I viewed the website, there's nothing on there. So, it would be really cool to see a new trend, especially started by the geologists here with content, putting content on there.

(01:46:43):

The web team said that they would like to see more frequent additions to that webpage. So, it would start with the board and we would review it for formatting and content and then send it off to the web team. They have people on their team too, that can help with the way that it looks and the structure of it.

Carla Brock (01:47:07):

So it would be a relatively informal process. It doesn't have to get approved by everyone or reviewed by somebody specific or anything like that.

(01:47:18):

Cool. I think that sounds like a great option. Sounds like an easiest option.

Susan (01:47:23):

And it looks like it's linked to our listserv, so if something gets posted on there, there's a notification. I don't know for sure if that's how it happens, but people can register to get notifications for information that's posted on there. So, I thought that was a pretty cool option too, how it's all connected together.

Sydney (01:47:44):

That is one of the nice things with our new website is we have some additional features in the background like that, that will allow people to get notifications and yeah, the process for submitting it would be fairly easy. We wouldn't necessarily need approval from the board, we would just ask that it'd be relevant to licensing and things like that. But we could look at doing short articles like two to 500 words max and posting online topics and areas of interest that the board feels need to be addressed. And that could be a really quick, easy way to push out information

Chair Casey Hanell (01:48:18):

Board member Gillum.

Carrie Gillum (01:48:22):

I think that the website would be a really excellent first step. It sounds easy, it's already supported. People I think these days are looking for short and sweet and we can test it out and see with the fact that it's got a listserv, just how many people we would be hitting. But then we can also then push out information like, hey, we've got more information coming.

(01:48:51):

Rather than, I think newsletters are nice, but I think maybe they're not as read as we would like. I know for me and probably a lot of you, we got too many emails now. It used to be too much junk mail in the mailbox. Now it's too many emails and I wish I had more time to read those newsletters because they probably have great information and I'm one that writes one and sends ones out, but something that's quick and sweet and gets to the point I think would be great, and so having this website, I am so excited to hear. I think that's probably one of the best ways that we could get some information out and even

doing our outreach about what licensing's available and where we're going to be, if we're going to be doing in-person outreach too. I think this would be a great first step for us.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:49:44):

Thank you. Board member, Struthers.

James Struthers (01:49:47):

Yeah, I concur with board member Gillum. That this is a really... I think it's a really good platform for us that avoids some of the pitfalls of actually physically having to produce a newsletter. And also that dictated quarterly rollout scheme. If you get locked into that, you're suddenly looking at deadlines that may inhibit people from producing timely content that would be valuable. And so I think that especially if it hits our listserv, it's something that could provide us a just-in-time publication type model. That would be pretty good.

Sydney (01:50:31):

And the other piece with that is with a newsletter sending it out as an attachment, we have no way to gauge impact. We're just kind of hoping for the best and hoping we get some feedback. Whereas with this through the web team, we can actually track clicks and trends and things like that.

James Struthers (01:50:50):

So, what is the reach of the listserv? Does that go out to every registrant or how does that work?

Sydney (01:50:57):

No, the listserv is people who have specifically signed up for it. And not necessarily licensees, just maybe people who are particularly interested in the field of geology. I know Department of Natural Resources and Ecology have people who work in geology but maybe aren't licensees. So, people that want to keep in touch with that, but we also have a lot of licensees who don't opt into it. So, that is kind of one of the downfalls with the listserv that is an opt-in service. But we can also continue working to grow that reach as well.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:51:35):

Board member Gillum.

Carrie Gillum (01:51:38):

Yeah, I believe... I didn't know it existed. So if we were just to even get the word out that that's there and knowing that we have non licensee people, but just maybe people who are generally interested in geology, that again is great to know and we can then tailor some of our information. But then also bringing it back to that message of, hey, we have licensed professionals in this State, would you like to be one? That kind of thing.

(01:52:03):

We can always bring that message home, but at the same time, just having that public outreach of general interest in science is always wonderful. Then there's also the whole thing of citizen scientists that we'd always like to be able to touch on out there. It's creating interest, gets the word out, and we could have a lot more people on that listserv that then could be our advocates.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:52:35):

Board member Brock.

Carla Brock (01:52:38):

On the news and updates web page, there's a little button that just says sign up to get email updates. Is that how you subscribe to the listserv?

Sydney (01:52:47):

I believe so. We can double check with the web team then that is in fact what that link goes to. But we can also send out information on just how to subscribe to the listserv in general. We can provide that to the board and please feel free to share it. We're always looking to grow those.

Carla Brock (01:53:03):

Cool. I'm going to send you some news today. Let's test it out.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:53:09):

Right on.

Carrie Gillum (01:53:12):

Can we send that out when we send our renewals out to our licensed geologists? Like hey, there's this listserv?

Sydney (01:53:20):

We can ask the team if it's possible to add a little blurb in there that, hey, don't forget to sign up for the listserv. It might already be on there. Unfortunately I don't see that side of it to be able to answer that with any level of divinity. But yeah, we could...

Carrie Gillum (01:53:34):

I'll look on my next registration.

Sydney (01:53:36):

Yeah, we can certainly see if that's an option just to add that little blurb. We can't automatically enroll people in it. It has to be an opt-in. But yeah, I think that would be a cool little reminder at the bottom.

Carrie Gillum (01:53:49):

Just little advertisement.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:53:53):

Board member Struthers.

James Struthers (01:53:56):

I mean, they are signing up for a license. I mean they're opting in by doing that, aren't they?

Sydney (01:54:03):

Yes and no. That's something we've found across all of our licensing groups that they don't appreciate being auto-enrolled in things and it leads to a whole lot of complaints for staff to sort through and then a lot of work on the backend to go in and dis-enroll people from it. So, the agency as a whole does it as an opt-in only service.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:54:31):

All right. Thank you Susan and Sydney for that discussion. Just for the board's awareness, we are at 11:55. We've got a few more things to cruise through here, so we'll do our best to stay on target. Go to our action item list and Susan will be presenting on this.

Susan (01:54:54):

So, with the action item list, the exam feedback review committee. We discussed that, we have a meeting set for the HG next week and we're working on the EG currently. The research whether there are issues verifying candidates for licensure are qualified based on curriculum that's still in progress. Check on specialty exam frequency to administer the exam cost and budget. That's currently on hold. The charter review is in progress. Outreach planning that was discussed today and still in progress. The task analysis survey, Sydney's still waiting on the results from ASBOG.

(01:55:39):

We'll get those to you as soon as we get them. The hydrogeology scope of practice that's still in progress. Sydney reported out on the program funding structure today. The Oregon newsletter structure that was discussed just a few moments ago. Reaching out to California to learn how they have dealt with the specialty license hydrogeology regarding code statutes and laws, that's still in progress. And Deb reported out on the pass rate data and we're going to follow up with a few items with that on the next agenda, and I made note of those. The licensee count report to show specialty endorsements that was added to the report today and reported out on by Sydney. I think that's it.

Chair Casey Hanell (01:56:36):

All right, thank you Susan. Any board comment or discussion on the action item list update? All right. Hearing none, we'll move to item number 10, public comment. So, the public may address the board on matters within the board's jurisdiction, either verbally during this meeting or by submitting written comments in advance. Verbal comments are limited to one, three minute comment. Written comments

are limited to no more than 500 words and must be emailed to dolboards@dol.wa.gov. And no less than two business days prior to the meeting, with the subject line public comment, geologist board.

(01:57:26):

Response to all public comments, the board is limited to requesting that the matter be added to a future agenda per discussion or directing staff to study the matter further. Inflammatory comments and language will not be permitted. So with that, we'll open it up. Do we have any members of the public who would like to provide a comment during this meeting?

(01:57:46):

All right, seeing no hands, we'll move to conclusions. See if we can get this in two minutes. Announcements. Do any board members have any announcements they'd like to share, today's meeting? All right, hearing none. Are there any requests for future agenda items that they would like to put forward during this meeting for a future agenda? All right, hearing none. We'll go to the review of the action items list and Susan will review the action items from this meeting for future work.

Susan (01:58:47):

I captured a lot today. I might've missed some things. So, I'll start at the top here. Staff will connect with the University of Washington for outreach and get some dates and then connect with board members to see for availability. The staff will review the materials for the outreach and the handouts and update the contact list. And then we'll distribute the contact list to the board members and we'll make note of giving board members advanced notice for attending the visits to the universities. And we will reach out to the licensing team and find out about complaints or questions for our public comment item on the agenda. The geo... I'm sorry I can't pronounce that.

Sydney (01:59:39):

Geo-morphology.

Susan (01:59:41):

Thank you, Sydney. Process the request for voting delegate Eileen Webb and make a request for Carla Brock for the COE and the field trip. And send in a correction to the meeting minutes for the ASBOGs annual meeting minutes regarding the complaints, after we reach out to staff to find out the totals. We'll add additional information to the specialty exam pass rate data to show a correlation with the different exams. We will produce a report to show trends for the geologist license. And also, there was a question about how geologists fall within the licensing profession and we will report back at the next meeting of how they fall with the different licensing professions. And then there was one more item that was added about the listserv in regards to see if, with the license renewal, if we could have a little blurb at the bottom encouraging our new licensees to sign up for the listserv.

(02:00:56):

So those were the items that I captured. And an agenda item that would be for next meeting would be a report out from the ASBOG meeting.

Chair Casey Hanell (02:01:07):

Board member, Brock.

Carla Brock (02:01:10):

I must have checked out for a minute when we were talking about outreach to udub, but I wanted to bring up, if you didn't know that the message program is on hiatus for a year, so it's not currently being provided. So, there may not be anyone at udub right now that is amenable to outreach by us since they don't currently have a graduate program in geology. I mean, it's worth reaching out, I think next year might be a better year to do it if that program gets reinstated. So, I just wanted to mention that.

Sydney (02:01:49):

Yeah, and we'll definitely have that discussion with them. But they reached out to us earlier this week requesting outreach from the board. So yeah, we'll make that part of the discussion with them.

James Struthers (02:01:59):

Out of curiosity, who was that that reached out?

Sydney (02:02:06):

[inaudible 02:02:07] two seconds to find the email. It was Kristin Evans. She's with the Earth and Space Sciences program.

James Struthers (02:02:20):

Okay.

Chair Casey Hanell (02:02:20):

Any other board comments on the review of the action item lists for next meeting and future work? All right. Hearing none, thank you so much board and board staff for rich topics to discuss today. Appreciate all the presentations and information and then the thoughtful conversation around it. So with that, the time is now 12:03 and we'll consider this meeting of the licensing board adjourned.

Carla Brock (02:02:52):

Thank you, Casey. Thanks everybody.

Sydney (02:02:53):

Thanks everybody.

James Struthers (02:02:54):

Yeah guys, take care.

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