

Washington State Home Inspector Advisory Licensing Board meeting transcript

December 14, 2023

Jon Ashlock (00:03):

[inaudible 00:00:03] I'm calling this meeting to order. This meeting's open to the public and we'll take the time at the end of the meeting for brief public comment period. Participants will have no more than three minutes to address the board. As a reminder, board members are not to engage in conversation during the public comments. As a courtesy, I ask all participants to keep themselves on mute to reduce background noises. When a board would like to comment on topic, please use the raise hand feature in Teams. Once I have called on you, unmute yourself and state your name before sharing your comments. Please remember to mute yourself again after finishing speaking. Thank you. Roll call. Sandra [inaudible 00:00:43] will now call roll confirming board member attendance once she has called your name. Please respond by standing here or present.

Sandra (00:51):

Thank you, Chair Ashlock. I will start with you. Chair Ashlock?

Jon Ashlock (00:55):

Here.

Sandra (00:56):

Thank you. Vice Chair Howard?

Howard (00:58):

Here.

Sandra (00:59):

Thank you. Board member, McKeely?

McKeely (01:03):

Present.

Sandra (01:04):

Thank you. Board member, Thompson?

Thompson (01:08):

Here.

Sandra (01:08):

Thank you. And board member, Tryon? [inaudible 00:01:15]. Board member, Tryon? Oh, you're muted.

Tryon (01:22):

Present.

Sandra (01:23):

Thank you so much. All right, back to you, Chair Ashlock.

Jon Ashlock (01:27):

All right. So moving on, we'll do the approval of the agenda. Anybody like to make a motion?

Howard (01:39):

Vice chair Howard. I'd like to make a motion to approve today's agenda.

Jon Ashlock (01:44):

Any second?

Tryon (01:47):

I'll second.

McKeely (01:47):

Board member, McKeely, second.

Jon Ashlock (01:50):

Okay. A vote, all approve say aye.

McKeely (01:53):

Aye.

Thompson (01:53):

Aye.

Tryon (01:53):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (01:54):

All opposed? Motion passes. Approval of minutes, so we have two to approve. June 15th and September 22nd of 2023 for the minutes. So we request a motion to approve the minutes for June 15th of 2023.

Thompson (02:13):

Board member Thompson. I approve. Move to approve the minutes.

Jon Ashlock (02:18):

Any seconds?

Tryon (02:19):

Board member, Tryon. Approve the minutes. Second.

Jon Ashlock (02:24):

All those opposed... [inaudible 00:02:26] approved for?

Tryon (02:28):

Aye.

Howard (02:28):

Aye.

McKeely (02:28):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (02:30):

All those opposed? Motion passes. All right, next one. Approval for the September 22nd 2023 minutes. We have to make a motion for that.

McKeely (02:45):

Motion to approve.

Thompson (02:47):

I will second.

Jon Ashlock (02:50):

All those in favor?

Thompson (02:50):

Aye.

McKeely (02:51):

Aye.

Howard (02:51):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (02:53):

All those opposed? Motion passes. Next up, moving on again. All right. For awards and recognition, there are nothing to be awarded or recognized during this meeting, so that makes it another easy one. Old business. Actually exact same item there. We have no old business on the agenda either. So moving

on to new business. I will now turn the floor over to Sandra. Who will present the proposed calendar for the board's review and approval. Sandra?

Sandra (03:21):

Yeah. So at the beginning... Or, rather at the end of each year, the staff proposes new dates for the following year. We're currently proposing March 14th 2024, June 27th 2024, September 19th, 2024 and December 12th twenty-twenty-four. We're just continuing with the pattern that we did this year where it's a Thursday every quarter and we would ask if the board would meet still at 10 a.m each day. And I'll turn it back to you chair. It will need a motion and a second.

Jon Ashlock (04:03):

Would Anybody like to make a motion to approve the calendar for next year as it stands for our quarterly meetings at date and times?

McKeely (04:11):

I'll motion to approve.

Jon Ashlock (04:14):

Any second?

Thompson (04:15):

Board member, Thompson. Second.

Jon Ashlock (04:18):

All those in favor?

Tryon (04:19):

Aye.

Thompson (04:20):

Aye.

McKeely (04:20):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (04:22):

All those opposed? Excellent. The motion passes. The schedule is set for next year. Thank you guys. All right, subcommittee reports. Board member, Tryon, you are up for the changing business practices subcommittee.

Tryon (04:41):

All right, so in our... Recently to licensed home inspectors and some other members of the public and we got about 39 people to respond and some of those questions that we asked, we just try to make it as

simple and concise as possible in regards to the WAC statutes involving obviously home inspections. And those questions were, should the WAC detail the process to refer findings that are outside the scope of the Inspection? And the majority of those 39 responses were, "No." The other question was, should the WAC provide more clarity around reporting pest conducive conditions? And those responses were in the majority of, "Yes." And thirdly, the third question that we asked was in defining experienced and inspector in regards to field training. And we got quite a wide range of responses, but that was in regards to should the WAC really define that more clearly and overwhelmingly, mainly was, "yes." So that was the three questions we sent out. We've had subsequent subcommittee meetings in regard to how we should kind of tackle that within the statute.

(06:30):

And these are kind of some slides, I'm assuming that everyone could see these. So in those discussions we considered what would be an experienced inspector and the general consensus was five years of licensure and a minimum of 500 paid home inspections, the same requirements for a board member. So that's kind of where we're at with that right now. And we decided that the easiest way to accomplish that verbiage would be through the rubric, which dictates what curriculum requirements are for those field inspectors as opposed to going the legislative route, which we may take at some future date. But that's where we're at with that.

Jon Ashlock (07:33):

Thank you for that. So normally we have public comment at the end of the meeting on this, but being that we talked earlier on, we wanted to keep this moving if there's any public that are on this meeting right now to be able to continue conversation on it. So I'd like to open the floor to the public to address the board regarding any questions or concern to what board member trial has talked about. But please note that the board could hear the comments in order to comply with the Open Public Meetings Act board members cannot engage in conversation. We'd be able to take notes on this and be able to go back to the committee and be able to talk further. But outside of the survey we thought this would be another area or another venue for public comment to come in if they didn't see or didn't complete out the survey. So at this point in time, are there anybody from the public that would like to bring up any comments regarding this topic?

Sandra (08:32):

I don't see any hands at this time.

Jon Ashlock (08:35):

All righty. Then we will go ahead and move on. I do like being able to do that as an option though since it's AI, keeping it fresh in people's memories. All right. Board member, [inaudible 00:08:50], the diversity equity inclusion subcommittee. Do you have any report for us today?

McKeely (08:55):

Yes, we have been discussing trying to obviously see how we can best serve the state as a whole. Right now in order to drive engagement, we're trying to put together a couple surveys for the educators, the ones who are doing the inspection education. We put together a short survey, designed to be taken in 10 minutes or less that will get emailed to all educators via a list that the DOL has and in that will be a

request if they wish to do a longer survey to ask for more detailed responses. That survey is going live I believe today, and it'll be open for two weeks and we hopefully will have some results for the next board meeting in March. We're also reaching out to contacts in our special interest groups for more information on how we can improve the industry to reach everyone. And that's what I have for today.

Jon Ashlock (10:01):

Excellent. Thank you very much. I can't wait to see the survey and see what sort of results we get back on it. I really strongly think that surveys and public feedback is a key to expanding our industry, so this is a good thing. All right, moving on the, sorry... I got missed. Oh my God. The education subcommittee board member, Thompson.

Thompson (10:25):

Yes. So we've been working hard on a couple of different things in that area and some of it kind overlaps with what Warren has already talked about. First off, looking into the training rubric, we've been doing some discussion about changing some of the hours around on some of the requirements. So if you look at it, it breaks down all the different sections of things that the students go in and learn and we're wondering if some of those aren't a little bit on the short side, like HVAC Electrical. As an instructor, I often see the students coming into the course and that is their biggest fear factor and they don't have the greatest understanding. So there's been some discussion like, "Okay, how do we make some adjustments to that? Maybe add more time to that, look at some of the other areas that maybe don't need as much attention and work on some of those things." So that sort of stuff we're working on there.

(11:11):

And then also talking about as we're looking at the WAC as well and looking at some of that wording, we kind of came across the same thing about what is a field trainer, what kind of requirements should there be to be one? Right now, it's very vague. I do know again that a lot of people will go through the online courses and then they go back to the company that they plan on joining and they get whatever you want to call, field training. And I'm not really a classroom environment, to whereas the company I work with, we take them out for a week, they get 10 homes, five days instructor on site. I answer questions throughout the week and just sharpen them up a little bit. We're not sure if people who are skipping that actual process and going straight to an inspection company are getting the training that they properly need to be successful in this career.

(11:59):

And then to also just guarantee that we are putting forth a good product and that we're protecting this industry that we love so much and making sure we're getting good inspectors out there. Because I'm sure as most of you people always love to pull me aside and tell me their nightmare and inspector stories about what happened at their last inspection and my goal is to bring that to an end. So hopefully with this education and getting better students and getting better learning, that's part of this whole process and getting them out there. So that's what I have to report on.

Jon Ashlock (12:28):

Excellent. Thank you very much. Moving on. So Sandy, Central Investigations and Audits Unit, the complaint case counts, the floor is yours.

Sandy (12:40):

All right. Thank you very much. So there are currently two cases that are open in complaint intake, two that have been sent forward to investigation. Investigations have completed nine cases, total closed is six, and I know it can be a little confusing with the all years all units. That just means that it may have been submitted at a previous quarter or a previous year and it has gone through the process, but it has been closed now. So that's just a historical. We just want to make sure we include cases that have been submitted even last year or at the beginning of year, they have been closed. So we have six in a closed status, zero in complaint intake. We have 32 that are currently under investigation and one that has been forwarded to our legal compliance unit. And with that I'm happy to answer any questions. Okay.

Jon Ashlock (14:00):

All right. You have the next one also here, the licensing and customer support services.

Sandy (14:04):

I do. So we currently have 1,209 active licenses, and if you'll move on to the next slide please. We have broken that down, all the active licenses. So we have presented them by county. I don't want to run through each and every county, but you can see here that King County is the highest followed by Pierce, then Snohomish and Spokane. Next slide please. So here we have a little history and this is something we've started tracking this year. So as we go forward we'll have a little bit more data and more historical data to document. So on average we have seen around 50 renewals per month and on average we have seen around 8 new applications per month. Next slide please and I'll turn it over to Sandra to go over the master action items.

Sandra (15:20):

Thank you. So we do still have an open recruitment for two vacant seats. We currently only have received packets from three interested applicants. We're hoping to get a few more applicants so it's a little bit more, just we have a wider pool. So we're still working on getting that recruitment filled. As far as staff, inviting guest speakers, this is an ongoing item that will just continue to be on here. We may think about if the board is okay with it, removing that from the action item list and just keep it as part of our process because it isn't necessarily something with a deliverable other than having someone on the agenda. As far as the military spouse cultural competency training, Sandy has a little bit to say about that, but currently it is good. We have received all of our certificates. All right.

Sandy (16:33):

And I do want to barge in a little bit here and before we move into the public comments, I really want to thank everyone on this board for completing their training. As a veteran this particular subject is very near and dear to my heart and I appreciate the time and the effort that you put into watching the video, to taking the survey and just maybe keeping that in the front of your mind about the difficulties that military families go through. Thank you very much.

Tryon (17:11):

Thanks for your service, Sandy.

Sandra (17:22):

You're muted.

Howard (17:23):

You're muted.

Jon Ashlock (17:27):

Sorry about that. I will now open the floor to public, to address the board and share their thoughts, concerns or requests. Written comments can be submitted at least two days prior to the meetings and by emailing the DOLboards@dol.w.gov boards. Is there any comments that have been submitted or questions have been submitted in writing?

Sandy (17:51):

We do not have any written comments to read off at this time.

Jon Ashlock (17:56):

Okay. Is there anybody from the member of public that would like to be able to address the board? All righty, I think that's given that time there, we'll go ahead and close off the floor. If you do have anything for our next meeting, just go ahead and email off the list or come prepared for our next meeting next year. All right. So announcements, space reserved for staff and board members for private information updates or news impacting the industry, information only. Are there any announcements right now that anybody would like to share? We are just cruising right now today. All right, Sandra, turning it over to you.

Sandra (18:56):

Yeah, so I didn't hear any additional future agenda items in the meeting or action items for next meeting. Please let me know if I missed anything.

Jon Ashlock (19:07):

No, I do agree. I think the comment for getting people coming to our board meeting should go ahead and move off the action item, just be kind of an assumed item at this point in time.

Sandra (19:15):

Okay.

Howard (19:17):

Does that require a motion or are we just good with that?

Sandra (19:21):

It doesn't require a motion.

Howard (19:22):

Beautiful.

Jon Ashlock (19:26):

All right, we are just cruising. We're already at adjournment right now. So at this point in time, it is now 10:19 in the morning on December 14th, 2023 and this meeting is adjourned. Our next meeting via Teams on March 14th, 2024 at 10 A.M. Everybody have a great holiday season and we will.