

Washington State Geologist Licensing Board meeting transcript

June 12, 2025

Sydney Muhle (00:02):

Pop up here at the top. There we go. We are all set.

Noah Dudley (00:06):

Okay. Good morning, everyone. It is now 10:02 AM. I'm calling this regular 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 phone if you have called in when you're not speaking to reduce the background noise. One challenge is remembering to unmute your microphone or phone when you're speaking. Also, for board members, to help us capture information correctly, please state your name when making comments. Thank you. Oh, and this is Board Chair Dudley. All right, Alyssa, would you start the roll call?

Alyssa Woods (00:47):

Yes. And I will start with you. Chair Dudley?

Noah Dudley (00:51):

Present.

Alyssa Woods (00:53):

Vice Chair Gillum?

Carrie Gillum (00:55):

Here.

Alyssa Woods (00:56):

Secretary Hanell?

Casey Hanell (00:59):

Present.

Alyssa Woods (01:00):

Board Member Struthers?

Jim Struthers (01:03):

Present.

Alyssa Woods (01:04):

Board Member Halbert?

Bill Halbert (01:06):

Present.

Alyssa Woods (01:07):

And Board Member Brock? I'm going to assume she's not present because of her return, and I'm still not sure where we're at with that, so I will pass it back to you, Chair Dudley.

Noah Dudley (01:25):

Okay, next up is the approval of agenda. Would someone move to approve the agenda as written?

Casey Hanell (01:38):

Board Member Hanell moves to approve the agenda as presented.

Noah Dudley (01:43):

Okay, can I get a second?

Bill Halbert (01:46):

Board member Halbert seconds.

Noah Dudley (01:48):

Thank you. Next is the approval of minutes.

Sydney Muhle (01:58):

Can we get a vote on that?

Noah Dudley (02:00):

Oh, yes. Thank you. All right. Can we get a vote to approve the agenda as written? Yay or nay?

Bill Halbert (02:11):

Yay.

Carrie Gillum (02:13):

Yay.

Jim Struthers (02:14):

Yay.

Noah Dudley (02:21):

Okay. Next up, approval of the regular meeting minutes from the March 13th, 2025 meeting. Can I get a motion for approval?

Casey Hanell (02:36):

Board Member Hanell moves approval of the meeting minutes.

Noah Dudley (02:41):

Okay, and second?

Jim Struthers (02:42):

Board Member Struthers seconds that.

Noah Dudley (02:45):

Thank you. And a vote to approve or deny the March 13th meeting minutes? Yay or nay?

Jim Struthers (02:59):

Yay.

Bill Halbert (03:00):

Yay.

Noah Dudley (03:12):

And Sydney, I think this one is for you, is that right?

Sydney Muhle (03:17):

Yes sir, it is. So, this is a standing agenda item for us, just an outreach update and discussion. We don't have a whole lot to update on. At this point we haven't heard of any outreach opportunities coming up, and now that we're heading into the summer semester or the summer break, I should say, for the colleges and universities, we likely won't hear a whole lot, but we'll still be reaching out, seeing if we can get on anybody's calendars for the fall, and also looking at just any additional opportunities.

(03:53):

Vice Chair Gillum was in the building with us yesterday, working on an exam review, and we got talking about just a couple of different ideas to maybe re-kickstart the outreach program, start rebuilding some of those relationships with the colleges and universities. And then also, tying that into the discussions the Board has been having around education and the changes that are happening there, and how that ties into the regulation and the

educational requirements for licensure. So, just working on some different ideas. So, as staff, we'll continue to work on those and bring anything forward to the Board that we can, but I don't know if any board members had any other outreach updates or ideas that they wanted to discuss as well.

Noah Dudley (05:02):

This is Chair Dudley. I think you alluded to it, and it might also be a point of discussion for the Application Requirement Verification Committee later, but we had some discussion at the subcommittee meeting recently about trying to do more outreach, find ways to get information about licensure to applicants before they choose or start a degree program, just to make sure that that degree program does meet the educational requirements, particularly with some of these online programs we've been looking at that are, I think, becoming a more attractive option to a lot of people seeking this career path. If we can add that to looking for opportunities to outreach, I'm not sure what that would exactly look like. And I think if any other board member has any ideas for that, that would be great.

Sydney Muhle (06:10):

And as part of that, I think the committee had discussed maybe trying to put together something to put on the website on just things to consider, making sure that educational programs people are looking at include these core areas, and just really helping draw attention to that core curriculum, and those subject matter areas that the Board looks for licensure. That was something that the committee definitely found with a couple of programs, but as Chair Dudley noted, we are seeing an increase in online programs starting the surface, some following that really traditional curriculum, just moving to an online platform instead.

(06:54):

Some that are not following the standards for licensure, but are perhaps advertising that you could become a geologist with this degree program, even though doesn't really meet what we would need to see for them to even consider applying to take the ASBOG exam. So, some different things that are coming to light, so we'll continue working with that committee on what we can put together, and get on the website as well as if there's any opportunities for us to share that out with any potential applicants, and just help highlight the things that people need in order to apply.

Alyssa Woods (07:44):

This is Program Specialist, Alyssa Woods. I just had a quick clarifying question. So, are we adding this as an action item to look for more opportunities for outreach or is this something that we should just be aware of looking forward? I just want to be sure for the notes that I'm capturing.

Sydney Muhle (08:10):

I think we can put it on the action list, but we'll keep it as an ongoing item just for our tracking.

Alyssa Woods (08:19):

Okay.

Carrie Gillum (08:23):

This is Vice Chair Gillum. I was wondering, didn't we have a subcommittee that was doing outreach? Is that still ongoing, existing? No?

Sydney Muhle (08:33):

No. I think we had, a couple of years ago a couple of board members had volunteered to maybe put together an outreach plan, but that never really materialized, but that's also something we could absolutely look at doing. My only ask would be, could we have four committees rolling at the moment, if we could hold off on really kick-starting any new committees until we get through the exam reviews this summer. I'm hoping and praying that those will be on your next agenda for Board approval for both of those, and we can sunset those committees, and then we'll have the capacity to be off and rolling with a new one.

Carrie Gillum (09:22):

I'm not necessarily thinking we may need that as much as I wasn't sure if we had that already, and that was something that then they would of course look more into. But if we don't, then it sounds like something we all would be contributing information to.

Sydney Muhle (09:38):

Board Member Hanell?

Casey Hanell (09:45):

Thank you. I'm curious for those that have attended any of the ASBOG meetings, if this topic has come up. Online degrees and how online coursework matches up with any others that administer the ASBOG test, has that been a topic of conversation at any of those meetings?

Sydney Muhle (10:12):

I think Carla is probably our most recent to have attended. And with her not present today, that's definitely something we can follow up with her on before the next meeting. And we can also ask her directly as well.

Carrie Gillum (10:26):

Vice Chair Gillum, I went last year and this was not... The online stuff wasn't necessarily a subject that came up, but just how the education does seem to be diverging a bit from

some of the testing regime. But this, I think, is something that we have seen probably, what would you say, in the last few months, actually? I don't know. Alyssa, you are usually looking at these or Sydney?

Alyssa Woods (11:01):

I don't think I've necessarily seen anything. Nothing stands out right now to me.

Sydney Muhle (11:09):

I'd say we've seen the increase in just the non-traditional pathways in general over the last year. But in particular, with the education, in the last nine months or so.

Carrie Gillum (11:23):

It may come up maybe in this year's COEs and ASBOG meetings. I'm wondering, if anything, I think it would be a good thing to bring up for any one of us that are going to find out if they are seeing this nationwide.

Sydney Muhle (11:42):

Board Member Halbert?

Bill Halbert (11:43):

I had a question about, we have access to the online curriculum as it pops up, and is it worth reaching out to those programs where they seem to be deficient in meeting the requirements for licensure?

Sydney Muhle (12:09):

We could, and we do have that relationship with the state colleges and universities that a lot of times they will send their curriculum changes to us, and it is really more of a, "Hey, the title of this course is changing to this, but here's the subject that's involved." And it just helps when our licensing team is going through and doing the reviews on the transcripts, like we were discussing with Vice Chair Gillum yesterday that mineralogy, it's not a separate course anymore, it's been folded into another course and is a topic under that umbrella.

(12:49):

So, WSU had reached out to us about a year ago and shared their curriculum updates. And so, that is a resource guide for our licensing team that they'll pull up regularly and okay, "This is what this means," and it helps them go through and check those boxes when they review those transcripts. But that was part of what we talked about yesterday is building those relationships a little bit better so that we have a lot more of that insight. But we are seeing an increase in colleges and universities from across the country that we don't have those relationships and don't know how many of them we might see. So, that's something we can definitely look at.

Bill Halbert (13:37):

Thank you. Just continuing on that, if we have applicants and their transcripts, they're graduates of these programs and their transcripts seem to be deficient to meet the requirements, is there a way we can flag that and then reach out to those universities and say, "You're not meeting our requirements, do without what you will"? But-

Sydney Muhle (14:06):

Yeah. We do not do that currently, but I can look into that and see what's within our scope to be able to do that. And I don't know how effective it would be coming from us as a Board and as a regulatory agency versus having a whole bunch of their students saying, "Hey, you told me I could get licensed, and I am now being told I don't meet licensure requirements with your program." So, we'll look at that and see how much of it we're able to address. Vice Chair Gillum?

Bill Halbert (14:50):

Thank you.

Alyssa Woods (14:59):

And again, one more clarifying question. This is Alyssa Woods. I'm just wondering, is this another action item that I could be adding to work with universities to start conversations about the curriculum and how it crosses over to-

Sydney Muhle (15:13):

I think we'll just tie it into the overall outreach discussion.

Alyssa Woods (15:17):

The overall outreach. Okay. All right. Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (15:21):

Vice Chair Gillum?

Carrie Gillum (15:25):

I was wondering if it's not necessarily on us, Washington State, to necessarily do that. Should we maybe reach out to ASBOG and have ASBOG as the national representation reach out to these universities and let them know since this is going to affect every single state that's under ASBOG regulation or licensure?

Sydney Muhle (15:44):

Yeah, I can reach out to Dina and see if that's something on their radar that they might be willing to shackle.

Carrie Gillum (15:52):

Okay.

Noah Dudley (15:53):

That's a good idea. Any other discussion on Old Business 5.1, outreach updates, or should we move on to 5.2, Professional License Review Act updates? Okay. Sydney, would you take 5.2?

Sydney Muhle (16:23):

Absolutely. And it is my pleasure once again to introduce Bennett Harbaugh, who is the management analyst working on the geologist program for this year's Professional License Review Act report, as well as, I believe his supervisor, Lauren Gilmore is also here. I'm not sure which of them wants to take the lead and provide the update, but just give you where we're at with that report. As a reminder to the Board, won't be sent to the legislature until the end of August, and then won't be published and ready to share for at least a few weeks after that. We want to make sure that the legislature gets lots of time to digest that information before we set them up to hear from their constituents on anything in the report.

(17:17):

And as a reminder for the Board and the public, before I turn it over to Ben and Lauren, this is an act that went through a couple of years ago where the legislature requires the Department of Licensing and the Business Professions Division to review 10% of our professional licensing programs each year for 10 years, and then the clock reset. So, whatever our licensing programs look like 10 years in the future, it'll be 10% of that. And each year one of those programs to be reviewed must be tied to a board or commission. So, this year the geologist program was tapped as that lucky program to review. So, with that, I'll turn it over to Ben and Lauren.

Bennett Harbaugh (18:11):

Great, thank you, Sydney. So, not too many updates this time, other than the draft is pretty much complete. We are just approaching getting it reviewed by leadership, and the research went well. Reports were good. We did identify a small record-keeping gap in the geologist program that we were able to just go back and fix up through the process. So, already seeing some benefits there. But for what you guys can expect from the report for geology is that there's not a lot to report. You guys are a very healthy profession. You're bored. I think you guys are functioning fantastically, which is why we picked you for this early run. And so, like Sydney said, it'll be published in August, and it goes to the legislature first. They get first dibs on reading it and then it'll be made public after that. And I'll definitely do a presentation for you guys, and you'll get it beforehand, and you can look at it, and then ask any questions you want of me. So, that's where we're at.

Noah Dudley (19:49):

Okay, thank you.

Bennett Harbaugh (19:51):

Yeah.

Sydney Muhle (19:57):

Were there any questions for Ben before we move on? All right. Thanks, Ben.

Bennett Harbaugh (20:06):

Thank you all.

Noah Dudley (20:06):

All right, moving on to item six, new business. I think this is all Sydney again. So, take it away, Sydney.

Sydney Muhle (20:18):

All right, and this one really is me. So, this is our semi-annual report out on our exam results from the spring 2025 exam. So, if we can go to the next slide please. There we go. All right, so results for the ASBOG exam. For the fundamentals of geology exam, all jurisdictions nationwide, we had a 68.4% pass rate. Washington, as you can see, historically exceeds that by quite a bit. We had a 79.2% pass rate this year. And then, very similar on the practices of geology pass rate nationwide, just shy of 76%, and Washington well exceeded that with just shy of 94% pass rate. So, I'm very happy to see those results.

(21:32):

Now heading into our specialty exams, which I'm not as excited about giving you. So, for our engineering geology exams this round, we did only have three candidates sit for the exam this cycle, and unfortunately none of those three passed. So, we had a 0% pass rate for the EG. Not the results that I wanted to share with you, but with three examinees, that does mean that pass rate is going to be much lower with even one not passing. So, with all three, we did receive several comments from examinees begging for study materials. So, we're looking at some opportunities on what and how much we can put together and then any funding available for that. So, we're looking to see what we can do to help fill that gap.

(22:41):

As I think the Board is aware, it's part of the Professional License Review Act, there was a listening session where a number of people vocalized that need as well. So, we do hear that need. We obviously see that need with the pass rate this year, so we're working on that. But it does take time to put that together. So, please know it is in the works, and we will bring anything we can and what we find back to the Board to get that rolling.

(23:11):

With our hydrogeology pass rate, we did have a much higher number of examinees, this round with 14. We've been seeing that number steadily increase over the last several years, and they had a just shy of 43% pass rate. Again, not the very high pass rate that we would love to see, but it is up from what we were seeing during those COVID years, especially the

'22, '23 cycle where we did have those lower pass rates coming out of COVID. So, we are excited to see it increasing, albeit slowly, but we did see an increase. And as part of this, the passing scores that we saw were significantly high passing scores. We had several candidates who passed in the 80%. Correct. So, it wasn't just that they passed, they passed significantly. So, I sure don't.

Carrie Gillum (24:24):

Do you guys keep track of if these are first time or they've taken the exam before? I was just curious.

Sydney Muhle (24:35):

We aren't tracking that currently, but I can put those numbers together for the next report.

Noah Dudley (24:44):

Chair Dudley, and we'll be rolling out a revised engineering geology exam somewhere in the future here soon, right?

Sydney Muhle (24:54):

Correct. Our goal is to have that rolled out and ready for the October exam cycle. There won't be major changes to the exam. The review itself is done, and Board Members Hanell and Struthers can step in at any point this week, but there were not major changes needed to the exam from the review. There were a couple of questions that were flagged for replacement that had already been flagged, and those were not counted as part of the grading for the exam cycle if they had been flagged. But there were some minor changes that were needed, to the ways that questions were phrased, updating terminology that the terminology didn't exist 20 years ago. And so, things like LiDAR was not specifically mentioned. I can't even remember what it was called previously, but so just updating those terms to what they are now called. And then again, just a couple of questions on each exam form that were flagged for replacement, but overall was not major, super significant number of changes.

Noah Dudley (26:26):

Okay, thank you.

Sydney Muhle (26:32):

Great. And then, I think we have one more slide. Just taking a look at that. Going on four years of pass rates, we can see that we definitely did have that dip for both of our specialty exams coming out of those COVID years in 2022 and 2023. For the hydrogeology, definitely hit that low point at the end of '23. Started seeing the rebound with the EG midway through 2023, with this cycle being the anomaly with that big drop, but with hydro starting to rebound. So, something we'll definitely be keeping an eye on. And again, the goal is that we

would have both of the revised exams ready to roll out for this October cycle, and see how that impacts our pass rates for that round. Board Member Hanell?

Casey Hanell (27:46):

Just second Board Member Gillum's request, to see how many of these were first time test takers versus second or following. I think that'd be an interesting piece of information. And then, additionally to that, do you have any sense for the engineering geology exam anyway, if the pass rate is significantly different for different exam versions that are given? Is that data that we have?

Sydney Muhle (28:15):

That is not data I have compiled currently, but again, I can put that together for the next round that we report this out at. I know as part of the exam review, we'd taken a look at that, and there was not a very significant difference between the two exam versions. All right, if there are no other questions for the exam data, then I think we can move on to our next item. All right, and Chair Dudley, I don't know if you want to introduce the item or if you want me to just keep rolling.

Noah Dudley (29:07):

Okay, item 6.2, National Association of State Boards of Geology ASBOG annual meeting. Take it away, Sydney.

Sydney Muhle (29:14):

All right, so the ASBOG annual meeting will be held October 14th through 18th in Salt Lake City, Utah. We just received information the other day on what all that's going to look like, but this will be the big meeting where we incorporate the annual meeting, any big report outs from ASBOG as well as the Council of Examiners for the fall. And so, with that, we would be looking for a tentative volunteer to look at participating in this. The tentative part being the state is still under a travel and budget freeze. We anticipate and hope that that will be lifted with the new biennium starting July one, but we have received no indication that that will be the case.

(30:18):

That's a very big assumption on our part right now. So, I don't want to promise that that will be the case when I can't say for certain that it will. And so, we would, again, be looking for a volunteer, and we would keep you as well as the entire Board apprised if/when as that travel freeze is lifted, what the status of the travel would be for the event. But we want to make sure that we get on somebody's calendar now, and feel that it's easier to have to cancel plans rather than wait until the last minute and try to get on somebody's calendar to make those plans. So, if anybody is really interested in going to Salt Lake in October.

Noah Dudley (31:12):

Chair Dudley, I'm tentatively interested, but I'd also be willing to defer to anyone else who is more interested. I think Carrie has her hand up.

Carrie Gillum (31:28):

I would be putting the consideration as well.

Sydney Muhle (31:37):

And we can have a primary and an alternate, we can see if it's possible to send two. Being Salt Lake, it's not as far away. The travel tends to be not quite as expensive, but again, a lot of that's all going to depend on any rules that come out of this travel freeze, as in when it is lifted. So, if one of you wants to be the primary and the alternate, and then we can look and see if it's possible for both.

Noah Dudley (32:14):

Carrie, if you're okay with it, would you be the primary?

Carrie Gillum (32:19):

Did you say me being the primary?

Noah Dudley (32:22):

Yes.

Carrie Gillum (32:23):

Yeah, I'm okay with that.

Noah Dudley (32:24):

Okay.

Carrie Gillum (32:28):

Let's do it.

Sydney Muhle (32:31):

Awesome. We'll keep you all posted as we get closer, but again, we want to make sure we could block out your guys' calendars rather than try and scramble at the last minute.

Carrie Gillum (32:46):

Right.

Noah Dudley (32:47):

Great. Okay, so that brings us to item seven, reports. 7.1 is Committee and Task Force reports, and this is another Sydney item.

Sydney Muhle (33:00):

It is. I know, I feel like it's the Sydney show today, and that's definitely not the intention, but with the committee and task force reports, it didn't seem fair to ask the board members to really take that on when just a whole lot of it is being housed with staff right now.

(33:19):

So, I'll start with the Engineering Geologist Exam Review, that is currently waiting on me to finalize updating some graphics, and then I'll have one final review with Board Members Hanell and Struthers, and will make sure that everything is good to go. And once I have their final thumbs up, we'll get it to Oregon for their sign off. For those who don't know, we do co-own the engineering geologist exam with the State of Oregon. So, they will sign off on any changes, and then we'll be bringing it to the Board in September for Ural's final sign-off, and then be ready to hopefully roll that out for October as we've already discussed.

(34:14):

With the hydrogeologist exam review, Vice Chair Gillum completed her review yesterday. We already have a review from Board Member Brock. As well as a previous board member who graciously left notes with us. And then, we are working with Board Member Halbert to schedule a review, I believe for early July, and then we'll be trying to bring that group together to finalize any changes. That is one solely owned by the State of Washington. So, that one, as soon as the committee is good with any potential changes, again, hope to have that on the agenda for you guys in September, and roll that one out for use in October as well. At which point, once those exams are good to go and put into use, we'll be looking at sunseting those committees, with the caveat we may ask them to help us out if we're able to do something more with exam prep material. So, we might be asking to utilize your guys' expertise in just helping us make sure that anything we put out is going to be helpful. And so, are there any questions on either exam review committee before I move on?

(35:47):

Okay, so with the Application Requirements Verification Committee, this one I could actually ask the committee members to step in on, but for this cycle, they've just had their first meeting heading into the fall exam cycle actually earlier this week. Went really great. We always appreciate this group's time and the care that they put into reviewing these applications with us, and helping educate us, helping make sure that we can provide explanations on things that we need, any gaps that are being seen back to our applicants. And then also helping us see different things with our non-traditional applicants that we've seen an increase of and getting them approved. So, I don't know if any of the committee members want to share anything as well with that committee, or you felt like that pretty well covered it?

Carrie Gillum (37:01):

This is Vice Chair Gillum. If anything, we alluded to what we ran into with our committee beforehand, with now there's these online degree courses that are being offered that are not necessarily fitting the bill, even though they're advertising that it's going to get you into the profession that you want. So, that's definitely going... I feel like that's going to create a

new stressor for us, because, unfortunately, somebody's just been through a four-year degree, only to find out that now they can't work in the profession and a licensing required, like ASBOG states. It definitely was unfortunate to see that applicant come through and then find out, it's like, "You're going to have to have more education in order to be able to work as a geologist in Washington."

Noah Dudley (37:55):

This is Chair Dudley. There's an interesting problem that there's not really a clear solution to where, I think, for most people who start a geology program or geology degree, they're not thinking about licensure or those steps for career growth exactly at that point while they're taking classes and just trying to make their way through school, and then near the end of a four-year degree suddenly trying to figure that all out. It's really unfortunate.

Sydney Muhle (38:34):

And so, again, that committee is looking at or has discussed what can we put out on the website, help draw some attention hopefully before applicants get into those programs, and things that they need to consider before starting school. So, we're looking at what opportunities we have with that, and we'll bring back a report on anything that we can move forward from that. Were there any questions on the Application Requirements Verification Committee? Okay.

(39:15):

Then the last committee that we have right now is the Washington Administrative Code, the WAC review committee. And that one is still with me, putting together some resources for that committee, and then sending those resources out to all of them to be able to dig in and review all of our WACs and see what opportunities we have to make some rule changes in any areas that we need to smooth out. So, that's where the delay is. But with the exam reviews, that have been the priority to get rolling and out the door. So, hopefully around July 4th I'll be able to get all of that information finally out to that committee for them to keep moving forward. Any questions on that or any of the committee and task force reports?

(40:18):

Okay, if not, we can move into staff reports, and I think all of those are mine as well. So, we'll start with the complaint status report. We have two cases that are currently in a management review status, for a grand total of two cases, is all we have at the moment. Pro and con, this group just doesn't get a lot of complaints. Something from a regulatory standpoint that the department really loves to see is that you guys don't get a lot of complaints. The flip side of that coin is that means you guys don't have that many cases to review, and a regulatory lens that you just don't have as frequently. So, it's a blessing and a curse simultaneously. Any questions on that?

(41:21):

Okay, then we will move on with our licensee count report. As a reminder, this information is being provided to the Board as part of the meeting packet. The public can always request

a copy of the packet via email at dolboards@dol.wa.gov. But did any members of the board have any questions on the licensing count data? Okay, then again, we'll be working on putting that together for the first meeting of 2026 as a big annual report, just providing that much broader program overview look for the year. And for our legislative update, the one and only bill impacting you guys was the bill consolidating the program under the Business and Professions account, known as our 06L account. So, that bill did pass, it was signed by the governor in May. It goes into effect in January of 2026. And so, that was the only piece of legislation that impacted you guys. So, are there any questions on that? Board Member Hanell?

Casey Hanell (42:49):

I remember some conversation about the effects of that, but does that or how does that affect the Geology Licensing Board's budget or account? Or does it?

Sydney Muhle (43:02):

It really doesn't, it just consolidates it under this umbrella account. So, rather than being a standalone program where everything has to be funded completely standalone, it puts you guys under this umbrella account, and it just allows us to do some different monitoring in-house within our accounting group, that when we have major financial impacts to the program, for example, a case that moves forward for hearing or moves up into the court system, that can draw really quick high attorney's fees that stack up very quickly. It allows us, rather than having to immediately implement a fee increase to help cover those costs, it helps us slow that down and rebuild those costs into the program and regain those costs over time, rather than having to just immediately hit.

(44:09):

And actually, I think that the geologist program was the example that I learned when I first joined the Board's team, that the GEO program had had a case. Again, as we just talked about, you guys don't get very many, but we did have one, I think pre-COVID. So, 2019-ish, maybe 2018, that did move forward and went into the courts and ended up going all the way up to the Washington State Supreme Court. So, again, lots of attorneys involved at that point, very high attorney fees rolling up very quickly, and a fee increase was needed just to be able to help sustain the program. So, this would help in the event that something like that happens, where in that rare circumstance it essentially provides a bit of overdraft protection for the program so that we don't have to immediately hit our licensees with a fee increase to help cover the costs for that single case. And we can regain that over time.

(45:24):

Any other questions on the legislative update? All right, then I'm going to turn it over to Alyssa to go over the master action item list.

Alyssa Woods (45:37):

Thank you, Sydney. So, to start, from the meeting on March 3rd, 2021, we have the Exam Review Committee. We'll have meetings, review exam results and question dates. And this

is still in progress. And Sydney had covered this a little bit ago about what we plan to do for that committee. June 1st of 2022, check on specialty exam frequency to administer the exam costs and budget. And that is currently on hold. For December 1st, 2022, outreach. So, strategic plans, student outreach, best practices, document, scheduling outreach with UDub and updating university contact list in materials. That is, I believe, still in progress, and something it sounds like we're planning on doing moving forward once we have some bandwidth. And then, March 9th, 2023, working titles discussion. That is currently on hold. June 8th, 2023, reach out to California to learn how they have dealt with the specialty license hydrogeology regarding code statues, et cetera. And that is complete. There was no response.

(46:59):

From December 5th, 2024, staff will provide a link to the 2023 license review data for reference. And that is now complete. And December 5th, 2024, Sydney will work with Board Member Hubbard and Vice Chair Gillum to finalize the hydrogeologist review. That is still in progress. Sydney had mentioned that Vice Chair Gillum had come into the office yesterday to work on her part, and we'll be working with Board Member Hubbard to get him in July to work on that. And then, December 5th, 2024, WAC review committee will schedule a meeting no later than January 2025. And that is complete. March 13th, 2025, staff will provide an update on the 2023 license review data. That is now complete. And from that same meeting, board staff will follow up on public comment from the last meeting. And that is now complete as well.

(47:56):

I can't remember if there's more. No, there's not more. So, I will hand it back over to you, Chair Dudley.

Noah Dudley (48:05):

Okay, thank you, Alyssa. Moving on to item eight, Public Comments. This is an opportunity for the public to address the Board on matters within the Board's jurisdiction, either verbally during the 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 board staff no less than two business days prior to the meeting. In response to all public comments, the Board is limited to requesting that the matter be added to a future agenda for discussion or directing staff to study the matter further. Inflammatory comments and language will not be permitted.

(48:49):

Okay, are there any public comments? Sydney or Alyssa, were there any submitted in advance?

Alyssa Woods (49:09):

No, I did not see any in the Board's inbox.

Noah Dudley (49:18):

Okay. Any public comment, verbal public comments, please raise your hand at this time or chime in and we can start the timer. Okay. I see one from Daniel, and here we go.

Daniel Eungard (49:39):

Hi. Yes, thank you. I'm Daniel Eungard with the Washington Geological Survey. I just wanted to bring to the Board's attention, I was reviewing the Department of Ecology's Shoreline Management Plan rulemaking documentation recently. And within the documentation, there are a number of call-outs to the various licenses for geology, engineering, and hydrogeology. And I'm making a comment to address that the terminology that they're using is not consistent with Washington State's terminology, as far as I'm aware. And I believe the Board might be well suited to reach out to Ecology and make sure that they're using correct terminology. Thank you.

Noah Dudley (50:29):

Thank you. Sydney and Alyssa, is that something that you could follow up on?

Sydney Muhle (50:35):

Yep, I'll add that to my list.

Noah Dudley (50:40):

Great. You think we need to add it as a item for a future meeting for discussion?

Sydney Muhle (50:46):

I can provide a report back to the Board at the next meeting on the outcome of the discussion.

Noah Dudley (50:52):

Okay, thank you. All right. Any other public comments? Seeing or hearing none. We can move on to section item nine of this meeting, which is the conclusion. First up, do any board members have any announcements they would like to share? Board member Hanell?

Casey Hanell (51:34):

Thanks. Just share, last week was the annual Association of American State Geologists meeting in Baton Rouge. And the topic of geology, education, licensure, people entering the profession was a big part of the conversation. It's a nationwide conversation. It intersects with declining enrollment in universities in general, declining enrollment in geology programs, geology programs being combined with other science programs, and coursework changing.

(52:21):

So, just as was noted in this meeting, I think it's likely that we're going to continue to see curriculum at the university level changing, whether that's online or at universities. And

we'll need to be paying attention to, one, how we encourage universities to be providing the education that it takes to do the geologic work that we need in our society. But then also understanding how that will influence paths to licensure and paths to working in the profession.

(53:02):

So, I just want to acknowledge it's not a Washington specific challenge that we're facing and it's not an easy challenge. Again, there's no reflected on, there aren't necessarily answers at this point, but I think it is going to be a shift. It already is a shift and we're going to continue to see it away from traditional geology educations at universities. And we'll need to strategize how we do that to make sure our profession stays strong here in Washington and we're bringing people along so they have a pathway into the profession.

Noah Dudley (53:58):

Thank you, Board Member Hanell. Hearing no other announcements, are there any requests for future agenda items? Okay, hearing no requests for future agenda items. Alyssa, can you give us a review of action items and items for the next meeting?

Alyssa Woods (54:31):

Yes. So, I have captured that the Board and board staff will look for more opportunities for outreach, and this will be kept as an ongoing item. And then, Sydney will reach out to Dina from ASBOG about university curriculums. And then, Sydney will gather data on examinees and whether they're first-time test takers. And I will work with a Board Member or Vice Chair Gillum and Chair Dudley on travel information for the ASBOG meeting in October. And then, I will work with Board Member Halbert to schedule early July for the HG exam review. And then, I will add the exam approval to the September agenda. And then, I've also added to follow up on the public comment, and Sydney said that she would provide a report at the next meeting. So, that will be added to the September agenda. And if I missed anything, please feel free to let me know. And if you wind up having any other agenda items that you'd like to add prior to the next meeting, just send me an email and I'd be happy to add that. Back to you.

Noah Dudley (55:57):

Great. Thank you. Board Member or Chair Dudley here. That brings us to adjourning this meeting. The time is now 10:58 AM. This meeting is adjourned. The next board meeting will be September 18th at 10:0 AM, virtual over Teams.

Alyssa Woods (56:19):

Thank you, everyone.

Casey Hanell (56:20):

Thanks, everyone. Take care.