



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

DATE: March 9, 2023
TIME: 10:00 AM
LOCATION: Virtual via Microsoft Teams

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

1. Call to Order

Chair James Struthers called the meeting to order at **10:01 AM**.

2. Roll Call

Program Specialist Susan Nieves conducted Roll Call, and all Board Members were present.

3. Approval of Agenda

Board Member Tom Tebb made a **MOTION** to approve the agenda as presented. Vice Chair Casey Hanell **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. The Special Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2022

Board Member Eileen Webb made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as presented. Secretary Carla Brock **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

5. Old Business

None.

6. New Business

6.1. Election of Officers

The Board will elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for the upcoming year.

Board Member Tebb made a **MOTION** to nominate Board Member Hanell for Chair. It was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

Board Member Tebb made a **MOTION** to nominate Board Member Brock for Vice Chair. It was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

Chair Struthers made a **MOTION** to nominate Board Member Tebb for Secretary. It was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5-0.

6.2. Development of a LG/HG Best Practices Document

The Board will discuss creating a best practice document for professional titles and licensure under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and Washington Advisory Code (WAC), including potentially establishing a committee to address this topic.

Program Specialist Sydney Muhle initiated the discussion. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Elizabeth Lagerberg advised the Board to stay within the boundaries of the WAC so as not to go outside of the Board's scope. She said, "standards of practice" reflects the intent of the document better than "best practice." She also provided an update on the court case discussed in the December 2022 Board meeting involving the use of a title.

The Board revisited and further discussed the intent to define job requirements and types of work that would require using "geologist" or specialty titles and the associated licensure.

The Board created a subcommittee to address this subject. Board Member Tebb offered to lead the subcommittee, and Chair Struthers offered to assist on the subcommittee work.

6.3. Spring Exam Update

Staff will give an update on spring examinations.

Ms. Muhle said the National Association of State Board of Geology (ASBOG) exams are scheduled for March 16th and 17th. The analytics related to the exam will be available from the psychometrician within a few days of the exam, then the subject matter experts will take over at the Council of Examiners (COE) to complete scoring. The anticipated scores will be released by early May and the Boards will be able to release the pass/fail notices to candidates at that time.

The Board and staff discussed the number of testing centers and whether the specialty exam testing information can be expedited and released ahead of ASBOG.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to provide number of testing centers in Washington state for ASBOG exam.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to ask Oregon if they are willing to expedite the release of Engineering Geologist specialty exam results ahead of ASBOG.

6.4. Campus Travel Update

Staff will give an update on Department of Licensing's (DOL) policy for travel with outreach.

Ms. Muhle said there are no related travel restrictions in place prohibiting resuming campus or outreach visits.

6.5. DOL Policy for Failed Examinations

Staff will provide information about testing when a candidate fails an exam multiple times.

Ms. Muhle said when a candidate fails an exam, they can retake it as many times as needed to pass. When RCWs or WACs are changed, qualifications for reexamination are reevaluated. The Board discussed and agreed that, with the opportunity to only take the test twice a year, it was only a small concern that they would not move to address.

6.6. ASBOG Task Analysis Survey

Staff will provide an update regarding the ASBOG Task Analysis Survey.

Ms. Muhle said, the 2022 ASBOG Task Analysis Survey results are not ready yet. Per ASBOG, the psychometrician has just finished the preliminary report and the executive committee will be reviewing that over the next few weeks.

6.7. Communications Between Board Members and Licensees

A Board Member requested a discussion item regarding communications between Board Members and licensees.

Board members said they had been approached by a denied candidate for licensure who was asking for assistance with their application packet. Board members and staff discussed answering questions and talking with candidates about licensure requirements, particularly involving denied licenses. The Board felt it was inappropriate for Members to discuss these situations with applicants.

Ms. Muhle and AAG Lagerberg confirmed that Board members shouldn't talk with applicants for licensure, especially denied applicants, as it can interfere with due process if the applicant appeals.

AAG Lagerberg advised Board members to direct applicants back to the denial letter. Additionally, Assistant Administrator Debra Allen-Bâ and AAG Lagerberg said Board members can forward incoming communication to Ms. Muhle and Ms. Nieves who will respond or route the communication to the relevant team.

6.8. Spring Council of Examiners (COE) Discussion

Staff will provide an update regarding the ASBOG Spring COE.

Ms. Muhle said that the Board's travel budget for the current biennium has been exhausted and there was no funding to send a Board member to the 2023

Spring COE. She said staff and the Budget Manager were working to ensure enough funding will be allocated for all necessary travel and expenses in the upcoming biennium. They were also working to determine if other Board funds could be reallocated to travel.

Board Member Tebb requested for the Budget Manager to be present at the next Board meeting and share how the previous biennium's budget process was carried out and how the allocations were made.

ACTION ITEM: Staff will update the Board on any possible reallocation of funds to travel once new information becomes available.

AGENDA ITEM: DOL Budget Manager to provide information on 2021-2023 budget allocations at the next Board meeting.

6.9. Establishment of Board Goals for 2023

The Board will discuss and may establish priorities and goals for 2023.

Ms. Muhle provided an overview of a new goal setting tool designed to assist the Board and staff in defining priorities and accomplishing goals.

The Board discussed and determined the following top priorities:

- Establish a process for specialty exam review.
- Clear policy statement on the titles of Geologist, Hydrogeologist, and Engineering Geologist.
- Participation in COE's.
- Charter completion.

Ms. Muhle advised the Board to send any additional recommendations and requests to her.

AGENDA ITEM: Review Board Goals (standing agenda item).

7. Reports

7.1. Committee/Task Force Reports

7.1.1. EG/HG Exam Review Subcommittee Update

Ms. Muhle said the Engineering Geology (EG) / Hydrogeology (HG) Exam Review subcommittees have a focus group for each specialty exam. She said the subcommittee had developed an initial plan for Washington and Oregon to review the EG exam together and that a resource request to analyze exam data was in progress through DOL. Staff was waiting on some additional information and will schedule a meeting with the EG subcommittee once the information becomes available. Staff will be scheduling meetings with the HG subcommittee once more data has been gathered regarding the HG exam.

Secretary Brock offered to provide her input on best practices for reviewing exams, based on her experience reviewing exams for ASBOG.

Ms. Allen Bâ said staff were looking into hiring a psychometrician and have been compiling comments from both exams to find consistent issues. She will share the outcomes with the subcommittees.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to finalize gathering data, then schedule subcommittee meetings for the EG and HG Exam Review committees.

7.2. Central Investigations & Audit Unit (CIAU) Reports

7.2.1. Complaint Status Report

Ms. Muhle reviewed the Geologist Complaint Status report with the Board.

7.3. LCSS Reports

7.3.1. Licensee Count Report

Ms. Muhle reviewed the Geologist Licensee Count report with the Board.

7.4. Board & Outreach Support Services (BOSS) Reports

7.4.1. Action Item List

Ms. Nieves reviewed the Master Action Item List, including updates made during today's meeting.

7.4.2. Staff Update

Ms. Muhle provided an overview of the changes made to the programs in DOL and presented an organizational chart of the Boards and Outreach Support Services unit.

7.4.3. Board Executive's Report

Nothing to report.

7.5. Other Reports

7.5.1. Board Training

Ms. Muhle provided training on the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), Parliamentary Procedures, Ethics in Public Service, and Public Disclosure.

Board Member Webb left the meeting at 12:00, during the Public Records training.

8. Public Comments

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

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

Jennifer Saltonstall addressed the Board and asked whether an employee's business cards, and email signatures can include the title "Geologist" if the employee has a Bachelor of Science degree in geology but hasn't taken the ASBOG. Alternatively, can the title "Geoscientist" be used?

9. Conclusion

9.1. Announcements

Board member Brock thanked Board Member Webb for eight years of service to the Board. Ms. Allen-Bâ said staff will recognize Board Member Webb at the next Board meeting and send a certificate and plaque.

9.2. Requests for future agenda items

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

- Standing item to revisit Board goals.
- DOL Budget Manager to provide information on 2021-2023 budget allocations at the next Board meeting.

9.3. Review of action items and items for next meeting

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

- Newly established subcommittee to work on draft "standards of practice" statement.
- Staff to provide the number of testing centers for the ASBOG exam in Washington state.
- Staff to update the Board on any possible reallocation of funds to travel, once new information becomes available.
- Staff to finalize gathering data, then schedule committee meetings for EG/HG Exam Review committees.
- Staff to ask Oregon if they are willing to release the Engineering Geologist specialty exam results ahead of ASBOG.

10. Adjournment


Chair Struthers **ADJOURNED** the meeting at **12:09 PM**.

Next Board Meeting:

June 8, 2023 at 10:00 AM
Virtual via Teams

Submitted by: 
Debra Allen-Bâ, Assistant Administrator

June 8, 2023
Date

Approved by: 
Casey R. Hanell, Chair

June 8, 2023
Date