

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & TRAINING**

**DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION**

**BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF PLUMBERS**

**1511 Pontiac Avenue, Bldg 70, 2nd Floor Conference Room**

**Cranston, RI 02920**

**Tuesday, February 19, 2013**

**9:00am**

**In attendance:**

**Lionel Bernardino**

**Larry Giorgi**

**Richard Mandarini**

**Michael Newman**

**Michael Raposa**

**William J. Riley, Chair**

**Anthony Cardarelli and Jeffrey Hutton were not in attendance.**

**Also in attendance were E. Patrick Luther, Chief Plumbing Investigator; Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lally; Bernard Treml, Supervisor of Apprenticeship; Ron DiAmbrosio, Administrator; and Joseph R. Degan, Assistant Administrator.**

**1.) Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:09am by**

**William J. Riley, Chair.**

**2.) Minutes of January 15, 2013: Michael Newman made a motion to accept the minutes of last months meeting; seconded by Larry Giorgi and passed unanimously by the Board.**

**3.) Conflict of Interest: Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lally, Legal Counsel, reminded the Board of that they are subject to the Code of Ethics and their responsibility to disclose conflicts of interest.**

**4.) Violation Appeal Hearings: None**

**5.) Gordon MacEwan, New England Regional Manager for IAPMO, to address the Board on Continuing Education:**

**Gordon MacEwan, New England Regional Manager for the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, IAPMO, and his associate, Peter DeFreitas (the administrator for the continuing education for licensees), addressed the Board regarding continuing education and how they administer and manage it in Massachusetts. Mr. MacEwan addressed the Board. There are two programs in Massachusetts; one for inspectors, which Mr. MacEwan works on, and one for licensees, which Mr. DeFreitas works on. IAPMO has been doing the continuing education for the inspectors since its inception almost 12 years ago. IAPMO is the only provider for the inspectors and works with the Massachusetts Plumbing Board to develop the curriculum which is twelve (12) hours per year done**

through two (2) six (6) hour mandatory sessions. Plumbers are required to do six (6) hours per year. IAPMO handles all the paperwork, setting up classes, and recordkeeping with no financial impact to the state of Massachusetts. Fees are collected from inspectors at the classes.

Due to the volume of licensees in Massachusetts (approximately 14,000) there are multiple providers, IAPMO is one of those providers, but the curriculum is the same.

Mr. Luther inquires of the process after classes are completed. Mr. MacEwan explains he submits a list yearly to Massachusetts of the non compliant inspectors.

Mr. DeFreitas explains the process of providers for licensees. Mr. DeFreitas explains that each provider submits to Massachusetts on a monthly basis, electronically, the licensees they have that attended their classes the previous month. Their curriculum is the same for Journeyman and Master Plumbers. Education is on an annual basis. Massachusetts is on a 2 year cycle and licensees must complete 2 sessions each cycle.

IAPMO has its own code. IAPMO teaches to the code that is in place and works with the plumbing board to develop the curriculum for the inspectors and tweaks that curriculum to serve as the basis of the curriculum for the plumbers. In New England IAPMO works with

**Massachusetts and hopes to work with Maine.**

**Mr. Luther reports that RI currently has 1158 Master Plumbers, 677 Journeyman Plumbers and 200 Apprentice Plumbers.**

**Bill Riley inquires what Massachusetts went through to get the program started. The Massachusetts law is generic (General Law 142 sections 11 and 6) and a section of their code explains the educational requirements. The difference in RI is that RI's Plumbing Board does not develop the code it is done at the Building Code Commission Office. The board may need to work in tandem with the Building Code Commission Office.**

**There is a discussion regarding whether RI inspectors would need to have continuing education in addition to the 20 hours in 3 years they are currently required to have.**

**Gordon MacEwan distributes packets to board members that included an outline of the requirements for their inspector portion, sample documents, newsletter and background information on IAPMO. Peter DeFraitas also distributes a booklet distributed by IAPMO at one of their sessions.**

**Discussion continues. Mr. DeFraitas addressed the board. Providers set the cost. Numerous classes are offered. The Plumbing Board in Massachusetts must approve providers and it is done annually.**

**Discussion continues.**

**Leo Bernardino expressed the need for communication with the Building Code Commission.**

**Gordon MacEwan offers to provide the board with contact information for G. J. Garrow, who is the Senior State Plumbing Inspector for Vermont as well as the Chair of Vermont's Plumbing Board and is also an instructor for continuing education.**

**The question arose as to whether a board member could teach a class or would it be a conflict. Mary Ellen McQueeney-Lally, Legal Counsel, will have to look into exactly what role the board would have as it could be a conflict.**

**Discussion continues.**

**There being no further questions for Mr. MacEwan and Mr. DeFraitas, the board thanked them for their input.**

**6.) Bernard Trembl & E. Patrick Luther to address Board on Apprenticeship:**

**E. Patrick Luther addressed the board regarding eliminating the plumbing apprenticeship program administered by the Department outside the State Apprenticeship Council (SAC). There are 139**

current apprentices in the program administered outside the SAC's control. Mr. Luther is unsure of the breakdown of apprentices and expressed the program could be dissolved within a 5 year period if it were determined to implement the apprentices in the plumbing program to the SAC governing body.

Bernard Treml, Supervisor of Apprenticeship, addressed the board. Some of the main benefits of a registered apprenticeship program are: 1.) It is a portable credential, recognized throughout every state. An individual in Mr. Luther's program may not receive credit should that apprentice move to another state; 2.) It would allow Pat Luther to concentrate on other things; 3.) The SAC monitors apprentices from start to finish - the SAC reviews applications, sponsors, related instruction providers, proof of apprentice on the job training hours and proof of apprentice current related instruction.

There are differences in the two programs. The big difference is the pay scale. In a registered program (SAC) an apprentice has a progressively increasing pay scale. A first year apprentice in RI starts out at 50% of what an average journeyman is paid that cannot be less than minimum wage. It is a progressively increasing pay scale. The Mr. Luther's program has no regulation and could be paid minimum wage the entire time. The SAC monitors minimum pay.

Mr. Treml does not know of many states that has two programs.

**The Board asks questions of Mr. Treml. The SAC follows the state licensing law.**

**Ratios have been an issue. Mr. Treml gives an example of a sponsor that signs up a plumbing apprentice in Mr. Luther's program, a few months later the same sponsor signs up a mechanical apprentice with the SAC and the sponsor, holding a Master Plumbers license and Master Pipefitter license, is the only licensed person which is a ratio infraction. This would eliminate this from happening.**

**Another issue is Prevailing Wage. In the Prevailing Wage law it states that anything over \$1 million dollars of state money must have an apprentice on the job. The SAC has the progressively increasing pay scale and the apprentice is paid accordingly. In Mr. Luther's program it is always full prevailing wage.**

**Mr. Treml adds that the goal is to make sure the apprentice is getting the OJT and not only meets the minimum requirements to take the test but that they pass the test.**

## **7.) Apprentice Approvals - Apprentice Registrations**

**„X Steven Atehorua Donald Emond MP001965**

**E. Patrick Luther confirms that all apprentices are in order. Larry Giorgi made a motion to accept the apprentice approvals / registrations; seconded by Michael Newman and passed**

**unanimously by the Board.**

**\*\*Mr. Luther asks if any board members are eligible for exam reviews.**

**Old Business: Michael Newman inquired about test questions. Mr. Luther is waiting for code changes. Mr. Newman has the rough draft of the new code.**

**6.) Adjournment: Michael Newman made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Lionel Bernardino and passed unanimously by the Board. The meeting adjourned at 10:08am.**