

Board Of Certification of Operators OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

Meeting Minutes: March 5, 2008

Members in Attendance: Richard Dionne, Fred Kurdziel, Bill Patenaude and Tom White

Others in Attendance: Traci Pena – RIDEM and Marisa Desautel, RIDEM – Legal Counsel

Charles B. Labbé and Joel Burke, Warwick Sewer Authority

The first agenda item to be addressed was the review of the draft open February 6, 2008 meeting minutes.

Mr. Kurdziel motioned to approve the minutes with minor grammatical amendments. Mr. White seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and as such, the motion passed.

The next item discussed was an Application for Reciprocity from a Mr. Charles B Labbé, an employee of the City of Warwick's Sewer Authority. Mr. Labbé works both as a laboratory technician and assisting with process control. Mr. Labbé applied for reciprocity Grade 3 in Rhode Island from the State of Massachusetts. His application noted, and had been confirmed, that Mr. Labbé has a Bachelor of Science degree and that he possesses a Massachusetts Grade 6c-Full license, which is the highest license available in the

Commonwealth. The request for Rhode Island licensure came before the Board at the February 2008 meeting; because of questions the Board had, the matter was continued until the next meeting so that Mr. Labbé could answer questions to clarify his education and experience. In this regard, Mr. Labbé has operational experience at small but complicated wastewater treatment systems in Massachusetts. His experience at these facilities did not include direct responsible charge, but he did “mentor” many of his coworkers and less-senior employees. After review and discussion, Mr. Patenaude gave his opinion that Mr. Labbé’s current duties and past experience warranted not a Grade 3 license but a Grade 2 license. However, given his education, should Mr. Labbé attain a position with more process-control duties, and that meets the requirements for direct responsible charge, the Board at that time may then consider granting Mr. Labbé a Grade 3 license via reciprocity.

Mr. Patenaude made a motion to deny Mr. Labbé’s application for Grade 3 licensure through reciprocity and to instead grant him a Grade 2 license until such time as the matter is re-presented to the Board when he has a position of Direct Responsible Charge. Seconded by Mr. White, all members present voted in favor, as such the motion passed.

Mr. Labbé and Mr. Burke then exited the meeting.

The next order of business was proposed legislative changes, which

had been discussed at previous meetings. Mr. Patenaude noted that it appeared unlikely that any of the proposed legislation would in fact be considered during this session.

The next order of business was the RIDEM-sponsored Operator Boot Camp. Mr. Patenaude continued a conversation regarding offering participants of the training program some allowance for taking a higher grade examination due to their efforts in the program. Mr. Dionne asked if there was any proficiency testing during the trainings; Mr. Patenaude said at present there was not, but such testing could be easily added. A general discussion ensued, with the understanding that a full board should be present for the conversation to be meaningful. Attorney Desautel noted that a review of existing regulations might be needed for any further consideration, which she said she would undertake and present at the next Board meeting. As such the matter was continued.

The next item discussed was the matter of Jarod Doyle, an operator who took and passed the Grade 4 exam in November of 2006. Upon re-review of his application it was determined that the Board was in error to have granted him the exam, as there was a miscalculation regarding Mr. Doyle's amount of time in direct responsible charge and the status of a full Grade 3 license. Recently, Mr. Doyle gave a verbal affirmation to Mr. Patenaude that he is now in

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DRC. Mr. Patenaude asked the Board for guidance as to whether to allow Mr. Doyle to maintain the successful passing of the Grade 4 exam, even if at the time of exam he was not technically eligible. Mr. Dionne noted that granting Mr. Doyle the exam prematurely was an oversight on the Board's part, and as such Mr. Doyle should be allowed a Grade 4 license without having to retake the exam, once he meets all other qualifications. Messrs. Kurdziel and White concurred.

Mr. Patenaude will request the Bay Commission to outline Mr. Doyle's job duties. Mr. Patenaude asked Attorney Desautel to examine the language on Rule 8 of the Regulations as it relates to such examination approvals.

The next item on the agenda to be discussed was an update on the Operator Challenge. Due to scheduling conflicts, the Team could not attend the meeting. The next item on the agenda was enforcement matters, of which there were none at this time.

In new business, due to ongoing scheduling conflicts with the Community College of Rhode Island, the Board's exams will now be administered at DEM; with the Grades 1, 3 and 4 will be administered on one day and the Grade 2 exams will be given on another. Traci

Pena will be looking into parking options for the examinees.

With no further business Mr. White motioned to adjournment.. Mr. Dionne seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and as such the motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 2, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in room 280 of the DEM – Office of Water Resources, 235 Promenade St., Providence, RI 02908.