



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

DATE: Thursday, June 13, 2024
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: **In person:**
Department of Licensing, Room 2210/2211
405 Black Lake Blvd, Building 2
Olympia, WA 98502
Virtual:
Video Conference via Microsoft Teams

BOARD MEMBERS: **Carla Brock**, LG/HG, Chair
Carrie Gillum, LG, Vice Chair
Jim Struthers, LG/EG, Secretary
Bill Halbert, LG/EG/HG, Board Member
Casey Hanell, LG/EG, State Geologist, Board Member
Noah Dudley, LG/EG, Board Member

STAFF MEMBERS: **Sydney Muhle**, Program Specialist
Bill Dutra, Administrator
Debra Allen-Bâ, Assistant Administrator
Tanya Hessler, Program Manager
Michelle Burris, Professional Licensing Representative

1. Call to Order

Board Chair Carla Brock called the meeting to order at **10:01 a.m.**

2. Roll Call

Program Specialist Sydney Muhle conducted roll call. All board members were present.

In person attendees: Board Chair Carla Brock, Vice Chair Carrie Gillum, Board Member Casey Hanell, and Board Member Noah Dudley.

Remote attendees: Board Secretary Jim Struthers and Board Member Bill Halbert.

3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Muhle requested the following changes to the agenda:

- Move item 7.1. *Budget Discussion* up on the agenda, to follow item 5.1.
- Discuss items 7.3 and 7.5 together.

Board Member Casey Hanell made a **MOTION** to approve the agenda as amended. Board Vice Chair Carrie Gillum **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. Special Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2024

Board Member Hanell made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as presented. Board Member Noah Dudley **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6-0.

5. Awards/Recognition

5.1. Recognition for Board Member Eileen Webb

Ms. Webb's term on the Board expired on May 1, 2024. Board members and staff may share words of appreciation for her service and departing thoughts.

Ms. Muhle presented a plaque to departing Board member Eileen Webb in recognition of her years of service with the Board.

Board members and staff shared their parting thoughts and appreciation for Ms. Webb's service and guidance.

5.2. Welcoming New Board members

Noah Dudley and William Halbert were appointed to the Board as of May 1, 2024. This is an opportunity for them to introduce themselves to the Board and the public.

Ms. Muhle announced that Noah Dudley and William Halbert had been appointed to the Board. The new members shared their history as it related to the Board.

6. Old Business

6.1. Outreach Update and Discussion

Chair Carla Brock and Vice Chair Carrie Gillum will provide a report from their attendance at the Washington State Hydrogeology Symposium.

Vice Chair Gillum shared her experience attending the Washington State Hydrogeology Symposium. She said it would be beneficial to have an information sheet about the profession available to give out, and additional information on the website to direct attendees to.

Assistant Administrator Debra Allen-Bâ asked whether it would be beneficial to have a Department of Licensing (DOL) licensing professional attend future symposiums as a content expert. Vice Chair Gillum said it would be very helpful.

Board members discussed the importance of conducting student outreach in order to communicate alternative pathways to licensure, requirements for specialty licenses, and the necessary steps to acquire licensure in Washington State.

6.2. National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) Spring Council of Examiners (COE) Workshop and Fieldtrip Report-Out

Vice Chair Gillum will provide a report from her attendance at the Spring COE.

Vice Chair Gillum shared with the Board her experience attending the ASBOG Spring COE. Chair Brock said ensuring the option for Board attendance would be a priority for future ASBOG COE events.

7. New Business

7.1. Spring Exam Update

Board staff will provide an update on spring examinations.

Ms. Allen-Bâ shared data with the Board regarding the pass rates of Geologist license examinees. She shared the observation that there was a pattern of diminishing returns for repeat test takers the more times they took the test.

Ms. Allen-Bâ asked whether the Board would like to receive ASBOG exam result packets as DOL received them. The Board said they would like to receive them.

Board Member Dudley shared that the content of the exam was cryptic and he felt there was an opportunity to provide additional clarity for candidates. Ms. Muhle suggested, once the exam review committees were done with their current work, they could study this topic.

7.2. Budget Discussion

Department of Licensing staff will provide information concerning the geologist licensing program budget.

Note: This item was discussed prior to Agenda Item 6.1.

Business and Professions Division Policy Advisor Bill Dutra said DOL was reviewing the option to move the Geologist licensing program budget into the

Business and Professions Division pooled account, also known as the 06L account. Per statute, the program budget was in the 06L account at its inception then moved out once the program had established a sustainable budget.

Mr. Dutra said that this change would provide a benefit to the program similar to overdraft protection on a bank account, that the change would not negatively impact the program's fund balance or fees, and that there were no foreseeable downsides to this change. He said it would allow for the possibility of staggering any future fee increases and might provide more funding opportunities for outreach and conference attendance.

Chair Brock asked whether it would only be beneficial if all the smaller programs were moved into the fund. Mr. Dutra confirmed that this was correct and said staff was also discussing this with the Funeral & Cemetery Board and Landscape Architect Board.

Ms. Muhle said the primary focus of this change was to mitigate risks associated with sudden unexpected costs. She provided an example of a past Geologist program case that incurred sudden and significant costs associated with legal fees that was not budgeted for.

Mr. Dutra said staff would bring additional data to the Board at a future meeting.

7.3. Revising Education Requirements Discussion

Chair Brock requested a discussion about revising education requirements.

Chair Brock led Board discussion of expanding and making more flexible the education requirements in order to grow the profession. She said rule changes may be needed.

The Board and staff discussed potential changes needed to Geology related Washington Administrative Code (WAC) in general.

The Board formed the WAC Update Committee to further address this topic and agenda item 7.5. Chair Brock and Board Members Dudley and Halbert were appointed to the committee, with Board Member Hanell as an alternate.

Ms. Muhle will reach out to the committee members to schedule a meeting.

7.4. National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG) Annual Meeting October 23-26, 2024, in Ft. Collins Colorado

Board staff will provide information for ASBOG's annual meeting.

Ms. Muhle said the annual meeting would take place in Fort Collins, Colorado. October 23 through 26, with the ASBOG Field Trip taking place on the 24th. The Board appointed Chair Brock to attend in person as the voting delegate.

Chair Borck said there would also be a virtual attendance option for the *Annual Meeting* portion that anyone on the Board could attend.

7.5. Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Update

Board staff will provide information in request of a WAC update.

This item was discussed during Agenda Item 7.3.

8. Complaint Case for Review

8.1. 2023-12-2774-00GEO (Gillum)

Vice Chair Gillum read the Case Manager Report to the Board as the Case Manager.

Board Member Hanell asked why the offense did not rise to the level of unprofessional conduct. Vice Chair Gillum explained that the offense was not egregious and did not fit under the definition of unprofessional conduct in statute.

Board Member Dudley made a **MOTION** to close the case with no further action. Board Member Hanell **SECONDED** the motion, and it was **DENIED** by a vote of 5-0 with Vice Chair Gillum abstaining as the Case Manager.

9. Reports

9.1. Committee/Task Force Reports

9.1.1. Engineering-Geologist Exam Review Committee Update

Ms. Muhle provided an update on the committee's progress since the last Board meeting. She said the committee completed their initial review of the exam and were reviewing statistics and comments. The committee would meet to finish reviewing one more form, then meet with members of the Oregon board to complete the update.

Ms. Muhle said she and Ms. Allen-Bâ met with a representative from Oregon who said they had not performed the same level of review. She said the Oregon board members would come to Washington to review the work done by the committee and provide input for the exam update. She said that the

Oregon board was experiencing budgetary constraints and would not be able to contribute to the costs associated with a psychometrician.

9.1.2. Hydrogeologist Exam Review Committee Update

Ms. Muhle provided an update on the committee's progress since the last Board meeting. She said she was compiling statistics and would schedule a meeting for the committee. Some of the data included statistics for individual questions and would be used to determine whether each question was incorrect or not covered under the current curriculum.

Ms. Muhle said the committee would meet for further review of the data in order to determine next steps.

Board Member Halbert joined the committee.

9.1.3. Working Titles Committee Update

Ms. Muhle provided an update on the committee's progress since the last Board meeting. She said previous Board Member Tom Tebb had met with AAG Lagerberg and asked whether Board Member Struthers had a chance to meet with Mr. Tebb before he termed off, which he had not.

Ms. Muhle said she would meet with Board Member Struthers to fill him in on the discussion.

9.1.4. Application Requirements Verification Committee Update

Ms. Muhle provided a history of the committee and their area of focus to review candidate who had applied to take the Geologist licensing and specialty exams.

Ms. Muhle said committee members and DOL Licensing partners were working on several applications and that more would likely be submitted for review. Vice Chair Gillum and Ms. Muhle shared there had been many more than the initial estimate when the committee was formed.

Board Member Hanell said the approvals may be impacting the pass/fail rates of the exams.

9.2. Centralized Investigations and Audits Unit Reports

9.2.1. Complaint Status Report

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

9.3. Licensing Customer Support Services Reports

9.3.1. Licensee Count Report

Program Manager Tanya Hessler provided a summary of the Licensee Count Report data.

Ms. Muhle said she would coordinate with Ms. Hessler on whether the dramatic decrease in licensees in 2024 was a true drop or a reporting error.

Board Member Hanell said he had several conversations with licensees that had trouble with the renewal process on the website, such as thinking they had renewed their license but had not, and challenges renewing specialty indorsements. He asked if detailed instructions could be added to the website. DOL Professional Licensing Representative Michelle Burris said she would update the language on the page and include information in the news section to provide clarity.

The Board and staff discussed communication methods to inform licensees when they were due to be renewed and other ways communications could be improved.

9.4. Boards, Commissions and Outreach Reports

9.4.1. Review of Master Action Items List

Ms. Muhle provided updates to each item on the Master Action Items List.

10. 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 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 DOLBoards@dol.wa.gov no less than two business days prior to the meeting with the subject line "Public Comment: Geologist Board". 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.

There were no verbal public comments.

Ms. Muhle read a written public comment to the Board submitted by Dianne Escobito. The comment was regarding the need to memorize formulas and conversion factors when taking the hydrogeologist specialty licensing exam. Ms. Muhle said she would forward the email to the Board members.

11. Conclusion

11.1. Announcements

There were no announcements.

11.2. Requests for future agenda items

There were no requests for future agenda items.

11.3. Review of action items and items for next meeting

Ms. Muhle reported the agenda and action items captured in the meeting.

- Budget Discussion: Bring additional data to the Board at a future meeting.
- Develop one-page handout with information on licensure for the Geologist profession to provide at outreach events.
- Coordinate attendance of a licensing professional future Hydrogeology Symposiums.
- Send the Board the most recent ASBOG exam result packet.
- Ms. Muhle to schedule a WAC Update Committee meeting.
- Coordinate registration and travel for Chair Brock to attend the ASBOG Annual Meeting.
- Coordinate meeting with representatives of the Oregon Geologist Board and EG Exam Review Committee.
- Schedule HG Exam Review Committee meeting.
- Ms. Muhle to work with the Licensing team to review 2024 licensee count data to determine if there was a true drop or an error in reporting and to update the renewal information on the DOL website.

12. Adjournment

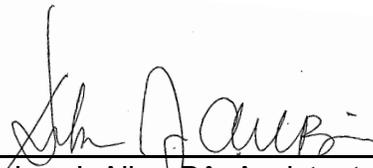
Chair Brock adjourned the meeting at **11:45 a.m.**

Next Board Meeting:

September 12, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Submitted by: 
Debra J. Allen-Bâ, Assistant Administrator

September 12, 2024
Date

Approved by: 
Carla Brock, Board Chair

September 12, 2024
Date