

# Washington State Home Inspector Advisory Licensing Board meeting transcript

December 12, 2024

Jon Ashlock (00:02):

Wait for him to get in.

Sandy Baur (00:03):

Yeah, we just let him in.

Jon Ashlock (00:06):

Okay.

Sandy Baur (00:08):

Recording has started.

Jon Ashlock (00:10):

Thank you. Let me get my notes up here really quick.

(00:15):

Good morning. I'm Jon Ashlock, Chair of the Home Inspector Licensing Board. It is now 9:59 AM on Thursday, December 12, 2024, and I am calling this meeting to order. This meeting's open to the public. We'll take time at the end of the meeting for a brief public comment period. Participants will have no more than three minutes to address the board. As a reminder, board members are not to engage in conversation during the public comment. As a courtesy, I ask all participants to please keep themselves on mute to reduce background noise. When a board member would like to comment on a topic, please use the raise hand feature in Teams. Once I have called on you, unmute yourself and state your name before sharing your comments. Please remember to mute yourself again after you finish speaking. Thank you.

(00:59):

At this point in time, I want to go ahead and start roll Call. Program specialist Sandra Schaefer will now do roll call confirming the board member attendance. Once she has called your name, please respond stating "here" or "present." Ms. Schaefer?

Sandra Schaefer (01:13):

Thank you. I will start with you, Chair Ashlock.

Jon Ashlock (01:14):

Here.

Saundra Schaefer (01:17):

Vice Chair Howard.

Jordan Howard (01:18):

Present. Here.

Saundra Schaefer (01:20):

Board Member Barbour.

Brad Barbour (01:22):

Here.

Saundra Schaefer (01:23):

Board Member Lotus.

Lisa Lotus (01:26):

Here.

Saundra Schaefer (01:27):

Thank you. Board Member McFeeley.

Austin McFeeley (01:30):

Present.

Saundra Schaefer (01:32):

Board Member Thompson.

Glen Thompson (01:35):

Here.

Saundra Schaefer (01:36):

Thank you. And Board Member Tryon.

Warren Tryon (01:38):

Present.

Saundra Schaefer (01:39):

Perfect. Back to you, Chair... Almost said Chair True, wrong word. Chair Ashlock.

Jon Ashlock (01:46):

All right, so approval agenda. Is there a motion to approve today's agenda as presented?

Warren Tryon (01:54):

I motion to approve. Board Member Tryon.

Jon Ashlock (01:58):

Is there a second?

Jordan Howard (02:03):

Jordan Howard, second.

Jon Ashlock (02:05):

Thank you, Jordan. All right, any discussion on the topic? All those in favor say aye.

Members (02:14):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (02:18):

All those opposed say nay. Any abstentions? Motion is approved, and agenda as presented has been approved. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting.

Warren Tryon (02:53):

There you go.

Jon Ashlock (02:55):

I'm going to give that one to Lotus. Thank you. Is there any discussion on the topic? All right. All those in favor say aye.

Members (03:06):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (03:11):

All those opposed say nay. All right, the minutes have been approved. We're just going to be cruising along on here because we've got a couple short things till we get to later on. Awards and recognition. There are no awards and recognition to discuss today. Old business. There is no old business on today's agenda either. New business. All right, this is the calendar review

and approval for 2025. I'll now turn the floor over to program specialist Sandy Baur, who'll present the proposed '24 calendar and look for our board's review and approval.

Sandy Baur (03:48):

Thank you so much, Chair Ashlock. During the last meeting of the year, we present our recommendations for the meeting calendar for the following year. For 2025 we suggest the same schedule as 2024, with quarterly meetings scheduled for March 6th, June 5th, September 11th, and December 4th. Now, we propose that June 5th be the in-person option pending the board approval and a confirmation of the quorum. As you know, our team supports nine different boards and commissions, so we do have a limited flexibility on the dates that we have suggested. We would like to recommend that the meetings continue to be started at 10 a.m, and I'll turn it back over to Chair Ashlock to open the floor for discussion and to call for a vote.

Jon Ashlock (04:42):

All right, floor is open for discussion. Anybody have any issues with the proposed dates right now? Any suggestions, comments, concerns? I don't see anything, so would anybody like to make a motion to accept the meetings for next year as stated?

Glen Thompson (05:04):

Board Member Thompson.

Lisa Lotus (05:05):

I move to accept the motion that the meeting dates are approved.

Jon Ashlock (05:11):

Okay, thank you. Do I hear a second?

Glen Thompson (05:16):

Board Member Thompson. I will second that.

Jon Ashlock (05:18):

Excellent. All those of ever say aye.

Members (05:21):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (05:24):

All those opposed say nay. All right, the motion has been approved. So the schedule is set for next year. Make sure you mark it on your calendars.

Sandy Baur (05:35):

Thank you so much. We'll be sending out meeting invitations.

Jon Ashlock (05:39):

All right. Hang on. Scrolling on here. Next item up is the annual election of chair and vice chair. Mrs. Schaefer.

Saundra Schaefer (05:53):

Thank you. And this is similar to the calendar review and approval in that every year the board has a chance to, excuse me, nominate and elect chair and vice chair for the following year. Keep in mind that board members may self-nominate or nominate other members. There is no limit to the number of terms a member can serve as chair or vice chair as long as it is within their normal period of time. And these positions do need to be appointed and voted for separately. So you can't do a slate of both of the positions at the same time as one motion.

Jon Ashlock (06:34):

Excellent. Well, we're going to go ahead and-

Saundra Schaefer (06:36):

Oh, I was just going to say I'll turn it back over to you.

Jon Ashlock (06:38):

Thanks. All right, we're going to go ahead and go for the chair position. Do I have any suggestions or nominations for chair?

Jordan Howard (06:48):

I would like to take the opportunity to self nominate me, Jordan Howard, vice chair, as serving as vice chair, and then also with some of the old board members pre-2019, 2020, would like to continue and at least get one rotation as primary chair. So, yeah, I'd be moving up from vice chair. Thank you.

Jon Ashlock (07:11):

Alrighty. Do we have any other nominations? With that, I think we can put this for a motion to be able to elect the chair. Do I have a motion to elect Jordan Howard as chair for 2025?

Warren Tryon (07:29):

I motion to elect Jordan as chair.

Jon Ashlock (07:34):

Excellent. And call for second for this motion?

Austin McFeeley (07:38):

I second.

Jon Ashlock (07:40):

Beautiful. All those in favor say aye.

Members (07:43):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (07:44):

All those opposed. All right, the motion passed. Jordan, you are in lead next year.

Jordan Howard (07:54):

Yay, thank you, Jon. Thank you, board.

Jon Ashlock (07:56):

All right, on the next topic here, we'll move on to vice chair. Do I have any nominations for vice chair? I'd actually like to nominate Warren.

Jordan Howard (08:10):

Yep.

Jon Ashlock (08:12):

I get it out before you.

Jordan Howard (08:14):

Dependent on his time available and things like that, and the community would like to see if I would like to nominate Warren, again, just as one of the continuing members and seeing in the vice chair role, so I would nominate Mr. Tryon.

Jon Ashlock (08:31):

Warren, do you accept that to be voted on?

Warren Tryon (08:35):

It doesn't sound like I have a choice. No, that's fine.

Jon Ashlock (08:40):

Okay. I don't consider this a voluntold position. Do we have any other people who would like to go for the running for vice chair? If nothing else, we'll go ahead and break it into a motion. I'd like to do the motion to nominate Warren Tryon for vice chair for 2025.

Jordan Howard (09:01):

And I will second, Jordan Howard.

Jon Ashlock (09:05):

All right. Do we have any discussion? All right, let's bring it to a vote. All those in favor say aye.

Members (09:13):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (09:15):

All those opposed? All right, Warren, congratulations, you are vice chair for 2025.

Warren Tryon (09:24):

Excellent.

Jon Ashlock (09:29):

See, you nominate me to get presentations on the front here when I'm gone, so, that-

Jordan Howard (09:35):

Love it.

Jon Ashlock (09:36):

Joking. All right, moving on to reports. For the change in business practices report, I'm assuming all of you got your packet and were able to take a look at the items that were on pages basically 21 to 23, and 24 also. The change in business practices, some of the big changes, if you didn't do a side-by-side comparison on it, we've been talking about it quite a bit. One of the big reasons for a lot of our changes was to get us in line with other commissions out there or other boards out there. So one of the big changes, got notes here, was the number of years for being on the board. Currently we are at three years in two terms, and we want to go in line with real estate, which is two terms at six years. So that's change number one.

(10:36):

Number two was removing the requirement of having completed 500 inspections. Talking on the CBB subcommittee, the big thing on that is how do you prove? It's basically impossible for somebody to say here's a stack of 500 inspections you have, so really, if it's not something we could enforce, why have it in there, but still hold onto the five years of experience on that.

(11:01):

And another one, which is kind of a big one, and it helps for keeping our board full, was removing the staggered, so only two people could be appointed per year. We've had several gaps in the previous years because somebody moved, new person was appointed, somebody dropped out, and then hands are tied for that entire year. With removing that portion of it, we

could hopefully keep a full board going forward. So if people are okay and they agree with these sort of changes, we'd like to go ahead and bring this up to a vote so staff could move forward with trying to get legislation to be able to change this up and update us to the modern days. At this point in time, I want to open up the table here. I don't have everybody on my screen for raising hands, so Sandra, if anybody has their hand raised to want to bring their thoughts or concerns on it, can you call them out for me please?

Saundra Schaefer (11:58):

Sure thing.

Jon Ashlock (11:59):

At this point in time, I'll open up the floor.

Warren Tryon (12:09):

Well, I'd just say just for anyone that doesn't quite grasp this concept is that the reason we need to change this is because we're always at a deficit with board members in the home inspector board as opposed to any of the other larger ones like real estate or appraisals. And so we're just kind of bringing our standards in line with the other licensing boards so that we're not constantly at a deficit with board members.

Sandy Baur (12:44):

And Board Member McFeeley has his hand raised.

Austin McFeeley (12:47):

Yeah, could you clarify the term limit portion of that again? It sounded like you said two at three. Is it so the term is three years currently, correct? And then you're going to six year terms? Is that what you said?

Jon Ashlock (13:00):

Correct. Right now we have a maximum of six years being on the board, so two terms, three back to back. It's going to change so that we're going to be able to do six years, which would come to 12 years you could be actually on the board.

Austin McFeeley (13:11):

Okay, thank you.

Jon Ashlock (13:12):

Cool.

Austin McFeeley (13:19):



And to follow up on that, do we know how that would affect current members, people who have already been passed, already hit their six years, such as yourself, and moving forward, those who are currently on the board, how that would affect those?

Jon Ashlock (13:34):

Sandy, can you actually talk about that one?

Sandy Baur (13:36):

Sure thing. That's a really great question. Right now we are in the making suggestions phase. Once this is approved, we can go ahead and get with our rulemaking partners, and we will add in suggestions on how that would look for current board members and past board members. But we'll bring that back to the subcommittee when we reach that point.

Jon Ashlock (14:06):

Yeah, unfortunately at this point in time, it's not going to do anything for me. I'm going out the door already. All righty, any other comments, concerns? If not, I would actually like to put up a motion to be able to vote on these changes so we could get staff to move forward on it. Does anybody have a motion they'd like to do?

Warren Tryon (14:32):

I'll motion to bring this up for vote.

Jon Ashlock (14:36):

Yes, we need to bring it up to vote.

Jordan Howard (14:39):

I second the motion.

Lisa Lotus (14:41):

I can second it. This is Lisa.

Jon Ashlock (14:44):

All right. All those in favor say aye.

Members (14:48):

Aye.

Jon Ashlock (14:50):

And it is approved. We can move forward with it. That is a big victory, I think, in many, many ways for us to get the ball rolling to be able to get these changes into place to make our board more efficient and long term.

Jordan Howard (15:04):

And Jon, on that ball and just to lay it out as far as timelines go, we would be looking at the '26 legislative session, that we're hoping that this gets presented by then? Okay.

Jon Ashlock (15:18):

Yep.

Sandy Baur (15:19):

Yes, that's correct.

Jon Ashlock (15:22):

Yeah, it's definitely not a fast process.

Jordan Howard (15:24):

No.

Lisa Lotus (15:25):

Just wondering, okay, so it's going to be 2026. I guess maybe I should speak offline with somebody about the length of time it takes something to pass the legislature. Who is a good person to do that with, please?

Sandy Baur (15:42):

That's a great question. And the 2025 legislative session is already set. So the best way to do that would be to reach out to the individual legislator that represents your area.

Lisa Lotus (15:59):

Right. Well, I think maybe I needed a little bit of a basic how-to, how does this get done by somebody that... Would it be you that I speak with, Sandy?

Sandy Baur (16:09):

Sure, yep, absolutely.

Lisa Lotus (16:11):

All right, I will talk to you another time about it. All right, thank you.

Sandy Baur (16:14):

Yeah, just shoot me an email, and we can arrange something for you.

Lisa Lotus (16:17):

Great, thanks.

Jon Ashlock (16:19):

Yeah, it's definitely a good example of how government moves slowly. So anyways, all right, with that we'll go ahead and move on to, I believe it's going to be our DEI, actually, is next. And for that, Lisa, I'm turning the board over to you.

Lisa Lotus (16:39):

Well, I do not have my notes in front of me, I got to tell you all. I don't know if it's super imposing or not, but I don't know if anyone could bring up our work that we were doing together. I do know that there was a couple of changes that we had to verbiage about helping inspectors be able to join us a little bit easier but still keep the quality and caliber of who's applying to become an inspector. There was just a couple of words that we changed, and I think there was... Oh boy, I feel bad, but I did want to just... I wanted to bring this up that we are working on it. It's very slow. Okay, here it is. No, this is some notes.

Jordan Howard (17:40):

Lisa, I can talk to it a little bit if you'd like.

Lisa Lotus (17:42):

Yeah, do you remember all the stuff that sort of basically we-

Jordan Howard (17:46):

The DEI subcommittee has been looking at some of the WACs and removing any redundancies, kind of like the original one, but also any verbiage that might be in place that could be restrictive to improving access to this industry. A couple of the WACs that we've been looking at are the first couples, the dot three zero and the dot four zero. And Lisa and I and Austin have gone through and improved some of those, such as improving timelines for familial type of issues that come up that might restrict someone from testing, some of the punitive regulations that are built into the wording. So we're continuing to go through the rest of the WAC before making all recommendations, but we have two, I believe two out of about the 14 sub-chapters or sub-subtext sections reviewed so far. And we will continue to go through and dissect and look at verbiage improvements to remove licensure barriers for more equitable and inclusiveness. Yes, go ahead.

Lisa Lotus (18:56):

I'm raising my hand. And I just wanted to say, talking about slow-moving work, I was like, let's just do all of it right now, and it was just like, oh geez, no, we're not doing all that right now. So I was a little bit impatient, and now I'm like, oh yeah, I realize it just takes some time. And then I don't know if... Would one of you administrators let me know, is it okay to just bring up something very relevant to the work that we're doing? Yes? I see a nod. Okay.

(19:26):

So in the meantime between these meetings, I ended up meeting with two different prospective home inspectors, and they both happened to be what you might want to call diverse, equity,

inclusion, whatever kinds of populations. So one was an African-born gentleman, and we just had a talk at the Starbucks. He was wanting to know all about how to become a home inspector, and I was telling him all that I knew. And then the other one was a trans woman who... We also met at a Starbucks, and we just talked about... That person actually has their license and wanted to get on with me as, wanted to do their... No, she doesn't have her license. However, she's in that process where you have to do the field work and the shadowing. So she's there and then has asked me, "Could I shadow under you?" And I wasn't quite ready at that time. But it was just, I want to say there's some promise, and I'm glad that we're working on this.

Jordan Howard (20:32):

Absolutely.

Jon Ashlock (20:39):

That's pretty cool.

Jordan Howard (20:40):

Yep. That should be the report out for DEI subcommittee.

Jon Ashlock (20:44):

Excellent. Moving on, then. Any questions or any comments for DEI?

Lisa Lotus (20:47):

Thank you, Jordan. I appreciate that.

Jon Ashlock (20:52):

All right. We'll move on to the education subcommittee. So we've been working. We've reported out a couple times during our previous meetings, changed around the rubric, and we thought we had it down to exactly where we wanted it, until the last subcommittee meeting, where I wouldn't call it a bomb drop, but actually in my mind's eye something kind of cool, that we need to keep the hours the same, but we could actually add different items in. So Warren, Glenn, correct me if I'm wrong, since I wasn't at that meeting, but it sounds like we could change things around in there as long as we have the total hours available. And I apologize for a puppy barking in the background as I talk. Is that a good summation, Warren, of what [inaudible 00:21:39]?

Warren Tryon (21:38):

Yeah, I think so. I think so, yeah. So basically what we learned, kind of the revelation that the outline was for the hours, the clock hours, and that the actual curriculum could be pretty much anything that we thought was necessary, so we could add and subtract from that rubric as necessary and as discussed in our subcommittee, because we were limited to the amount of hours, and so we were kind of trying to pull hours from areas that weren't quite as important in our eyes and adding them to some of the more difficult subjects that students encounter, like HVAC, electrical, things of that nature. And then we were informed that we could actually eliminate or add additional subjects or eliminate subjects completely. And so that kind of gave

us the idea that maybe we've been looking at it wrong the entire time and we should review exactly what is being taught and maybe change it as needed.

Jon Ashlock (23:01):

Yeah. I think that's eye-opening and gives us a lot more power than previously thought, and I think we're really going to be able to... I mean, our field is so new in the sense of licensure, it's going to give us real good direction to be able to make us better and not be pigeonholed and tightened down by that stack of the existing items that are in the rubric. So I'm excited for that. I think that's a great opening on it. Yes, Lisa. Yeah, you're on mute, Lisa.

Lisa Lotus (23:43):

Yeah, I just had to figure out where the raised hand was on my phone. Is this a good time to ask a question about... Well, I'm going to just ask it, and you all can just bear with me. But you know how there's that thing called the Washington Worker Retraining Program? Are any of you familiar with that program? I guess it would be maybe the administrators that would know.

Jordan Howard (24:09):

I'm familiar with it.

Jon Ashlock (24:10):

Familiar with it, too.

Lisa Lotus (24:11):

Okay. Well, I'm just curious, your work here with the education subcommittee, whoever's on this, I'm wondering, are you also going to be reviewing which schools are qualified for that particular program? And the reason why I'm asking this is because there are certain programs that are approved for that worker retraining program that I don't believe should be on that list.

Jon Ashlock (24:40):

So the actual schools that are approved are outside the scope of our board. That is at the state level to be able to do the review of the licensure to make sure that they have all their boxes checked for what they need to be able to do. So Sandy, I'm going to call out on you again for that, because you're definitely well versed on it. But in general, we are able to set up the rules, but we don't do the sign-off that this education can be given by this company, and we also are not part of this is the renewal. But when we do changes to it, they will have to replicate those changes the next time they license. Does that make sense?

Lisa Lotus (25:22):

Yes, but then is this committee responsible for curricula? That's what you have here.

Sandy Baur (25:27):

Mm-hmm. So I'd like to call on Mr. Tim Allen. He's our education manager, and he'll be able to shed a little bit more light on this.

Tim Allen (25:39):

Thank you. So yes, ma'am, as it ultimately work for the department, we do not certify instructors nor schools as we do for real estate. When you talk about schools, that falls up under what we call the Workforce Training Education Coordinating Board. So if they deem fit that, per se, they want to certify and license schools within the state of Washington, that falls up under their purview. For us, all we do is we review the curriculum that the provider, and that's why we call them home inspector provider, sends up to the DOL, and they ensure that it makes in it's compliance with the WAX and regulatory statutes.

Lisa Lotus (26:19):

Okay, so if one-