

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Water Utility Operator Licensing Advisory Committee

April 20, 2007

9:30 a.m.

TCEQ

12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. A, 3rd Flr., Rm. 328

Austin TX

MINUTES

Members Attending

Carol V. Batterton
L. Russell Hamilton
Richard E. Harbuck
Dennis King, Sr.
George W. Patterson
David Sanders
Carola G. Serrato
Odis Tyler
Larry West
David L. Yohe

Members Absent

Joseph G. Majdalani, P.E.
H. Ted Neumann, Jr.
Robert T. Riley

TCEQ Staff Attending

Noreen Helmle
Sandra Hernandez
Susan Hier
Jane Scheidler

Others Attending

James Fischer, TEEEX

Richard Harbuck, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., a quorum was confirmed and members, guests and TCEQ staff were introduced. The Minutes of the October 27, 2006 Meeting were approved.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

Copies of TAC Ch. 5, Advisory Committees and Groups, were distributed and members were asked to review these regarding their roles and responsibilities. (Copy attached to original Minutes.) It was noted that Rule 5.7, Membership, states that replacement of committee member shall be appointed by the commission. It was also noted that Rule 5.8, Attendance, states that if a member “misses three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings or more than half of all the regularly scheduled meetings in a one-year period, that member automatically vacates his or her position.”

New Committee Members

Odis Tyler’s and Dennis King’s terms will expire August 31, 2007. The deadline for submitting nominations for the Commission’s consideration for appointment is May 11, 2007. Copies of the solicitation notice that was mailed to approximately 100 interested parties were distributed. (Copy attached to original Minutes.) Terry Thompson thanked Odis and Dennis for their contributions to the committee’s work.

Election of Vice Chair

Richard asked the committee for nominations for a Vice Chair. Carol Batterton nominated Russell Hamilton. No other nominations were made. The committee voted unanimously for Russell Hamilton to serve as the Vice Chair.

Texas Small Public Water System Training Program (TSPWSTP)

Sandra Hernandez provided a brief overview of the TSPWSTP. The classroom training contracts will be awarded by the end of the month. At the end of March 2007, 2,683 water systems and 4,521 water operators had enrolled. Committee members representing associations offered to include information about the program in their journals, publications and meetings. TCEQ Small Business and Environmental Assistance notifies systems and operators of the benefits of the program.

TCEQ Update

Terry Thompson announced that TCEQ’s new commissioner, Buddy Garcia, was confirmed March 13, 2007 for a term that will expire August 31, 2011. Commissioner Garcia’s background information is available on the TCEQ website. The TCEQ Trade Fair is scheduled for May 1-3, 2007. Late registration information is available on the TCEQ website.

Legislative Issues

Terry Thompson reported that there were two bills introduced that dealt with licensing issues. One proposed that license applicants present proof that they were qualified to

work in the U.S. The other proposed that a criminal background check be performed on each applicant. Bill Impact Analyses were prepared by TCEQ for both of these.

Water/Wastewater Training Provider Seminar

Terry Thompson announced that the annual TCEQ Water/Wastewater Training Provider Seminar is scheduled for July 1 and 2, 2007 in Austin. Registration information will be mailed to training providers in May.

Licensing Update

Terry Thompson shared with the committee the FY 07 statistics (through March 2007) for licenses issued, licenses renewed, applications submitted, and exams administered. Licensees will now receive a receipt with their license. A blue Registration Renewal Notice will be mailed to licensees 60-90 days prior to the expiration of their license instructing them to renew on-line or call to have a hard copy of a Renewal Application faxed or mailed to them so that they can renew by check via U.S. mail. Database testing is underway for other enhancements to the current system. Terry asked members to continue to inform operators that the renewal of their licenses is their responsibility, not their employer's. If a licensee has not received a Renewal Notice 60 days prior to the expiration date, they should contact the Licensing section immediately and inquire.

Ch. 30 Rules Revision

Terry Thompson briefed the committee on the Ch. 30 Occupational Licensing rule revision status. A public hearing is scheduled for May 7, 2007, at 1:00 p.m. He asked the committee to review the information on the TCEQ website about these rule revisions and to make comments. At this time, this matter is set on the September 12, 2007 Commissioner's Agenda. Terry answered questions from the members

Other Business

Terry Thompson distributed a copy of the e-mail Juanita Lopez received from the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) regarding the ABC Plant Maintenance Certification Program. (Copy attached to original Minutes.) Committee members were encouraged to send their comments to the Manager of Testing at ABC who sent the e-mail.

Terry Thompson mentioned that revisions to the B Surface Water exam are underway. The Exam Revision Subcommittee will review it upon completion. Linda Saladino will be contacting the subcommittee members soon. The Wastewater D, Wastewater A and Water A exams are also scheduled for revision as staff resources allow. Dennis King discussed the issue that the current B Water Distribution and Wastewater Collection III license applications do not require field experience. Terry Thompson said that would be taken into consideration when those applications were reviewed for revisions.

Susan Hier distributed information about the upcoming stakeholder meeting regarding 30 TAC Ch. 217 Design Criteria for Sewerage Systems scheduled for May 8, 2007, 9:00 a.m. (Copy attached to original Minutes.) These rules could be adopted by late Spring of this year.

Russell Hamilton asked about the definition of “direct supervision.” Terry Thompson explained that he was getting a collective response from Licensing, Field Operations, and Public Drinking Water and would keep the committee informed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 10, 2007, 9:30 a.m.

Adjourn

Richard Harbuck adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.