

# LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809



## REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 1:00 P.M.

Louisiana Engineering Society Building Conference Room  
9643 Brookline Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70809

## MINUTES

Chairman John Johnston called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, 2016.

He then commenced Roll Call.

Present: William Finley, John Johnston, Art Johnson, Madhurendu Kumar, Lloyd Hoover, William Meaney, Daisy Pate, Board Members. Thomas Klekamp, NOGS board member nominee. Harry Vorhoff, Legal Counsel. Georgeann McNicholas, Executive Secretary. Brenda Macon, applicant for Assistant Executive Secretary.

Absent: None.

Quorum established. Roll Call sheet was circulated for signatures.

Meeting Minutes: Meeting Minutes of 03/08/2016 were reviewed. Motion made by Johnson to accept the minutes, seconded by Finley. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Johnson presented the April 2016 Treasurer's Report. He reviewed credit card charges. He noted renewals are at approximately 90%. He reviewed bank reconciliation and all is in order. Perry asked if the current bank balance is steady, increasing or decreasing. Johnson noted that it varies based on renewals but that it bears watching closely. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report was made by Perry, seconded by Finley. Motion carried unanimously.

Licensing Application Review Committee – Pate reported that all nine applications of the Licensing Review Committee List for April 12, 2016 are recommended for approval. Johnson motioned to approve the recommended list of applicants. Seconded by Finley. Motion carried unanimously.

Licensing Examination Committee – Finley reported that the ASBOG exams were administered on Friday, March 18, 2016 and that we are now waiting for the results. Next examination date is September 30, 2016.

Complaint Review Committee – Meaney said no complaints have been received. Johnston presented a concern raised by Bill Schram, a person who gives the Ethics training for the Baton Rouge Geological Society (BRGS), regarding a lack of knowledge of licensed professional geoscientists' obligations under the Louisiana Professional Geoscience Practice Act. There seems to be confusion as to when PG's need to be applying their seal on documents and when they don't need to apply their seal. If they work for the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), are they required to seal their work? At this time, they are

not required to but DEQ is considering this issue. As a Professional Geoscientists, aren't they required to do that anyway? Therefore, it was suggested that LBOPG put together a panel to disseminate information. Perry, Finley and Meaney volunteered to serve on the panel. Perry gave a report on this same topic. Gary Fulton and Bill Schram with DEQ want to engage Don Haydel and David Efert with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to determine what is required.

Office Committee – Johnston introduced Brenda Macon to the Board. Macon was interviewed by the Office Committee: Kumar, Johnson, and Johnston; and McNicholas, to fill the position of Assistant Executive Secretary. Johnston stated that advertisement was placed in the Advocate and a number of responses were received but only two met all the requirements. Both candidates were very well qualified but Macon had more office management experience. Johnston outlined Macon's education and her experience stating that she had the complete skill package that LBOPG was looking for. Johnston asked if anyone had questions. Finley asked Macon about longevity. Macon stated that she hoped to stay indefinitely. Johnston pointed out that Macon is retired from LSU so she has a benefits, since LBOPG does not provide benefits. Macon was excused. Finley asked for confirmation that Macon will work 10 hours a week as an assistant to McNicholas until McNicholas leaves and then, if all goes well, she will replace McNicholas as Executive Secretary in December. Hoover confirmed that Macon will not be replacing McNicholas until McNicholas is ready to leave. Johnson mentioned that the other candidate had excellent skills as well but did not have as much office management experience as Macon and that he would have been fine offering the position to the other candidate, had Macon not accepted. Johnston concurred. Finley suggested that the other candidate's information be retained. Hoover asked if another Assistant Secretary would be hired when McNicholas leaves. Johnston confirmed and discussion ensued. It was decided that no further action need to be taken at this time. Motion to hire Macon to fill the Assistant Executive Secretary's position was made by Johnson, seconded by Finley. Motion carried unanimously.

Legal Counsel's Comments – Vorhoff said he would research whether Pate's and Johnston's attendance at the ASBOG COE meeting in Baton Rouge is eligible for per diem and travel and have a response for the next meeting. Discussion ensued. Pate stated that there was a precedent already set because she received per diem when she attended the ASBOG COE in November. Finley said that there should be no problem because it was board business. Vorhoff again stated that he would look into it thoroughly and report back to the board next month. Johnston asked if he could get back to the board before the next board meeting. Vorhoff said yes. Kumar was asked and confirmed that he also got travel and per diem when he attended ASBOG COE in November 2013. Johnston stated that he and Pate should get two days of per diem. Finley asked if a Committee Chair calls a meeting outside the Board meeting, do the board members on the committee get per diem and travel for those meetings as well? Pate said when she and Hardesty had committee meetings in New Orleans, since they didn't have to travel, they did not apply for per diem. McNicholas clarified that per diem and travel are two separate expenses. If a board member meets to discuss board business, they get per diem and if they travel a certain distance away from their home, they get travel too. Finley and Kumar concurred that if a board member travels outside their domiciled area, they get travel. Johnston said everybody who has gone to an ASBOG meeting representing the board, has gotten per diem up to this date. Finley said his question was about other meetings the board may have. Kumar stated that before he went to the ASBOG meeting he got the board's approval for reimbursement of his expenses. Johnston asked then if a motion needed to be made to approve. Kumar said that should be done before the expense is incurred. Johnston said it didn't have to be. Perry suggested that the board let Vorhoff research and report back to the board.

Other Business – *Reciprocity*: McNicholas reported that Georgia still has not met as they only meet a few times a year. No response from Mississippi since Erickson, who is spearheading that, has been ill. PG

*license plate:* Perry said he should have a status update very soon and will email everyone. *Louisiana Government Agencies Policies re: PG signoff:* Perry said it was already discussed under the Complaint Committee but asked Meaney and Finley if they are available to meet with DNR and DEQ on April 28<sup>th</sup> and asked McNicholas if the meeting could be held in the conference room. McNicholas said she would see if it was available. Johnston said, if not, he could get a room at LSU. Perry said it could be held at his office. Johnston said he would like to attend. Kumar said he could not attend. Johnston said the board could only have 4 members in attendance without it being an official board meeting since 5 makes a quorum. If there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> person committee meeting and a 4<sup>th</sup> board member walks in, it's fine but if a 5<sup>th</sup> board member attends, it would be a board meeting. Pate disagreed if it is a committee meeting according to LBOPG bylaws. She stated that 5 board members cannot go to lunch together and discuss board business without "noticing" a meeting per the Open Meeting Law. She said if there is a committee meeting of 3 and more members of the board attend, they would only be in attendance not voting. She pointed out that all the board members could have attended the ASBOG meeting last week but they could not discuss board business without "noticing" that there was a board meeting. Vorhoff stated that the by-laws say "As provided by the Act, a quorum of the board will be the majority of its members." Perry said on April 28<sup>th</sup>, we will have 3 representatives from DEQ, 3 representatives from DNR and 4 members of the board. Johnston said if there were 5 board members present, they could not meet. Pate disagreed. Vorhoff said that it is a gray area if they are having a committee meeting, not having a board meeting, not voting, he has heard it both ways. Vorhoff stated that he will look into the Open Meeting Laws further, that there are not a lot of official comments explaining them, and people have taken more precaution than may be necessary. Vorhoff will explore further and report back to the board. Kumar said he thought committee meetings should also have to have an agenda and minutes taken. Pate said she thought that, because of the content of the Application Review Committee meetings, they are done in Executive Session, as would interviewing applicants by the Office Committee. Pate said that she thought it necessary for the committee meeting scheduled on April 28 with DEQ and DNR be "noticed" and minutes taken and would like Vorhoff to look into it. Meaney said he thought that we should post notice and Vorhoff should be present at the meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup> because the discussion will be about the legal requirements of professional geoscientists. Johnston concurred. Vorhoff said he will be present. Kumar asked Vorhoff to check if the Committee's must keep minutes of Committee meetings. Vorhoff said the LBOPG Bylaws say they must be. Johnson pointed out the list of applicants each month are minutes of the Application Review Committee. Pate said that is why the Application Review Committee is always conducted in Executive Session. Johnston made the motion that the committee members that attended the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting get per diem and travel. Kumar said that Vorhoff first had to verify the eligibility. Perry made the motion that subject to it being legal, per diem and travel will be given to the board members who attend the April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting with DEQ and DNR representative. Seconded by Johnson. Motion passed unanimously. *Promoting the Geologist-In-Training program:* McNicholas sent an email to all board members yesterday with an attachment of ASBOGS Fundamentals of Geology (FG) Examination As An "Assessment Examination" which explains the benefits of Universities geology departments including the exam in their curriculum. McNicholas will schedule a meeting with each of the department heads at LSU, Louisiana University at Lafayette, University of New Orleans, Tulane and Centenary College to explain how the exam results may be used as an assessment of their individual programs and also assist students with the licensing process through the GIT program. McNicholas is going to try to coordinate those meetings with the regional geological society meetings to answer questions about licensing and LBOPG. She noted that it was beneficial to attend the Baton Rouge Geological Society meeting to meet attendees and answer questions. Pate said that many of the geology programs are being

scrutinized and they would be able to use this assessment as a tool. She explained that they are given a password to the database that only allows them to see their student's results. Further, she explained in detail Randy Kath's presentation of the ASBOGS Fundamentals of Geology (FG) Examination As An "Assessment Examination". Johnson said he has spoken to a number of graduates and with the downturn in employment, having your GIT and then your PG is very advantageous.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, May 10, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. Meaney motioned to adjourn meeting, seconded by Johnson. Motion carried unanimously.  
Johnston adjourned meeting at 1:35 p.m.