

**LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS**

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



**REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG**

Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 1:00 P.M.

Physical meeting at

Louisiana Engineering Center

9643 Brookline Avenue

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

and

Virtual Public Meeting Hosted on Zoom

**MINUTES**

Chair William Schramm called the meeting to order at 1:20 p.m., Tuesday, November 14, 2023, and commenced roll call.

Present: William Schramm, William Finley, David Culpepper, Lloyd Hoover, and David Williamson, Board Members; Machel Hall, Legal Counsel; and Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary.

Absent: Michael Simms, Melanie Stiegler, Kaycee Garrett, and Elizabeth McDade, Board Members (Garrett and McDade attended by Zoom); Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary; Sadé Dennis and Seija Meaux, Project Coordinators.

Guests: Jessica Littleton, GIT, with Louisiana Department of Natural Resources.

Quorum was established. Schramm read from the statute that created the board.

**Public Comment Period**

The guest deferred her comments until later in the meeting.

**Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the September 12, 2023, regular board meeting were reviewed. Schramm called for discussion; Finley initially asked that the vote be tabled until later in the meeting; the vote was tabled until the last item of business. At that point, Williamson moved to accept

the minutes; Culpepper seconded the motion. Schramm called for a vote, and the motion passed.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Finley presented the Treasurer's Report for September and October 2023, reporting that, for the two-month period, more revenue was generated, but expenses still exceeded revenue. He pointed out that revenue and expenses appear to be following a recurring trend. He presented graphs to show this trend. Finley asked Macon what the primary expenses have been; she said that payroll is the largest expense.

Williamson asked about moving some of the funds to a money market account or certificate of deposit. Finley said he has not yet found a bank that would be willing to work with the board and asked board members to let him know if they had suggestions. Culpepper noted that a money market account should be an option. Schramm asked if someone with the Office of the State Treasurer would be able to help. Finley said he needs a contact number for that office.

Finley moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; Hoover seconded the motion. Schramm called for discussion and a vote. The motion passed.

### **Standing Committees**

Application Review Committee: Williamson reported that the committee reviewed applications for three licenses and one testing request (ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology only). He said the committee recommended all for approval: 1, 2, and 3 for license; and 1 for examination. Williamson moved to accept these recommendations; Finley seconded the motion. Schramm repeated the motion, called for discussion, and, when no discussion was forthcoming, called for a vote; the motion passed.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reported that nineteen candidates took ASBOG exams in early October. He said score reports are not yet available. He asked Macon if this number of candidates is a record; she agreed that it is and added that the number of candidates taking the exams has increased dramatically since the examination became computer based. A brief discussion ensued about when the license candidates on the list that was just approved had taken the exams. Macon explained that test scores are often from other states, and those scores are reported by ASBOG at the candidates' request.

Schramm and Culpepper reported on the recent ASBOG Council of Examiners meeting in Spokane. Schramm reported that over 1400 candidates took the exams during the October sessions: 845 took the Fundamentals of Geology exam, and 580 took the Practice of Geology exam. The computer-based format also generates far more comments from candidates than the paper exams did.

Williamson then asked the board to set a policy to define when candidates are allowed to take the ASBOG Practice of Geology (PG) exam. He pointed out that the visitor at this meeting has an interest in this issue and may have comments. Hoover asked for

clarification; Macon explained that the board has discussed allowing candidates to take the PG exam before they have completed the full five years of work experience required for licensure. She noted that, during this discussion, no guidelines were set. She asked if the board would allow someone to take the PG exam immediately after passing the Fundamentals of Geology (FG) exam, regardless of how much work experience that person had, or if the board would rather have candidates wait until their final year of training before they take the PG. She said, in either case, candidates would still be required to complete the five years of work experience before they would be eligible to become licensed.

Finley asked if the GIT status would be taken into consideration when determining when the candidate can take the PG exam. Williamson stated that he feels the board should not constrain applicants from taking either exam. Discussion ensued, with Macon clarifying that, as part of the board's agreement with ASBOG, any candidate applying to take either exam must be applying also for either GIT certification or licensure and must be approved by the board for either certification or license. GIT Jessica Littleton added that she is in her fourth year of work experience and would like to take the PG exam before she has completed the five years of work experience. Finley agreed that he thinks she should be able to take the exam whenever she feels ready. Schramm told her about opportunities to learn more about preparing for the PG. He also summarized the discussion by saying that the consensus appears to be that candidates can take the FG in their senior year at university, and they can take the PG anytime they feel ready, but if they fail the FG but pass the PG, they still must retake the FG until they pass it before they can qualify for license. He charged Williamson and his committee with developing a draft policy that clarifies the board's position, and he thanked Littleton for bringing the issue to the board's attention.

Compliance Committee: Schramm reported that, as of the date of this meeting, one or two of the licensees audited as part of the 2023 audit are still working on their activities and materials. One was considered during the committee meeting earlier on the morning of this meeting and was still deficient. Schramm asked Macon to provide additional information. She said, the current spread sheet indicates that 20 have passed; two are still under review; six have either not responded or are otherwise not in compliance with licensing rules and their licenses have expired; one is retired; and one is deceased.

Outreach Committee: Finley reported that he has difficulty communicating with the ULL faculty, but he has been working on a document that he wants to add to the website eventually. He said he has discovered new information that has not been examined regarding land loss in South Louisiana, and he wanted to present this information to the board. He wants to use this presentation to introduce people to the complexity of geoscience work. A brief discussion ensued. Schramm explained that he wants the committee to concentrate on presenting information on the board's function to outside audiences, such as at conferences and symposia. He asked who else is on the Outreach Committee; Macon read the committee members from the organizational chart: Finley, chair; Culpepper, Garrett, McDade, and Williamson.

Strategic Five-year Plan & Rules Review Ad Hoc: Hall reported that she and Schramm have been working on rules changes, and those changes have been sent to board members for review. She has not received any other responses. She also said that changes related to recent legislation are under development, and she will insert those into the changes that have already been drafted. As soon as she gets those changes incorporated, she will begin the process of having the rules changes approved. Schramm asked Hall if the person who serves as the board's contact with the legislature has the rules changes; she said she had sent them.

Macon asked about the newly legislated rules for virtual meetings if those meetings must be announced more than 24 hours in advance. Discussion ensued.

Office Committee: Macon reported that Dennis and Meaux, the board's project coordinators, have nearly completed the demographic database. Meaux had intended to present information from their work to the board, but she was unable to attend because of illness. Macon showed board members examples of the graphs the interns had created from the data. Schramm suggested adding dates to the graphs so a record of change over time could be maintained. Macon agreed.

She also reported that Dovetail Digital is continuing to work on the continuing education reporting pages for the existing database. She said the primary representative with Dovetail has indicated that the project is nearly complete and has said he will provide a detailed presentation on the new module and its components at the January meeting.

Macon reported that Mary Claire Ruckert, the director of LEF, has informed her that LAPELS has announced the intention of moving out of the Engineering Center by the end of 2024. Ruckert presented several possible changes as a result of their vacating the building. First, the LEF board may decide to sell the building and become a tenant as well. In that case, LEF would negotiate a deal with any potential buyer to honor all existing rental agreements. Second, the LEF board may decide to sell the building and move with LAPELS. Third, the LEF board may decide to remain as the building owner and primary occupant and find a tenant to lease the space vacated by LAPELS. All rental agreements are on hold until the LEF board decides what the organization will do.

Macon reported that her presentation at the ASBOG Annual Meeting was well received, with representatives from other board administrators providing insights from their own experiences.

Macon then announced that all the geoscience sessions at the Joint Engineering Societies Conference (JESC), which is scheduled for February 28 and 29, 2024, at the Cajundome in Lafayette, had been filled.

### **Legal Counsel's Comments**

Hall had no additional comments.

## **New Business**

Schramm reported ASBOG had alerted its members of legislation in Virginia designed to eliminate geology regulation. The legislation was not successful because licensed geologists in the state wrote letters and spoke with their legislators to keep the licensing board. Schramm said he wanted the rest of the board to be aware and remain vigilant. Discussion ensued, with several board members commenting on the value of working with and encouraging geology students to become licensed.

## **Announcement of the Next Meeting and Adjournment**

Schramm read the mission statement of the board into the record and reminded board members to participate in their committees and to make progress toward goals. The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 1:00 pm. Culpepper moved to adjourn; Williamson seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 3:32 pm.