

LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

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



REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG

Thursday, January 25 , 2024, 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 1:24 p.m., Thursday, January 25, 2024, and commenced roll call.

Present: William Schramm, Melanie Stiegler, William Finley, Kaycee Garrett, Elizabeth McDade, and David Williamson, Board Members; Machel Hall, Legal Counsel; and Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary.

Absent: David Culpepper, Lloyd Hoover, and Michael Simms, Board Members; Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary; Sadé Dennis and Seija Meaux, Project Coordinators.

Guests: Zachary Burch (LDENR), Byron Ebner (Oregon Water Resources), John Ellis (GHD), Jessica Littleton (LDENR), and Donna Sentell (LAPELS).

Quorum was established. Schramm read from R.S. 37:711.12 (C), part of the statute that created the board, to remind those present of the board's mission.

Public Comment Period

No comments were forthcoming.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the November 14, 2023, regular board meeting were reviewed, and Schramm called for discussion. Finley, Garrett, and McDade asked for minor corrections of

typographic errors; Williamson moved to accept the minutes with those revisions, and McDade seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Finley presented the Treasurer's Report for November and December 2023, reporting that, for the two-month period, the board generated more revenue than was spent. He suggested that this increase in revenue follows the seasonal trend seen in previous years. He pointed out that increasing the numbers of license applications will improve the ability of the board to stay ahead of expenses. He suggested more outreach to potential applicants is important for building this revenue base.

Williamson suggested moving some of the funds in the restricted account that is earmarked for legal expenses to an account that pays higher dividends. Finley suggested opening a brokerage account. Williamson explained that he had investigated the possibility of opening Certificates of Deposit with Morgan Stanley. Discussion ensued, with the consensus that short-term CDs in any financial institution that will work with the board should be opened as soon as possible. Finley moved to accept the report; Williamson seconded. Schramm called for additional discussion; with none forthcoming, he called for a vote. The motion passed.

Discussion continued, with Donna Sentell, the director of LAPELS, explaining to the board that Certificates of Deposit are the only option for state agencies to invest funds. She described the process for spreading out these investment accounts and for board approval required for opening these types of accounts. She suggested that the board create a resolution to authorize Finley to open the accounts.

Schramm called for a motion to authorize Finley to open the accounts. Williamson moved to authorize Finley to conduct banking business, to move funds, and to open Certificate of Deposit investment accounts on behalf of the board. Stiegler seconded the motion. Schramm called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Standing Committees

Application Review Committee: Stiegler reported that the committee reviewed applications for five licenses, seven testing requests (ASBOG), and eight candidates for GIT certification. She said the committee recommended for approval 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for license; 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 for examination; and 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 for GIT certification. Stiegler moved to accept these recommendations; both Williamson and 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 19 candidates took the ASBOG exams in October. He asked Macon to report on the results of those exams. Macon reported that, of the 15 candidates who took the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology (FG) exam, eight passed; of the four who took the ASBOG Practice of Geology (PG) exam, two passed.

Schramm reported on details he gathered at the recent ASBOG Council of Examiners meeting. Discussion ensued.

Compliance Committee: Schramm reported that, as of the date of this meeting, five more audits have been conducted; four were approved, and one will require additional continuing education credits.

Discussion turned to those licenses that have lapsed beyond 60 days. Schramm suggested having those licensees complete and sign an affidavit affirming that they have not practiced geoscience in Louisiana during the time their licenses were out of date. The consensus was that this documentation would be a good idea.

Outreach Committee: Finley suggested that the board provide continuing education for licensees on the website. Discussion ensued, with a suggestion that licensees be encouraged to add to the board's library of continuing education presentations as an opportunity to gain instructor credits for their work.

Strategic Five-year Plan & Rules Review Ad Hoc: Hall and Schramm reported that a draft bill was expected to be pre-filed for the upcoming Louisiana Legislative session in support of increasing fee amounts charged by the board. They said more information should be available at the March board meeting.

Office Committee: Macon reported that the upcoming lease renewal was on hold because of the imminent departure of LAPELS from the Engineering Center.

Macon then reminded board members that the Joint Engineering Societies Conference (JESC) is scheduled for February 28 and 29, 2024, at the Cajundome in Lafayette.

Macon introduced Jacob Gibson, a web developer with Dovetail Digital Marketing, who provided an overview of the new audit functionality that has been incorporated into the LBOPG website. He also announced that Dovetail has been sold to Comit Developers. He explained that Shannon Lynd, one of the principals in Dovetail, had decided to retire, so she and her sister and co-owner, Allison Alesi, decided to sell. Both Jacob and Allison will continue with Comit, so the transition should be seamless.

Legal Counsel's Comments

Hall had no additional comments.

New Business

Schramm announced that Michael Simms had expressed his intent to resign because of health issues. Schramm said that two potential candidates for the board position have already been approached and have indicated their interest in being considered. Discussion ensued.

Announcement of the Next Meeting and Adjournment

Schramm read the mission statement of the board into the record and reminded board members to make progress toward goals. The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 1:00 pm. Finley moved to adjourn; Stiegler seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm.