

**LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS**

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



**REGULAR MEETING OF LBOPG**

Thursday, March 11, 2025, 1:00 P.M.

Physical meeting at

Engineering Center Conference Room

9643 Brookline Avenue

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

and

Virtual Public Meeting Hosted on Zoom

**MINUTES**

Chair David Ray Williamson called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m., Tuesday, March 11, 2025, and commenced roll call.

Present: David Ray Williamson, David Culpepper, Elizabeth McDade, William Schramm, and Melanie Stiegler, Board Members; David Peterson, Legal Counsel; and Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary.

Absent: William Finley, Kaycee Garrett and Michael Simms, Board Members; Sadé Dennis and Seija Meaux, Project Coordinators; and Chantel McCreary, Assistant Executive Secretary.

Guest: Connor Mills, ASBOG exam candidate.

Quorum was established.

**Public Comment Period**

No comments were forthcoming.

**Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of the January 14, 2025, regular board meeting were reviewed, and Williamson called for discussion. Schramm moved to accept the minutes, and Stiegler seconded the motion. Williamson called for any discussion and a vote; the motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report**

In Treasurer William Finley's absence, Executive Secretary Brenda Macon presented Finley's report, mentioning that the only extraordinary expenses during this period were a new cell phone and the transition from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online. Brief discussion ensued. Schramm moved to

accept the report, and McDade seconded the motion. Williamson called for discussion and a vote; the motion passed.

### **Standing Committees**

Application Review Committee: Committee Chair Melanie Stiegler reported on the committee's work. She said three applications for licenses and two (ASBOG) testing requests had been reviewed. On behalf of the committee, Stiegler recommended license applications 1, 2, and 3 be approved. She further recommended that testing requests 1 and 2 be approved. Stiegler then moved to accept the recommendations; Schramm seconded; and the motion passed.

License Examination Committee: Williamson reported that seventeen candidates (nine for the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology exam and eight for the ASBOG Practice of Geology exam) had registered to take exams during the March 2025 examination session.

Compliance Committee: Schramm reported on the progress of the 2025 continuing education audit. He said that, of those who have responded since the last meeting, seven needed more documentation, and four were reviewed at the morning review session.

Schramm then addressed the agenda item, "Continued discussion to decide if licensees should be required to send the board a copy of their license seals," reminding board members that the statute (R.S. 37:711.22) and the rules (Title 46, Part LXII, Chapter 15.B(1)) require that *all* licensed PGs in Louisiana *must* have a seal. The board continued to discuss the possibility of requiring licensees to send copies of their seals as proof of compliance.

Outreach Committee: Culpepper said he plans to send information to auditees with links to continuing education details on the LBOPG web page.

Strategic Five-year Plan & Rules Review Ad Hoc: McDade reported that her committee is now working on changes to the statute and rules and requested that board members submit potential rules revisions to her. Discussion of the need to track statutory language so that rules fit into that language ensued. Rules that reference statutes should be checked to ensure the referenced statutes have not changed. Peterson recommended that the revisions need to be complete and ready to submit to the legislature at least six months ahead of filing, which would make the deadline in November 2025.

Office Committee: Macon reported that the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Engineering Societies Conference (JESC) was held in Lafayette, Louisiana, February 5 and 6, 2025. The board had a booth at this conference, and a session dedicated to geology issues was offered. The conference was well attended, and traffic to the booth was excellent.

She reminded the board that an Executive Order from the governor's office was received in late January, directing the board to submit a report on the impact of Act 253 of 2024 (the Welcome Home Act). This report was due on February 28, 2025. Macon reported that, after drafting the report in the requested format, passing it to Legal Counsel David Peterson, and Board Chair David Ray Williamson for their input, she submitted the report on Friday, February 28, to Ryan Roberts, the director of the Office of Boards & Commissions. A copy was provided to each board member.

She reported that, with the encouragement of McDade and other board members, she made the transition from the desktop version of QuickBooks to the online version. She further reported that, on February 28,

she was able to trade in the board's old cell phone for a new one. The trade-in was worth an \$800 credit, to be credited over time on the phone bill.

Macon also reported that Sadé Dennis, while still available to work at LBOPG during her off weeks, has been working as a mud logger in Indiana. Macon told the board that she is happy for Dennis that she is working in the profession for which she had been educated and complimented her on her intelligence, wit, and ethic of hard work.

She then reported that the board's email provider, Zoho Mail, had locked board's users out of all devices except Macon's personal cell phone because the company had begun to require multi-factor authentication (MFA), using an authenticator that could only be accessed through its apps, which could not be accessed without the new authenticator. She said that Zoho support could only be reached by email, which then responded through an artificial intelligence (AI) bot that consistently misinterpreted the problem. She said this situation prompted her to begin looking at other options for email service. She asked how many board members use their lbopg.org emails. She said that, if the answer is "not often" or "not at all," the board would be better served not to use individual "lbopg.org" emails. The apply@lbopg.org email would be used to conduct board business, saving the board money by not having extraneous accounts.

Finally, Macon reported that the board's draft contract with the Office of the Attorney General is still in queue to be processed on their side.

## **Old Business**

### *Occupational Licensing Review Program*

Regarding a letter from the Office of the Attorney General about the change in required participation in the Occupational Licensing Review Program (OLRP) sent to board members October 7, 2024, David Peterson, Assistant Attorney General, presented new information on this program. He said the program could be useful to the board in revising the statute and rules. Peterson answered questions from board members, including whether the board can opt out of the program. In response to that question, he said that the board can opt out by completing a form on the website of the Office of the Governor and writing a letter to explain why. He also explained that, while no situation in Louisiana has triggered a suit like the one in South Carolina yet, such a situation could have potentially damaging consequences. Not only could the board itself be sued, but also individual board members could be sued. Participating in the state program could help with the board's liability and insurance. Discussion ensued, with the board ultimately deciding to table the issue for the present.

*Board Member Resolution:* The board reviewed and discussed a draft resolution of appreciation for Lloyd G. Hoover, one of the original members of the board who retired from the board in late October 2024 and passed away on January 2, 2025. Culpepper moved to accept the draft resolution and to create a plaque to present to Hoover's family, as well as one to be displayed in the board's office. Schramm seconded the motion. Williamson called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

Schramm further suggested creating an annual public service award in Hoover's memory to be presented to someone in the profession who exhibits a similar dedication to service. Several board members agreed with this suggestion, and Williamson asked Schramm to investigate how such an award could be initiated.

## **Adjournment**

The date of the next regular meeting of the board was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 1:00 pm in the Engineering Center conference room at 9643 Brookline Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA.

Schramm then moved to adjourn; Stiegler seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.