

**ARKANSAS WASTEWATER LICENSING COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020  
VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING / COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Committee Members

Jennifer Enos, Vice-Chairman, Springdale Water Utilities  
Michael Overstreet, Jacksonville Wastewater  
Lance McAvoy, City of Fort Smith  
Jonathan Richardson, Martin Operating Partnership  
Doug Ford, Pollution Management, Inc.  
Richard Healey, Executive Secretary, ADEE

**MINUTES**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, the committee addressed the issue at hand, appointing someone to replace our previous chairman, Mr. Rodney Williams, whose term ended April 30th. **Mr. McAvoy made the motion to move our Vice-Chairman into the position of Chairman, which Ms. Enos accepted. Mr. Ford seconded this motion and it carried.** Then the vacancy for the Vice-Chairman was discussed. **Mr. Overstreet made a motion to nominate Mr. McAvoy for this position. Mr. Ford seconded the motion and all members were in agreement and the motion carries.**

The meeting of the Arkansas Wastewater Licensing Committee (AWLC) was called to order by Chairman Jennifer Enos, at 10:03 A.M. on Wednesday, May 13, 2020.

Public Present: Randy Harper, AR Environmental Training Academy; Susan Poe, AR Rural Water Association; Martin Nutt, ADH; Jeff Ford, Kimzey Regional Water District; Stacie Wassell, ADEE, Legal Division; Sandy Luttrell and Leslie Allen-Daniel, ADEE, Division of Environmental Quality.

Previous Minutes: After reviewing the February 12th meeting minutes, **Mr. Ford made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Mr. Overstreet. The motion was accepted.**

Licensing Report: Ms. Luttrell reported the number of wastewater exams proctored and license certifications issued during in the past quarter. She also announced that the financial report was not available to include at this time, due to the agency being closed and some records not being accessible.

Training Updates: Mr. Harper discussed counts for classes completed by the Environmental Training Academy before their office closed in March. They continue to offer the opportunity to take advantage of online training that is available at a cost. He mentioned that both the association and the academy have been in contact and tentatively plan to reopen classroom instruction around July 6th, the week following the July 4th holiday break.

Ms. Poe presented the Committee with an overall assessment of courses, training hours issued and students in attendance from the Rural Water Associations records prior to the closing of their office. She also informed the Board of online training they are continuing to offer at a cost.

Public Comments: Mr. Martin Nutt indicated that the Department of Health's water operator certification exams were also interrupted/cancelled due to the COVID-19 circumstances faced by our state.

Old Business: Ms. Luttrell updated the committee that although Lance McAvoy's second term was approved by the APC&E Commission, the correction to his term ending date (12/31/2022) has still not been addressed and changed.

In addition, Ms. Luttrell confirmed that the Kansas Class 4 reciprocity applicant, Christopher McMahon, has been granted an AR Class III license after finally receiving the completed questionnaire requested several times by our licensing staff. Kansas does not issue certification licenses through testing by Association of Boards of Certification (ABC).

Mr. Healey announced that the agency has only received one nomination for each vacancy (operator/educator) on the Wastewater Licensing Committee at this time, most likely due to the affects of the coronavirus outbreak in Arkansas. He suggested we may want to wait to see if we receive more nominations in the near future, once we return to a “new” normal due to these circumstances. The board members thoroughly reviewed each candidates documentation provided, along with the supporting recommendation correspondence provided by state organizations and industry-wide peers. **Mr. McAvoy made a motion to recommend Dr. Wen Zhang to replace Dr. Rodney Williams for that member vacancy and that Mr. Jeff Ford be recommended to replace Mr. Cecil Zollicoffer to that position to be approved before the APC&E Commission. Mr. Ford seconded both motions for recommendations to the Committee and the motion carried.**

New Business: Ms. Daniel explained to the Committee a situation faced by inactive operator, Tye Wright with Mountain Harbor Resort. He overlooked renewing his wastewater license back in 2017, but has maintained training that just needs to be reported to the agency. An agency inspector was responsible for verifying that his license had become inactive and now he is requesting that the Committee allow him to test for his Class III license to be reactivated. Mr. McAvoy responded that Mr. Wright is accountable as the operator on record for the facility and as long as he can provide training hours accrued during 2017 to 2019, he would have no problem allowing this. Ms. Enos agreed but felt he should have known better and possibly start at the beginning with a Class I followed up to a Class III. If the inspector had not caught this oversight, how much more time in addition to the 3-years would have passed before this violation had been addressed. Mr. Healey asked that a recommendation be made to allow this opportunity in order to get a licensed operator for this facility as soon as possible. Mr. Ford agreed with Mr. Healey, as long as the hours have been completed and are documented for the agency. **Mr. Ford made a motion to allow Mr. Wright to sit for the Class III exam with additional trainings hours provided, as long as he has all training hour requirements met. Mr. McAvoy seconded the motion and it carried.**

A discussion ensued over the COVID-19 outbreak with the main concern over most wastewater operators minds: “how to obtain training hours for the upcoming license renewal when annual conferences, district meetings and training classes have been cancelled or postponed indefinitely.” Mr. Healey stated that the agency issued an emergency order to assist operators in all divisions through a COVID 19 email notification alert. This gives them the opportunity to explain hardships and difficulties they are experiencing in reaching state required deadlines and regulation requirements in all areas of the agency. Those who hold licenses renewing at the end of June, 2020, will have their expiration dates extended for another six months to allow additional time to address these extremely unusual circumstances. Ms. Luttrell informed the Committee that several organizations and state facilities have reached out to the agency to volunteer “FREE” webinars to assist all operators (wastewater and water) in maintaining their training requirements for the purpose of continued credit.

Vice-Chairman Enos announced the next scheduled meeting of this Committee: **August 12, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**

**The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.**