

**THE VIRGINIA BOARD FOR
WATERWORKS AND WASTEWATER WORKS OPERATORS**

Examinations Review Committee Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

The Examinations Review Committee of the Virginia Board for Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators met on Tuesday, February 8, 2005 in Conference Room 5 East at the offices of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, 3600 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia.

The following members of the Board were present:

Steve Cawthron, Board Member, Chairperson
Eileen M. Leininger, P.E., Board Member

The following members of DPOR staff were present during some or all of the meeting:

Karen O'Neal, Deputy Director for Licensing and Regulations
David Dick, Executive Director
Sharon Sweet, Education & Exam Administrator
Marilyn Mandel, Administrative Assistant

Steve Cawthron, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM. **Call to Order**

It was moved that the Committee approve the agenda with the addition of an additional item (number 4) regarding Discussion of Purpose. The motion was carried unanimously by the Committee. **Adopt Agenda**

Chairperson Cawthron opened the floor for public comment. No member of the public was present to address the Committee. **Public Comment Period**

The charge to this committee is to review the Board's current examination and develop recommendations and a report to present to the March 9, 2005 meeting of the full Board. The Committee agreed that the purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the Virginia prescriptive exams and compare to the standardized exams. **Discussion of Purpose**

Sharon Sweet provided Committee members with the ABC Non-Disclosure Forms for completion. **Completion of ABC Non-Disclosure Forms**

Ms. Leininger moved that the meeting be recessed and that the **Closed Meeting**

Board's Committee immediately reconvene in closed meeting for the purpose of consultation and/or briefings by staff members pertaining to examination issues within the jurisdiction of the Board as permitted by § 2.2-3711.A.7 of the *Code of Virginia*. The following non-members will be in attendance to reasonably aid the consideration of the topic: Sharon Sweet and David Dick. This motion is made with respect to the matter identified as agenda item 6. Mr. Cawthron seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously approved by the Committee members.

Ms. Leninger moved that the closed meeting, as authorized by Section 2.2-3711.A.7 of the *Code of Virginia* be adjourned and that the Board immediately reconvene in open public meeting. Mr. Cawthron seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

WHEREAS, the Examinations Review Committee of the Virginia Board for Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

**Certification of
Closed Meeting**

WHEREAS, § 2.2-3712 of the *Code of Virginia* requires a certification by this Examinations Review Committee of the Virginia Board for Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Examinations Review Committee of the Virginia Board for Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Examinations Review Committee of the Virginia Board for Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators.

ROLL CALL VOTE

YES: Eileen Leninger and Steven Cawthron

NAYS: None

ABSENT DURING VOTE: None

ABSENT DURING MEETING: None

The Committee examined one form of the current Virginia prescriptive examination for each of the 10 classes of license currently issued by the Board. They also examined one form of the equivalent Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) examination for each of the 10 classes of license currently issued by the Board.

**Proposed Report to
Board**

The members of the Committee agreed that the equivalent ABC examinations, while having a number of differences from the Virginia prescriptive examinations, did test for the appropriate minimum competency and should be viewed as equivalent for the purpose of assessing the examinee's entry level competence.

The Virginia prescriptive examination is provided under a contract with ABC that expires on December 31, 2005 and may be extended for one additional year to December 31, 2006.

The Committee agreed that the ABC examinations differ from the Virginia examinations in the following ways:

- Candidates are allowed three hours to complete the ABC and four hours to complete the Virginia examination.
- The ABC examination is a closed-book examination and the Virginia examination is an open-book examination.
- The Virginia prescriptive examinations range from 60 to 75 questions and the ABC examinations are all 100 questions.
- The item banks are, of course, different, having been drawn from a different pool of subject matter experts (SME).
- The ABC equivalent to the Virginia Water Class 4 is a Collection System examination; however, it does address hypo-chlorination and booster pumping systems.
- Both the Virginia and ABC examinations adequately assess the minimum competency needed for each Category and Classification.
- Up to 10 questions on any ABC standard examination may be substitutes with Virginia specific questions, and the

examination will still be considered an ABC “standard” examination and will be substituted at no extra charge. This may be most appropriate for the Class VI and V examinations.

- The ABC examinations cost \$29 per examinee and the Virginia examinations cost \$48.15 per examinee.
- Both are ready to be offered on-line:
 - ABC cannot perform the administration services and the Board would have to separately contract, via a Request for Proposals (RFP), with a vendor to administer the electronic examination to candidates.
 - ABC will charge a one-time start-up fee of \$500 per examination (\$5,000 total) to prepare the Virginia examinations to be administered on-line.
 - ABC will charge an annual maintenance fee of \$400 per examination per year (\$4,000 total).
 - Both the start-up fee and the annual maintenance fee will be waived by ABC if Virginia decides to use the ABC examinations.
 - The examination would be offered much more frequently, ending the three-times-per-year examination deadline work loads for both the industry and the Board’s staff.
- Staff will provide the Committee with a list of the examinations currently administered on behalf of other DPOR affiliated boards broken down by closed-book administration and open-book administration.
- Staff will provide the Committee with the pass-fail statistics for both the Virginia prescriptive and the ABC standard examinations.
- Staff will attempt to provide additional information concerning the estimated costs.

The Committee offers the following four options, along with their estimated costs, to the Board for consideration:

1. Continue giving the Virginia prescriptive examination three times per year by paper and pencil. It would remain an open-book examination with four hours allowed to complete. The exact cost to the first-time candidate does not change from the current cost of \$148.15 (\$100 application fee plus the \$48.15 examination fee).
2. Administer the Virginia prescriptive examination by electronic means through an on-line examination vendor.

It would remain open-booked with four hours to complete.

The cost to the first-time candidate is estimated at \$228.15 (\$100 application fee, \$48.15 examination fee, \$10 estimated cost to recover ABC set-up and maintenance fees, \$70 estimated cost for an on-line examination vendor's services).

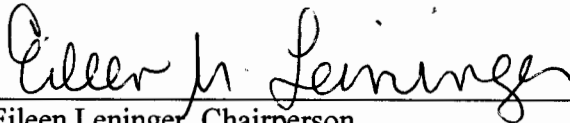
3. Administer the ABC examinations by electronic means. The examination would become closed-book and the time allowed to complete the examination would be reduced to three hours. The estimated cost to the first-time candidate is estimated at \$199 (\$100 application fee, \$29 examination fee, \$70 estimated cost for an on-line examination vendor's services).
4. Issue a request for proposals (RFP) for a vendor to both develop and administer the Board's examinations. The Board owns the Virginia prescriptive examination item bank and may get proposals from a vendor that can perform ABC functions as far as examination maintenance is concerned and administer the examination electronically at a lower total cost.

The Chairperson asked the Board members to complete their conflict of interest forms and travel vouchers.

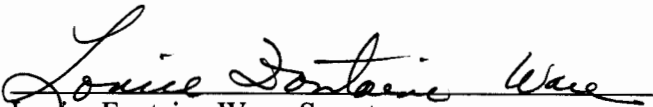
**Conflict of Interest
Forms and Travel
Vouchers**

Mr. Cawthron, finding no further business to conduct, adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment



Eileen Leninger, Chairperson



Louise Fontaine Ware, Secretary

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Examinations Review Committee
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Custodian of the Records

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of
State Government**

1. Name: Eileen Leininger
2. Title: Board Member - Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators
3. Agency: Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
4. Transaction: Board Meeting
5. Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction: NONE

6. I declare that:

(a) I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation, or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction: Water Industry

(b) I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

Dated:

2/8/05

Signature:

Eileen Leininger

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of
State Government**

- 1. Name: Steve W. Cawthron
- 2. Title: Board Member - Waterworks and Wastewater Works Operators
- 3. Agency: Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
- 4. Transaction: Board Meeting
- 5. Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction: ~~Water and WW Industry~~ 8
NONE

6. I declare that:

(a) I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation, or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction: Water and Wastewater Industry

(b) I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

Dated: 2/8/05

Signature: 8