

**BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS,  
WETLAND PROFESSIONALS and GEOLOGISTS MEETING**  
September 4, 2024  
10:00 a.m. – Board Room 4 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive  
Richmond, Virginia 23233  
(804) 367-8514

1. Call to Order (Page 3)
2. Emergency Evacuation Procedures (Page 3)
3. Welcome and Introductions (Page 3)
4. Approval of Agenda (Page 1)
5. Approval of Minutes (Page 4)
  - PSSWPG Board Meeting, June 11, 2024
6. Public Comment Period\* (Page 9)
7. Resolutions (Page 9)
  - R. Drew Thomas, Geologist
  - C. Robin Jones, Citizen
8. Examination Director Report (Page 10)
9. Executive Director Report (Page 14)
10. Regulatory Update (Page 17)
11. Election of Officers (Page 17)
12. EpicX Update (Page 17)
13. Soil Scientists Update (Page 18)
14. Wetland Professionals Update (Page 18)
15. Geologists Update (Page 18)
16. Licensed and Certified Population (Page 19)
17. Financial Statements (Page 20)

18. Other Business (Page 22)
  - i. ASBOG 2024 Fall Meeting
  - ii. Board Member Training Conference – October 10-11, 2024, Williamsburg, VA
19. Conflict of Interest / Travel Vouchers (Page 22)
20. Adjourn (Page 22)

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR December 2, 2024**

Agenda materials available to the public do not include disciplinary case files or application files pursuant to §54.1-108 of the Code of Virginia.

\*Five minute public comment, per person, with the exception of any open disciplinary or application files. Persons desiring to participate in the meeting and requiring special accommodations or interpretative services should contact the Department at (804) 367-8514 at least ten days prior to the meeting so that suitable arrangements can be made for an appropriate accommodation. The Department fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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- **Call to Order**
- **Emergency Evacuation**
- **Welcome and Introductions**

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BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS, WETLAND PROFESSIONALS and  
GEOLOGISTS MEETING MINUTES

The Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists met on June 11, 2024, at the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR), 9960 Mayland Drive, Richmond, Virginia.

Members present for all or part of the meeting:

**Citizens**

Bennette Burks  
Robin Jones  
Steven Yob

**Geologists**

Shannon George  
Matt Heller  
Michael Lawless  
R. Drew Thomas

**Soil Scientists**

Larry Giannasi  
David Hall

**Wetland Delineators**

Robin Bedenbaugh  
Doug DeBerry

Members absent from the meeting with regrets:

**Soil Scientists**

Alexis Jones

**Wetland Delineators**

Justin Brown

Staff present for all or part of the meeting were:

Brian Wolford, Chief Deputy Director  
Steve Kirschner, LRPD Deputy Director  
Kate Nobsch, Executive Director  
Ecila Williams, Licensing Operations Administrator  
Joseph Haughwout, Regulatory Affairs Manager  
Greg Emerson, Executive Director- Examinations  
John Robertson, IV, Communications and Digital Media Manager

Kishore Thota, Director, and Grace Flores-Hughes, BPOR Liaison, were not present at the meeting with regrets.

Josh Laws, Assistant Attorney General, was present from the office of the Attorney General.

Members of the audience:

Billie Hall  
Charlie Paullin, *Virginia Mercury*

Mr. Thomas, Chair, having a quorum, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Thomas advised the Board of the emergency evacuation procedures.

**Emergency  
Evacuation**

Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that Mr. Brown and Ms. A. Jones could not attend the meeting with regrets. Ms. Nosbisch informed the Board that Bonnie Davis accepted a position with another state agency closer to home and congratulated her on her future endeavors.

**Announcements**

Mr. Hall moved to approve the agenda. Ms. R. Jones seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

**Approval of  
Agenda**

Mr. Hall moved to approve all the minutes in block for the following dates:

**Approval of  
Minutes**

- i. PSSWPG Board Meeting, March 4, 2024
- ii. Wetland Delineators Regulatory Review Meeting, April 22, 2024

Mr. Lawless seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

There was no public comment.

**Public Comment  
Period**

Ms. Nosbisch stated the soil scientist update items were provided for informational purposes.

**Soil Scientists  
Update**

Ms. Nosbisch stated the wetland professional update items were provided for informational purposes.

**Wetland  
Professionals  
Update**

Mr. Bedenbaugh shared with the Board information from the 2024 Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals Spring Meeting that occurred on June 7, 2024. Mr. DeBerry thanked Mr. Kirschner and Ms. Nosbisch for their presentation on regulations and General Assembly at the spring meeting.

Ms. Nosbisch stated the geologist update items were provided for informational purposes.

**Geologists Update**

Mr. Lawless shared with the Board information from the 2024 Spring ASBOG Council of Examiners Workshop that occurred from April 5-7, 2024, in Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Emerson presented to the Board Virginia Geology Statistics from March 2023-October 2023 and March 2024 for informational purposes.

**Examination  
Director Report**

Ms. Nusbisch stated the Executive Director Report was provided for informational purposes only.

**Executive Director  
Report**

Mr. Haughwout informed the Board that general review actions for the Professional Soil Scientists Regulations and Regulations Governing Certified Professional Wetland Delineators are at the Proposed stage. The Board has adopted proposed amendments for these regulations and filing of the proposed regulations is pending. Once filed, the proposed regulations will undergo Executive Branch review. Once Executive Branch review is completed, the proposed regulations will be open for 60 days for public comment and a public hearing will be scheduled.

**Regulatory Update**

Mr. Haughwout informed the Board that the General Review of Regulations for the Geology Certification Program are now at the end of the NOIRA stage. The NOIRA was published in the Virginia Register on May 6, 2024, for a 30-day public comment period. The public comment period ended on June 5, 2024, and there were no comments received.

Mr. Haughwout informed the Board that the Board's proposed fee adjustments are currently in Executive Branch review at the Governor's Office.

Mr. Haughwout provided an overview of the proposed amendments for Geology Certification Program regulations that will aid in the reduction of regulatory requirements. The Board reviewed and considered proposed amendments recommended by the regulatory review committee and additional staff recommendations for changes. After a brief discussion, Mr. DeBerry moved to adopt the proposed amendments to the regulation as revised by the Board and to authorize staff to file the proposed regulation. Mr. Gianassi seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

Ms. Nusbisch informed the Board that Jen Sayegh could not attend the meeting with regrets, however, she provided an update for Ms. Nusbisch to share with the Board.

**General Assembly  
Update**

Ms. Nusbisch informed the Board that House Bill 287 have been signed into law by the Governor as of March 8, 2024. This legislation will take effect on July 1, 2024. The new law expands the definition of the practice of geology to encompass a broader range of professional services and activities where geological principles and methods are applied. Ms. George moved to authorize staff to file an exempt action to amend the Regulations for the Geology Certification Program to conform the regulation to the changes in statute. Mr. Giannasi seconded the motion, which was

unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

House Bill 1182 was signed into law by the Governor on April 5, 2024. This new legislation introduces changes to Virginia’s voluntary Professional Wetland Delineator Certification, aiming to provide a less burdensome certification process and to align with the Universal License Recognition (ULR) statute. The legislation will take effect on July 1, 2024. Key changes under the new law include reduction in required experience for degree holders to three years and applicants seeking certification through professional experience reduced the required experience in wetland science research or as a teacher of wetlands curriculum at an accredited institution of higher education to three years. Mr. Bedenbaugh moved to authorize staff to file an exempt action to amend the Regulations Governing Certified Professional Wetland Delineators to conform the regulation to the changes in statute. Mr. DeBerry seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

Mr. Lawless moved to approve the 2025 meeting dates of March 5, June 10, September 16, and December 2. Mr. Burks seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Bedenbaugh, Burks, DeBerry, George, Giannasi, Hall, Heller, R. Jones, Lawless, Thomas, and Yob.

**2025 Meeting Dates**

Mr. Bedenbaugh shared a “A Day in the Life of a Wetland Professional” presentation to the Board and DPOR staff.

**A Day in the Life of a Wetland Professional**

The licensee counts as of May 1, 2024: Soil Scientists – 78; Wetland Delineators – 130; Geologists – 900.

**Licensed and Certified Population**

Ms. Nobsisch informed the Board that the financial statements were included for informational purposes. Ms. Nobsisch informed the Board that Hope Larson, Director of Finance, will be invited to the next board meeting on September 4, 2024 to give more information about board statements.

**Financial Statements**

Ms. Nobsisch reminded the Board that the Board Member Training Conference is scheduled for October 10, 2024 to October 11, 2024 in Williamsburg, VA.

**Other Business**

Ms. Nobsisch informed the Board she received communication from the Virginia Department of Health indicating that regulations and construction permit for private wells would involve changes in its statutes.

Conflict of Interest forms and travel vouchers were completed by all board members present.

**Conflict of Interest  
Forms/Travel  
Vouchers**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

**Adjourn**

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R. Drew Thomas, Chair

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Kishore S. Thota, Secretary

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➤ **Public Comment**

➤ **Resolutions**

- **R. Drew Thomas, Geologist**
- **C. Robin Jones, Citizen**

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## WETLAND DELINEATOR EXAM

### STATISTICS

MONTH	NO. TAKEN	NO. PASSED	NO. FAILED	PASS PERCENT.
FEB. 2024	21	06	15	28.57%
AUG. 2024	22	15	07	68.18%

#### FEBRUARY 2024

02 = 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME PASSED      13 = 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME FAILED

04 = REPEATS PASSED      02 = REPEATS FAILED

#### AUGUST 2024

05 = 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME PASSED      4 = 1<sup>ST</sup> TIME FAILED

10 = REPEATS PASSED      3 = REPEATS FAILED

August 26, 2024

EXAMS - RSTARR

VA GEOLOGY STATISTICS

MARCH 2024

MONTH	NO. TAKEN	NO. PASSED	PASS PERCENT
MARCH 2024			
FUNDAMENTAL OF GEOLOGY FG	19	11	57.89%
PRACTICE OF GEOLOGY PG	13	08	61.53%
OCTOBER 2024			
FUNDAMENTAL OF GEOLOGY FG			
PRACTICE OF GEOLOGY PG			

OCTOBER 2024 EXAMS WILL BE REPORTED NEXT BOARD MEETING

May 22, 2024  
EXAMS - RSTARR

VA GEOLOGY STATISTICS

MARCH 2023

October 2023

MONTH	NO. TAKEN	NO. PASSED	PASS PERCENT
MARCH 2023			
FUNDAMENTAL OF GEOLOGY FG	15	10	66.66%
PRACTICE OF GEOLOGY PG	11	10	90.90%
OCTOBER 2023			
FUNDAMENTAL OF GEOLOGY FG	23	14	60.86%
PRACTICE OF GEOLOGY PG	11	09	81.81%

1<sup>ST</sup> exam administered by ASBOG – vendor Prometric

January 18, 2024

EXAMS - RSTARR

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Exam Date	Virginia Fundamentals Exam	Virginia Pass	Virginia Passing Rate	National Passing Rate	Virginia Professional Practice Exam	Virginia Pass	Virginia Passing Rate	National Passing Rate
January - August 2024	1	1	100%	43%	2	1	50%	16%
November 2023	2	1	50%	40%	0	0	0%	38%
Continuous Testing 2023	0	0	0%	48%	0	0	0%	29%
Continuous Testing 2022	0	0	0%	46%	0	0	0%	23%
Continuous Testing 2021	0	0	0%	83%	0	0	0%	0%
April 2021	0	0	0%	45%	0	0	0%	0%
November 2020	0	0	0%	50%	1	1	100%	50%

**To:** PSSWPG Board

**From:** Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director

**Subject:** Executive Director Update

**Date:** September 4, 2024

For this update, data for the last five years of the Board’s activities has been provided.

### Application Statistics

The table below provides the number of applications approved for the PSSWPG Board per calendar year (January 1 – December 31) since 2019.

Applications Approved						
Year	2024*	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
App Numbers	98	127	111	100	90	119

\*As of 08/01/2024

Applications Approved by Profession 2024			
Profession	Soil Scientists	Wetland Professionals	Geologists
App Numbers	3	18	77

ULR Applications Approved by Profession			
Profession	Soil Scientists	Wetland Professionals	Geologists
App Numbers	2	4	15

\*As of 08/27/2024

## Call Center Statistics

**\*\* The Call Center Statistics consists of APELSCIDLA, PSSWPG, Auctioneers, and Branch Pilots**

The Board’s call center has received a total of 5,624 phone calls between January 1, 2024, to August 1, 2024. The chart below illustrates the calls received in more detail:

**Call Center Activity**



## Email Statistics

The table below outlines the number of emails received through the Board’s email address per calendar year (Jan 1-Dec 31)

	Email Count					
Year	2024*	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
<b># of Emails**</b>	445	918	644	482	319	418

\*As of 08/01/2024

\*\*Includes Geology and BPSSWP Emails

## Board Case Statistics

Since 2018, The Board has adjudicated 2 cases.

No new cases to date

## Stakeholder Engagement & Outreach

ASBOG Fall Annual Meeting October 22-October 25, 2024 in Cheyenne, WY

Robin Bedenbaugh's (Wetland Professional) second four-year term expired June 30, 2024

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- **Regulatory Update**
- **Election of Officers**
- **EpicX Update**

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- **Soil Scientists Update**
- **Wetland Professionals Update**
- **Geologists Update**

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# Licensed and Certified Population

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Profession	1/1/2024	2/1/2024	3/1/2024	4/1/2024	5/1/2024	6/1/2024	7/1/2024	8/1/2024
Certified Professional Geologists (cpg)	860	869	876	886	900	906	909	912
Professional Soil Scientists	79	81	78	77	78	79	78	79
Professional Wetland Delineators	122	123	129	129	130	130	130	131

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
Statement of Financial Activity

**Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals, and Geologists**  
**954180**

2022-2024 Biennium

May 2024

	May 2024 Activity	Biennium-to-Date Comparison	
		July 2020 - May 2022	July 2022 - May 2024
<b>Cash/Revenue Balance Brought Forward</b>			16,455
<b>Revenues</b>	1,630	88,920	95,325
<b>Cumulative Revenues</b>			111,780
<b>Cost Categories:</b>			
<b>Board Expenditures</b>	4,807	23,960	40,669
<b>Board Administration</b>	2,523	32,985	34,564
<b>Administration of Exams</b>	380	5,669	3,261
<b>Enforcement</b>	0	20	13
<b>Legal Services</b>	0	72	76
<b>Information Systems</b>	1,244	23,618	22,870
<b>Facilities and Support Services</b>	436	9,463	8,112
<b>Agency Administration</b>	1,519	15,590	23,398
<b>Other / Transfers</b>	0	(0)	(15)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	10,908	111,376	132,948
<b>Transfer To/(From) Cash Reserves</b>	0	0	(26,591)
<b>Ending Cash/Revenue Balance</b>			5,423

<b>Cash Reserve Beginning Balance</b>	18,064	0	44,655
<b>Change in Cash Reserve</b>	0	0	(26,591)
<b>Cash Reserve Ending Balance</b>	18,064	0	18,064

<b>Number of Regulants</b>	
Current Month	1,115
Previous Biennium-to-Date	1,170

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
 Supporting Statement of Year-to-Date Activity  
 Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists - 954180  
 Fiscal Year 2024

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Fiscal YTD Charges	Planned Annual Charges	Current Balance	Projected Charges at 6/30	Projected Variance Favorable (Unfavorable) Amount	%
<b>Board Expenditures</b>	7,071	4,682	868	1,927	1,877	2,105	976	715	1,683	117	4,807	0	26,827	27,133	306	29,106	-1,973	-7.3%
<b>Board Administration</b>	1,556	1,514	2,016	715	1,525	2,081	834	1,501	2,227	927	2,523	0	17,419	24,763	7,344	17,917	6,846	27.6%
<b>Administration of Exams</b>	223	262	372	124	250	374	126	254	379	126	380	0	2,870	3,424	554	2,976	448	13.1%
<b>Enforcement</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Legal Services</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	8	0	9	-1	-9.1%
<b>Information Systems</b>	675	1,590	1,148	806	916	1,037	189	2,114	2,065	816	1,244	0	12,602	13,916	1,314	13,537	379	2.7%
<b>Facilities / Support Svcs</b>	438	739	584	286	301	387	303	337	424	338	436	0	4,573	8,145	3,572	4,892	3,253	39.9%
<b>Agency Administration</b>	1,059	1,149	1,637	553	1,143	1,485	412	909	1,409	523	1,519	0	11,799	15,243	3,444	12,216	3,028	19.9%
<b>Other / Transfers</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Charges</b>	<b>11,023</b>	<b>9,937</b>	<b>6,624</b>	<b>4,411</b>	<b>6,013</b>	<b>7,468</b>	<b>2,846</b>	<b>5,832</b>	<b>8,189</b>	<b>2,847</b>	<b>10,908</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76,098</b>	<b>92,632</b>	<b>16,534</b>	<b>80,652</b>	<b>11,980</b>	<b>12.9%</b>

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- **Other Business**
  - i. **ASBOG 2024 Fall Meeting**
  - ii. **Board Member Training Conference-  
October 10-11 2024, Williamsburg, VA**
- **Conflict of Interest Forms /  
Travel Vouchers**
- **Adjourn**

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