

**MINUTES**  
**South Carolina Environmental Certification Board Meeting**  
**April 25, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.**  
**Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building**  
**110 Centerview Drive, Upstate Room**  
**Columbia, SC 29210**

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**Meeting Called to Order**

Chair Ken Rentiers called the meeting of the South Carolina Environmental Certification Board to order at 10:00 a.m. Other members participating in the meeting included: Phillip Thompson-King, Vice Chair; Doug Kinard, Jason Fell, Joshua Castleberry, Jay Swearingen and William Van Ward. A quorum was present.

Staff members participating during the meeting included: Hardwick Stuart, Esq., Office of Advice Counsel; Johnnie L. Rose Jr., Board Executive; Cleve Langdale, Program Coordinator; Todd Bond, Office of Investigations and Enforcement; and Erin Koffman, Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

Others participating included: Katherine Boone, Creel Court Reporting.

**Statement of Public Notice**

Chair Rentiers stated public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Environmental Certification Board Office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, and on the board website and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. Members of the public who wish to observe may do so by live streaming at: <http://llr.sc.gov/env/videos.aspx>

**Invocation**

Mr. Castleberry gave the invocation.

**Adoption of Agenda**

**MOTION:** To approve the agenda of the April 25, 2024, meeting.  
Fell/Van Ward/approved.

**Introduction of Board Members and Others**

Board members and Board staff were introduced.

**Approval of Excused Absences**

**MOTION:** To excuse Ken Tuck from the meeting.  
Thompson-King/Kinard/approved.

## **Approval of the January 25, 2024 Minutes**

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes from the January 25, 2024 meeting.  
Castleberry/Kinard/approved.

## **Chair's Remarks – Ken Rentiers**

Chair Rentiers commended Johnnie Rose and Holly Beeson on their work representing the Board during the legislative cycle.

## **Staff Reports**

Mr. Rose gave the Board Executive's Report:

- Reminded Board members to refer media contacts, licensees, and/or applicants to staff for assistance.
- Reminded the Board that Board members attending association events cannot be invited as a Board Member, or represent themselves as Board Members.
- Renewals opened on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and will close June 30<sup>th</sup>, non-renewed licenses will move to a lapsed status on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- To date, the Board has 9,235 active licensees.

## **Finance Report**

Mr. Rose stated the Board had a cash balance of \$455,673.98 as of March 31, 2024.

## **Advisory Opinions, Office of Advice Counsel**

Mr. Stuart stated there are no advisory opinions.

## **OIE Report-Office of Investigations and Enforcement**

Mr. Bond stated the Office of Investigations and Enforcement Report received 8 complaints between February 1, 2024 – April 13, 2024. There is one active case, and 5 complaints have been closed.

## **IRC Report- Office of Investigations and Enforcements**

Mr. Bond stated there is a Letter of Caution for the Board's approval from the Investigative Review Conference Report.

**MOTION:** To approve the letter as presented.  
Thompson-King/Kinard/approve

## **ODC Report-Office of Disciplinary Counsel-Chris Elliot**

Ms. Koffman stated there are three pending cases in the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

## **Board Member Reports**

There were no Board member reports.

## **Application Hearings**

- a) Gary Poston appeared before the Board for an Application Hearing. With him for testimony was his supervisor, Rodney Green. He was not represented by counsel. All persons testifying were sworn in by court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary.

**MOTION:** To enter Executive Session.  
Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**MOTION:** To exit Executive Session . No action was taken during executive session.  
Kinard/Swearigen/approved.

**MOTION:** That in accordance with SC Code of Laws Section 40-1-640 and his displayed credentials, Mr. Poston be granted all three 'D' level licenses sought, and to delegate to staff the authority to issue Mr. Poston higher level licenses as exams are passed.  
Castleberry/Fell/approved.

#### **Old Business**

Mr. Rose requested that the Strategic Planning Update be deferred until the next meeting.

#### **New Business**

- a) Investigative Review Conference (IRC) New Member – Johnnie Rose Trueblood, JoEllen**

**MOTION:** To accept JoEllen Trueblood as the new IRC member.  
Ward/Kinard/approve

- b) 2024 Legislative Updates – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose stated the new regulations will timeout for changes on May 8<sup>th</sup> and will automatically go into effect on May 24<sup>th</sup> with all approved language.

- c) Review of Continuing Education Exemption Application – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose presented the new Continuing Education Exemption application form for operators aged 62 or over with more than 30 years of service.

**MOTION:** To accept the form as presented.  
Castleberry/Swearigen/approved.

- d) Out of State Licensure Experience – Johnnie Rose and Hardwick Stuart**

**MOTION:** To enter Executive Session.  
Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**MOTION:** To exit Executive Session. No action was taken during executive session.  
Kinard/Fell/approved.

**MOTION:** To delegate to staff authority to issue out of state experience upon verification with the state licensing body the licensure of the supervisor of the applicant, and to adjust the form to that purpose.

Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**e) Review for Updates of the Experience Verification Form for Upgrades – Johnnie Rose**

No action taken. Deferred item to another meeting.

**f) Statutory Construction of the Definition of Operator – Hardwick Stuart and Johnnie Rose**

No action taken. More information is needed.

**g) Credit for Laboratory Experience Towards Operator Licensure Experience – John Young**

Mr. Young gave a presentation proposing that laboratory technicians be granted experience as operators for the purposes of licensing, where appropriate.

**MOTION:** To enter Executive Session.

Fell/Castleberry/approved.

**MOTION:** To exit Executive Session. No action was taken during executive session.

Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**h) Web-Based License Cards – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose gave a presentation proposing that operators move to virtual license cards rather than physical licenses, except when physical copies are needed.

**MOTION:** To accept the proposal as presented.

Swearingen/Ward/approved.

**i) Water Professionals International (WPI) Update(s) – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose stated that new exams will be released within the next quarter, replacing the 2019 version. He encouraged the Board to vet this exam and implement when it is released.

**j) PSI Update(s) – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose stated that there have been difficulties for operators and staff due to the portal switch PSI's exam service software has undergone. For information only.

**k) Update(s) on Pass/Fail Report for Operator Testing – Johnnie Rose**

Mr. Rose stated that there has been little data since the exam extensions, and requested that a full update on pass/fail rates be deferred. Mr. Fell stated that he would like to see in the next 30 days feedback from senior operators who have taken exams.

**l) Board Notification to Licensees for Updates and New Processes – Johnnie Rose**

-Newsletter(s)

-Brochure(s)

- Website Update(s)

**MOTION:** To delegate staff the authority to distribute newsletters and brochures and to adjust them as necessary.  
Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**m) Upcoming Board Travel 2024 – Johnnie Rose**

**MOTION:** To approve staff to attend the WEASC meeting.  
Kinard/Swearingen/approved.

**MOTION:** To approve staff to represent the Board at meetings without overnight travel.  
Castleberry/Fell/approved.

**MOTION:** To approve staff to attend the SCGWA fall meeting.  
Kinard/Fell/approved.

**Discussion Topics for the July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Meeting of the Board**

- Strategic Plans

-WPI exam Improvements

**Public Comments**

Mr. Paul Fodor, of Pennsylvania, appeared before the Board to offer his experience, expertise, and service to the Board. Mr. Fodor holds an 'A' level Biological Wastewater license and held the equivalent in Pennsylvania. He believes the improvements he saw in Pennsylvania's training and licensing pipelines can be used to good effect in South Carolina. He gave several examples of changes enacted and stated the benefits that resulted.

**Executive Session**

The Board did not go into Executive Session.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business:

**MOTION:** To adjourn.  
Ward/Fell/approved.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.