

MINUTES
South Carolina Environmental Certification Board
Special Called Board Meeting
September 20, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.
South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
110 Centerview Drive, Columbia, SC
Via Virtual Video/Teleconference

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Ken Rentiers called the meeting of the South Carolina Environmental Certification Board to order at 10:01 a.m. Other members participating in the meeting included Vice Chair Phillip Thompson-King; Doug Kinard; Jason Fell; Josh Castleberry; and Jay Swearingen. A quorum was present.

Staff members participating during the meeting included Hardwick Stuart, Office of Advice Counsel; Molly Price, Program Director; Johnnie L. Rose Jr., Board Executive; and Cleve Langdale, Program Coordinator.

Others present included: Katherine Boone, Creel Court Reporting; Rachel Butler, Lab Director North Charleston Sewer; John Young, Exam Review Committee; Michael Tavano, Savannah River Site; Paul Muzyczyn, Water Operations Supervisor GCWSD; Paul Calamita, Aqualaw; Rip Tafta, Exam Review Committee; and Robert Schmidt, VP Goldie Associates.

Statement of Public Notice

Chair Rentiers stated that public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Board of Environmental Certification Board Office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, 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: <https://scdllr.webex.com/scdllr/j.php?MTID=m0c7fa54848c3c4832486565f7f881208>

Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: To approve the agenda of the September 20, 2024, meeting.
Thompson-King/Castleberry/approved

Introduction of Board Members and Others

Board members and Board staff were introduced.

Approval of Excused Absences

MOTION: To excuse Ken Tuck, and William Van Ward from the meeting.
Thompson-King/Fell/approved

Chair's Remarks – Ken Rentiers

Chair Rentiers introduced the purpose of the special called meeting: to discuss new information regarding unanticipated fallout from the board's decision to lower the passing threshold for exam scores.

New Business

Reconsideration of the July 25, 2024 Board Vote to Lower the Examination Passing Score(s) from 70% to 60% – Molly Price, Program Director

The Board discussed the following the decision to lower the passing scores, WPI has indicated that they have been internally considering not allowing South Carolina to utilize their exams anymore. Additionally, the EPA has indicated that the state's Drinking Water Revolving Fund would need to be reconsidered.

MOTION: To remove the 60% passing threshold for exams and return to the 70% passing threshold.

Rentiers/Thompson-KingCastleberry/Kinard/Swearingen

Fell - Abstained

Public Comments

Robert Schmidt spoke in favor of the decision to return the exam passing scores to 70%, expressing concerns about the quality of operators and the importance of maintaining high standards within the community. He elaborated that low interest in the field is due to low pay rates within the field, which must be adjusted by the market.

Paul Calamita spoke against the decision to return the exam passing scores to 70%, emphasizing the need for legal advice and a clear understanding of the contract with WPI.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Adjournment

There being no further business:

The meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.