

MINUTES
SC Soil Classifiers Advisory Council Meeting
March 4, 2025 at 10 a.m.
Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building
110 Centerview Drive, Pee Dee Conference Room
Columbia, SC

Call to Order and Introduction of Council Members and All Other Persons Attending

Chairman Thorp called the meeting to order at 10:22 a.m.

Other members participating in person included, Randall Fowler and Jason Goff.

Staff attending in person included: Mary League, Office of Advice Counsel; Tyler Livezey, Office of Governmental Affairs; Johnnie Rose, Board Executive; and Sherri Moorner, Administrative Coordinator.

Others attending in person included Richard Threatt and Tina Behles (Capital City Reporting).

Others attending by WebEx Webinar included, Trevor Dale Peterson.

Statement of Public Notice

Mr. Thorp stated that Public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S.C. Soil Classifiers Advisory Council 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://llr.sc.gov/soil/videos.aspx>

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Goff moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fowler, which was unanimously approved.

Approval of Excuses Absences

MOTION: Mr. Goff made a motion to excuse Chris Fincham and M. Lance Brewington from the meeting. Mr. Fincham seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Chairman's Remarks

Mr. Thorp said he is encouraged by the increase in applications to the program as the profession enters a busy season.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Mr. Fowler made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2024, meeting. Mr. Goff seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Board Executive Report

Mr. Rose gave the Board Executive's Report:

- The Council has 52 licensed soil classifiers. One license has been issued since the last Council meeting.

- License renewals for the regular renewal period closed at midnight on January 31, 2025. 96% of licensees renewed online. Late renewals are open through March 31, 2025, which allows individuals to renew with a \$60 late fee. Licenses not renewed as of April 1 must apply for reinstatement.
- The Department has changed to process travel reimbursement for Board meetings electronically. Mrs. Moorer will be in contact with Council member who qualify for reimbursement to initiate this new process.
- Filing the Statement of Economic Interest forms is required no later than 12:00 p.m. noon on March 30, 2025, to avoid penalties. Board staff will send out reminder notices about this to Board Members as we get closer to the deadline.

Financial Report

Mr. Rose stated that as of January 31, 2025 the Council had a cash balance of \$53,689.18.

Office of Investigations and Enforcement Report

Mr. Rose stated there are no cases in the Office of Investigations and Enforcement.

Investigative Review Conference Report

Mr. Rose stated there is no Investigative Review Conference report.

Office of Disciplinary Counsel Report

Mr. Rose stated there are no cases in the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

Application Hearing

Mr. Trevor Dale Peterson appeared before the Council for an Application Hearing by WebEx. He was not represented by counsel. All persons testifying were sworn in by the court reporter. Application hearings are recorded by a certified court reporter in the event a verbatim transcript is necessary. Mr. Brewington recused himself from the application hearing.

MOTION: Mr. Goff made a motion to enter Executive Session for legal advice. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Goff made a motion to exit Executive Session. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Fowler made a motion to approve Mr. Peterson for licensure. Mr. Goff seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

New Business

1. 2025 Legislative Update. Mr. Rose gave an update on two bills in the House of Representatives:

- HB3656, which prohibits the Department of Environmental Services from denying property owners the right to repair or replace a well or septic tank in certain circumstances, is scheduled for a hearing in the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs.
- HB3950, which amends Section 40-65-40 to exempt licensed professional engineers performing soil evaluations in connection with conventional onsite wastewater

systems, and to provide these engineers must have certain training, bonding, and insurance, has been referred to the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs committee.

2. **Introduction of the New South Carolina Onsite Wastewater Association (SCOWA).** Richard Threatt spoke to Council about the South Carolina Onsite Wastewater Association (SCOWA). Their mission is to lead, promote, and strengthen the onsite wastewater industry for the benefit and protection of South Carolina's citizens and the environment, and to serve as a liaison between the licensure and regulatory functions of the process. There are four types of membership that cover the three parts of the process. SCOWA will hold quarterly meetings, with an annual meeting planned for January 2026. This organization will also help to provide continuing education hours for installers, which is required by the Department of Environmental Services starting in 2025. Mr. Threatt thanked the Council for their support, as many of our licensees are members of this association.
3. **Review and Discussion on Board member Role and Responsibilities.** Mrs. League discussed the various roles of Council Members, association members, and individual licensees. Council members were reminded to clearly define the role they are serving when speaking to people, to avoid any confusion.
4. **Review and Recommendations of Updates to Soil Classifiers Online Roster.** Mr. Rose said he and Mrs. Moorner are developing a new online roster. The Department of Environmental Services frequently refers people to the Council for services, so they would like to simplify the roster to help the public understand why they are being referred to a Professional Soil Classifier, and to correctly identify who to contact about their property. The idea is to provide a color-coded map of the state that breaks down their services by region. It will be necessary to survey the licensees to complete this task. Mrs. Moorner asked for a brief description for a "Why Hire a Professional Soil Classifier?" section for the roster. Mr. Thorp said he has a flow chart of services that can be modified for this use.
5. **Review and Approval of Auditing Process for Continuing Education Hours for Compliance.** Mr. Rose stated that CE Broker has evolved since the Council initially used it for Continuing Education audits in 2017. The Council is responsible for licensure and compliance, and the audits are part of the compliance process. Council is only enforcing CE Broker for individuals who are selected for random audits, but this will be pushed out for all licenses to join with the next renewal cycle.

Election of Officers

MOTION: Mr. Fowler made a motion to defer the election of officers until the next meeting. Mr. Goff seconded the motion, which unanimously passed. Agenda Topics for Future Meetings

Agenda Topics for Future Meetings

- Representative from Finance Department to discuss the Cash Balance Report.
- Continuing Education Audits for the February 1, 2023 – January 31, 2025 renewal period.
- Present final version of Soil Classifiers Online Roster.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

There being no further business:

MOTION: Mr. Goff made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fowler seconded the motion, which unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 P.M.