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**STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING  
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** August 15, 2024

**Time:** 10:30 a.m.

**Location:** 1100 N. Eutaw Street  
First Floor Conference Room  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
**(In person for Board Members and Staff)**  
Held via Video Conference  
[meet.google.com/qks-niad-yfo](https://meet.google.com/qks-niad-yfo)  
By Phone via Teleconference  
1-414-909-7588 (PIN: 385820141)

**Members Present:** Joseph Radtka, Chairman  
Gregory Schott, Industry Member  
Leif Hancock, Industry Member  
Hayward Hinkhaus, Industry Member  
Craig Stokes, Industry Member  
Robert Parker, Consumer Member

**Absent:** Keith Horton, Vice-Chairman, Industry Member  
Gregory Schott, Industry Member  
Richard Bowers, Consumer Member

**LABOR Officials & Staff Present:** John Bull, Executive Director, Mechanical Licensing Unit  
Sloane Fried Kinstler, Assistant Attorney General  
LaKisha Thornton, Administrative Officer III

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Wayne Fishpaw, Pipe Trades Technologies  
Jesse Fields, Mid Atlantic Pipe Trades  
Jonathan Sargeant, Omega Plex

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Joseph Radtka called the Business Meeting of the Maryland State Board of Plumbing to order, virtually, at 10:35 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Hinkhaus to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2024, Plumbing Board meeting without amendment, seconded by Mr. Stokes, and, by a roll call vote, unanimously approved by the Board.

**PLUMBING COMPLAINT COMMITTEE**

Mr. Schott reported the findings of the Complaint Committee as follows:

<b><u>Closed Complaint</u></b>	<b><u>Under Investigation</u></b>	<b><u>Sent for A.G. Pre-Charge</u></b>	<b><u>Criminally Charged</u></b>
24-0040			
24-0041			
24-0044			

Upon a motion by Mr. Parker, and a second by Mr. Hinkhaus, the Board voted unanimously, by a roll call vote, to approve the Complaint Committee’s report.

**REVIEW OF EXAMINATION STATISTICS AND LICENSE TOTALS**

PSI Exams submitted the following statistical summaries for July 2024:

	<b>Candidates Tested</b>	<b>Passed</b>	<b>Failed</b>	<b>Pass %</b>
Journey Natural Gas Fitter	1	0	1	0%
Journey Plumber/Gas Fitter	41	19	22	46%
Master Natural Gas Fitter	3	1	2	33%
Master Plumber/Gas Fitter	19	10	9	53%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>47%</b>

Director Bull further reported that since January 2024, 400 candidates were tested, 157 candidates passed, 243 failed, for a pass rate of 39%. Since the inception of the test, 11,575 candidates were tested, 4,197 candidates passed, 7,378 failed, for a pass rate of 36%. There are currently 13,762 active licensees.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Board discussed a letter submitted by Mr. B. Marvel, regarding his concerns over predatory pricing. Mr. Marvel wrote that he had heard of several companies who were charging, what he felt to be, inflated rates for services. He questions what authority the Board had over regulating prices charged for services by contractors in the industry. Chairman Radtka responded, stating that the Board did not have jurisdiction over pricing or contracts and recommended that Mr. Marvel contact the Workplace Fraud

Unit. Counsel recommend that Director Bull prepare a response for Mr. Marvel clarifying the Board's jurisdiction on the matter and referring him to any agencies that may be able to assist him. Counsel also advised that Mr. Marvel may wish to reach out to the local trade organizations for support regarding the issue, and if Mr. Marvel could identify a specific instance against a specific person that showed predatory pricing, that he file a complaint with the Board for review. Chairman Radtka, agreed with Counsels advise and requested that Director Bull respond to Mr. Marvel with the Board's advice.

After the discussion on CSST during Old Business, a motion to instruct Director Bull to prepare a response from the Board to be sent to Mr. Marvel was made by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Hinkhaus, and unanimously approved by the Board.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Climate Solutions Act of 2022:**

Chairman Radtka informed the Board that he would be distributing a copy of the Climate Solutions Act of 2022 and a letter from Secretary Wu to the Public Service Commission for the Board to review at the next meeting. He encouraged the Board to review both for discussion, as he felt that the compliance requirements set forth in the act would cause several issues for the overall well being of the state such as, the current inability of the electrical grid to meet the current and future energy needs, the loss of work for the gas fitting and steam industries, and the cost to the state to meet the act's requirements. Counsel advised that if the Board wished to take a position that it be put in writing for presentation to the Commissioner and then the Secretary.

Chairman Radtka expressed his desire to present a statement and asked that the item be placed on the agenda for next month under Old Business.

### **CSST:**

Chairman Radtka informed the Board that he and Director Bull meet with Frederick County to discuss CSST. He stated that no formal conclusion was reached and that another meet was set to be scheduled in the future. Chairman Radtka stated he would inform the Board of the date when the meeting had been set.

Chairman Radtka also informed the Board that the issue had been discussed at a meeting of the Maryland Association of Counties on July 21, 2024. The members of the Association agreed that the requirement must comply with the code and cannot be changed to meet a manufacturer standard. Chairman Radtka confirmed that the International Code Council had affirmed that they would not change the current code standard to meet a manufacturer standard. Chairman Radtka asked that the item be left on the agenda under Old Business.

### **Code Adoption:**

Chairman Radtka questioned if the Board had officially adopted the 2020 Code. Counsel replied that the issue had not yet been resolved. After a brief discussion, Chairman Radtka requested that the item remain on the agenda under Old Business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Radtka reminded the Board that Director Bull would be retiring on November 1, 2024, and asked that he address it in his Executive Director report.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Bull informed the Board that PSI was still in the process of implementing the Spanish language version of the Plumbing exams and that he would update the Board when they were available. He continued, stating that PSI was in the process of converting the exam application process to an online platform and would inform the Board when the process went live.

Director Bull confirmed that he would be retiring on November 1, 2024, and that he did not have any information regarding his replacement or any person that may be selected as interim Executive Director.

**COUNSEL’S REPORT**

Counsel did not offer a report.

**CHAIR’S REPORT**

Chairman Radtka thanked the Board for their participation and Director Bull for his tenure as Executive Director, stating that he would be missed. Chairman Radtka also thanked Director Bull for his updates regarding PSI and requested that the election of an additional member to the Application Review Committee be placed on the agenda for next month.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Board did not convene in a Closed Session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon Mr. Parker’s Motion, and Mr. Hancock’s second, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 a.m.

**Signature On File**

**September 19, 2024**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**John Bull**  
**Executive Director**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Signed on behalf of the Board as voted and approved on: September 19, 2024**