



**STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

Date: September 19, 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: 1100 N. Eutaw Street
First Floor Conference Room
Baltimore, MD 21201
Held via Video Conference
meet.google.com/qks-niad-yfo
By Phone via Teleconference
1-414-909-7588 (PIN: 385820141)

Members Present: Gregory Schott, Industry Member
Leif Hancock, Industry Member
Hayward Hinkhaus, Industry Member
Craig Stokes, Industry Member
Robert Parker, Consumer Member
Richard Bowers, Consumer Member

Absent: Joseph Radtka, Chairman
Keith Horton, Vice-Chairman, Industry 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
Jonathan Sargeant, Omega Plex

CALL TO ORDER

In Chairman Radtka's absence, a motion to allow Mr. Schott to run the proceedings of the meetings was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Bowers and unanimously approved by the Board. Mr. Schott called the Business Meeting of the Maryland State Board of Plumbing to order, virtually, at 10:35 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Before the adoption of the September 19, 2024, meeting agenda, Director Bull requested that the following items be added to the agenda under New Business: (1) adding a member to the Complaint Committee; and (2) holding an election to appoint a new Vice-Chairman. The Board agreed to adding the items to New Business.

Mr. Schott was asked and agreed to preside over the meeting in the Chair’s absence and in the absence of a Vice Chair.

Mr. Parker moved to adopt the September 19, 2024, meeting agenda; Mr. Hinkhaus seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by a Board vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Parker to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2024, Plumbing Board meeting without amendment, which was 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:

<u>Closed Complaint</u>	<u>Under Investigation</u>	<u>Sent for A.G. Pre-Charge</u>	<u>Criminally Charged</u>
24-0053	24-0030		
25-0010	24-0034		
25-0011	24-0046		
	24-0058		

A motion to approve the findings of the Complaint Committee was made by Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Parker, and unanimously approved by the Board.

REVIEW OF EXAMINATION STATISTICS AND LICENSE TOTALS

PSI Exams submitted the following statistical summaries for August 2024:

	Candidates Tested	Passed	Failed	Pass %
Journey Natural Gas Fitter	2	1	1	50%
Journey Plumber/Gas Fitter	31	15	16	48%
Master Natural Gas Fitter	1	0	1	0%
Master Plumber/Gas Fitter	27	10	17	37%
TOTAL	61	26	35	43%

Director Bull further reported that since January 2024, 529 candidates were tested, 206 candidates passed, 323 failed, for a pass rate of 39%. Since the inception of the test, 11,704 candidates were tested, 4,246 candidates passed, 7,458 failed, for a pass rate of 36%. There are currently 13,825 active licensees.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Board discussed a question submitted by Mr. B. Alan. Mr. Alan who stated that he is a master gas fitter and asked whether he can provide gas-based services on HVACR systems or system components. The Board requested that Ms. Thornton respond to Mr. Alan asking for specific information regarding the nature and scope of work about which he is inquiring. The Board will discuss the matter further when Mr. Alan replies to the request.

OLD BUSINESS

Climate Solutions Act of 2022:

In Chairman Radtka's absence, the Board decided to table the discussion the Climate Solutions Act until the October Meeting.

Code Committee Formation:

Counsel Kinstler reminded the Board that Chairman Radtka had requested that they take action to form a Code Update Committee, and that it should be discussed under Old Business. Mr. Schott advised that Chairman Radtka had recommended both Mr. Stokes and Mr. Hancock for appointment to the Committee. He added that he would act as an advisor to the Committee if necessary. Director Bull asked both Mr. Stokes and Mr. Hancock if they would be willing to serve on the Code Update Committee; both agreed to serve.

Mr. Hinkhaus moved to establish a Code Update Committee comprised of Mr. Stokes and Mr. Hancock with Mr. Schott acting as Committee advisor. The motion was seconded by Mr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board.

Code Adoption:

Counsel reminded the Board that Chairman Radtka and Mr. Schott had discussed at a previous meeting, after having reviewed the codes subject to adoption, that some codes could be adopted as written to be periodically updated. She advised that regulations setting forth current COMAR modifications, set forth in COMAR 09.20.01.02-.05, would need to be amended or repealed. She stated that the Board could, after considering the advice of the Code Update Committee, adopt the codes as written to be periodically updated. She advised that she would send the necessary regulations to the Board for their review.

Mr. Schott asked whether the Board would be adopting NFPA 54 and 58, as well as the International Codes. Counsel confirmed that they could. Mr. Schott expressed that he felt the codes should be adopted as written, without modification, as periodically amended and updated. Mr. Hancock asked how much time the Board had to review and make a determination regarding adopting the new code versions. Counsel advised that it may be difficult to pass any new regulation before the expected annual moratorium on proposed action in December begins. In that case, the moratorium has typically

been lifted during the second week of February. Director Bull advised that he had submitted a concept proposal regarding code adoption to the Commissioner for review. Counsel advised that if an approved concept proposal approved before a moratorium, the Board may be able to take final action before February. She continued, stating that after proposed action on the regulation was published, there would be a 30-day comment period, after which the Board could consider any public comments submitted and vote to take final action on the regulation at the meeting following the end of the comment period. After a brief discussion, the Board decided to leave the item on the agenda for the October meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Backflow provider approval:

The Board discussed a request submitted by Local 486 to add Mr. R. Burda as a backflow instructor in their program. Director Bull informed the Board that Mr. Burda is currently licensed as an approved backflow instruction provider and was requesting to be approved to also provide instruction on behalf of Local 486.

A motion to approve Mr. R. Burda as an approved backflow instructor for Local 486 was made by Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Stokes and unanimously approved by the Board.

Application Review Committee:

Mr. Schott stated that he and Chairman Radtka wished to add an additional member to the Application Review Committee. He advised the Committee was currently comprised of Mr. Radtka and himself and asked if anyone wished to volunteer to join the Committee. Mr. Hinkhaus volunteered to join the Committee.

A motion to reestablish the Application Review Committee, to be comprised of Chairman Radtka, Mr. Schott, and Mr. Hinkhaus, was made by Mr. Stokes, seconded by Mr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board.

Vice-Chairman Election:

Director Bull to elect a new Vice-Chairman in Mr. Horton's stead. Mr. Director Bull then opened the floor to nominations. Mr. Hinkhaus volunteered to serve a Vice-Chairman. Hearing no other nominations, Director Bull closed the floor.

Mr. Parker moved to appoint Hayward Hinkhaus as Vice Chair of the Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bowers and by a vote of the Board, unanimously passed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Bull informed the Board that a new investigator had been hired for the Mechanical Licensing Unit and that he hoped they would begin employment before the October meeting. Director Bull reminded the Board that staff would be changing office locations in October and that the move should be completed by the November meeting. He informed them that it may be necessary to change the date of the October or November meeting due to the move and would keep the Board updated. Mr. Hinkhaus asked Director Bull if he had any information on who would replace him as Executive

Director when he retired in December, to which Director Bull stated that he was unaware of decisions in this regard.

COUNSEL’S REPORT

Counsel did not offer a report.

CHAIR’S REPORT

Mr. Schott did not offer a report on the Chairman’s behalf.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board did not convene in a Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon Mr. Hinkhaus’ Motion, and Mr. Parker’s second, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:16 a.m.

Joseph Radtka
Chairman

Date

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