

# LOUISIANA BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS

9643 Brookline Ave., Ste. 101, Baton Rouge, LA 70809



## SPECIAL MEETING OF LBOPG

Thursday, January 19, 2017, 1:00 P.M.

6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room,

Louisiana Department of Justice Building

1885 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

## MINUTES

Chairman William Finley called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m., Thursday, January 19, 2017. He then commenced roll call.

Present: William Finley, Lloyd Hoover, Art Johnson, John Johnston, Thomas Klekamp, and Daisy Pate, Board Members. Harry Vorhoff, Legal Counsel; and Brenda Macon, Executive Secretary.

Absent: Madhurendu Kumar, William Meaney, and L. Todd Perry, Board Members.

Quorum established. Roll Call sheet was circulated for signatures.

Application Review Committee: Pate reported that eight candidates for the ASBOG Fundamentals of Geology (FG) and two candidates for the Practice of Geology (PG) exam were reviewed. She read the numbers of applicants recommended by the Licensing Application Review Committee to take the FG exam as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Johnston moved to approve these candidates; Klekamp seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously. Pate then read the numbers of applicants recommended to take the PG exam as follows: 1 and 2. Johnston moved to approve these candidates; Johnson seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

Other Business: Johnston requested that a motion be made to accept Pate's travel expense request for travel to the ASBOG conference in early November. The request was submitted more than 30 days after the travel was complete because Pate had several extenuating circumstances that prevented her from submitting the request in a timely manner. Johnson moved to approve Pate's travel expense request; Klekamp seconded the motion; the motion passed with five of six votes; Johnston opposed.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with LAPELS: Vorhoff asked for more direction from the board in developing a final version of the MOU. He requested information regarding how specific or "loose" the MOU should be. Finley recommended leaving the language "loose" but with enough specific details to address both the concerns of LBOPG and LAPELS. Vorhoff then suggested that an ad hoc committee, with members from both LBOPG and LAPELS, be appointed to put together a draft that would be acceptable to both boards. He offered to pare down the current draft to present one version before the next meeting

that can then be presented to LAPELS. Hoover mentioned that, at a recent meeting, some of the geoscientists present were of the opinion that LBOPG and LAPELS were far apart in their perspectives on who can submit reports on geological work, but that he did not agree with that assessment. He said he thought the two boards are close to an understanding.

Complaint Review Procedure Progress: Vorhoff presented a flowchart, as the board had requested at the last meeting, that he and Perry had put together and that outlines the procedure for adjudicating complaints that he had drafted for the board. He asked the board to review it and, if it met their expectations, he recommended adopting this procedure to be used in the event of complaints. Finley charged the board with reviewing the flowchart so that it could be discussed at the February meeting.

#### New Business:

##### *Reciprocity questions from Indiana:*

Johnston reported that he received an email from Todd Thompson, the chair of the Indiana Board of Licensure for Professional Geologists, that he forwarded to Finley, as Finley is the current chair of LBOPG. The Indiana board meets twice a year, and their meeting was also held on Thursday, January 19, so the questions Thompson raised will be considered for the next LBOPG board meeting in February. The two questions that Thompson asked are, "What is the reason you are asking for reciprocity?" and "With what states have you entered into reciprocity agreements?" Johnson responded to the first question, saying that LBOPG is attempting to make the path to licensure for geoscientists who are already licensed in other states easier. If they meet the qualifications in states with which Louisiana has a reciprocity agreement, then LBOPG is willing to accept those qualifications as the basis for licensure in Louisiana – and Louisiana licensees would also be considered based on LBOPG's review of their qualifications. Hoover pointed out that the Indiana board chair mentioned his state's low application fees, and he and Johnson agreed that Thompson was thinking that reciprocity was about money, while LBOPG intended that the issue is about qualifications. Discussion ensued. Pate suggested that someone on the board needed to respond with this explanation; Johnson asked Finley if he, as chair, could respond. Finley agreed. Pate suggested that Finley call to let Thompson know what the board had discussed.

*State license verification form:* Pate explained that the Application Review Committee initiated the creation of this form to document information on applicants' licenses in other states. She said the committee was comfortable with the form as is and that they would like to get the form into use as soon as possible for reciprocal applicants. Finley asked about the background for the necessity of the form. Pate explained that the form asks for license information – date issued and status, and whether the licensee is in good standing – that is in keeping with the reciprocity agreements in place with Texas, Alabama, and Mississippi. Johnson expanded on Pate's comments, adding that currently applicants upload their licenses from other states and that this information is useful but not definitive. The form provides information on the length of time the applicant has been licensed and whether any lapses occurred in licensing, necessary information to ascertain whether applicants have been continuously licensed for a specified number of years, a requirement in some of LBOPG's reciprocity agreements (e.g., Texas). Both Pate and Johnson explained that the form will be made available on the LBOPG website. They also mentioned that the form was based on the Texas verification form. Pate said that, since the majority of reciprocity applicants have been from Texas, it makes sense that the two forms should be similar. Hoover questioned the item "License Type." Johnson, Pate, and Klekamp responded that, because this form will go to all other states, the license type should be open enough to encompass the types of

licenses granted in those other states so that reviewers in Louisiana are alerted when a license was granted in an “other” area that would not be accepted in Louisiana. Hoover objected to this item. Johnston moved to accept the form; Johnson seconded the motion; the motion passed with five of six votes; Hoover opposed.

*Procedure for reviewing/approving exam candidates:* Johnson explained that the process for reviewing candidates has become more complicated. From a simple list of grandfathered applicants who were all applying for a PG license, applicants now are applying for a license based on test scores; for certification as GITs; and for approval to take one or both ASBOG exams. Because of the increasing complexity of review, Johnson said, the Application Review Committee, was looking at the process in a stepwise manner, separating the various types of applications to prevent confusion. Pate expanded on Johnson’s remarks, pointing out the difference between approval and verification, and explaining that the terminology needs to be consistent. Johnson added that applicants for the Fundamentals of Geology (FG) exam should be approved to take the exam even before graduation with a geoscience degree. Finley asked if the board should be involved in monitoring the FG exam if area universities decide to offer the exam to their students, and all agreed that such monitoring is not necessary but that students should be given this information early in their academic programs. Discussion ensued. Finley summarized that the FG can be taken by students prior to graduation but that applicants must have five years of experience before they are allowed to take the PG exam. Johnson suggested having a brief FAQ on the website that explains the application review process. Finley charged the committee with working on such an element on the website.

*Venue for March 17, 2017, ASBOG Testing:*

Macon reported that the conference room in the building at 9643 Brookline Avenue, which is the usual space for ASBOG testing, is not available on the testing date. After checking on prices at a couple of other venues, Macon mentioned the unavailability of the room to Chantel McCreary, assistant executive secretary of LBOPG. McCreary, who also teaches at the Medical Training College (10525 Plaza Americana Drive), asked that college’s owner if LBOPG could use a classroom in his building, and he agreed to offer it to the board for free. Johnston moved to accept his offer; Klekamp seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

*Stamp (with ink) rather than embossed seal on official reports:* Finley reported that neither the rules nor the statute specifies that the seal must be one or the other. Johnson mentioned that, at some point, this question had arisen in the past and that both were deemed acceptable. Hoover mentioned that the engineering board has also allowed an electronic seal; Johnson suggested that having the option of using an electronic seal would be beneficial. Pate explained that the electronic seal was accomplished by registering the licensee’s signature. Discussion ensued.

*Updated job description for executive secretary position:* Finley explained that Georgeann McNicholas had signed an employment agreement and had a description of duties but that Brenda Macon has not signed such a document. He also mentioned that he had asked Macon to add duties that had become a part of the position description over the last four years, and she had identified five additional duties that could be assigned to the executive secretary. Finley expressed the opinion that these additional duties are intended to reduce the workload of board members and could also facilitate record-keeping and documentation of any internal, external, or supportive board activities. He stressed that the executive

secretary does not have authority to act on board business without board approval. The executive secretary is still required to report any findings and/or results of research to the Office Committee members for review, determination of board involvement, and decision-making. He said that this is the point at which the board can authorize the executive secretary to take approved action. He mentioned that his understanding of the role of executive secretary includes the efficient operation of the office, which means this person has authority to do those tasks of running the office without board approval. To maintain efficiency, the Office Committee should periodically review these tasks to suggest or require improvements. Finley then charged board members to review the list of duties and to be prepared to discuss and recommend any changes at the February meeting. Johnson suggested adding interactions with Usable Creative to the list of duties.

Replacing Dr. M. B. Kumar: Johnston moved to replace Kumar on the board based on non-attendance at board meetings. Johnson seconded the motion. Pate asked the board to reconsider how it requests that Kumar be replaced, keeping in mind Kumar's exemplary service to the board. Johnson added that, while the replacement must be done, that it should be done with respect. Discussion ensued. Pate asked that the motion follow the language in the rules regarding the procedure for replacing a board member; the board agreed, and the motion passed.

Calls to board members to ascertain whether they will be attending meetings: Klekamp asked that the executive secretary call board members when a quorum is in question to be sure that enough board members will be attending.

Opening reciprocity to international licensing boards: Pate suggested that international licensing boards – for example, Canada – be invited to enter into reciprocity agreements. Board members were asked to consider sending letters to these boards.

Spring 2017 ASBOG Council of Experts Meeting: Pate announced that the Spring 2017 ASBOG Council of Experts meeting will be held April 6-8, 2017, Flagstaff, Arizona. Finley asked if any board members were interested in attending. Klekamp is considering.

The next regular meeting of the board will be held in the conference room at 9643 Brookline Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on Tuesday, February 14, 2017, at 1:00 p.m. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Johnston. Motion carried unanimously. Finley adjourned the meeting at 2:16 p.m.