
**STATE BOARD OF HEATING, VENTILATION, AIR-CONDITIONING, AND
REFRIGERATION CONTRACTORS
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

Date: March 12, 2025

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: The Board of HVACR Contractors meeting was held via teleconference (US ☐ +1 208-907-5480 ☐ PIN:

Members Present: **Michael Giangrandi, Chairman**, Master HVACR Contractor
Michael Weglarz, Master Electrician
Winfield “Rocky” Jones, Master Plumber Member
David Politzer, Consumer Member
Dwight Needham, Master HVACR Contractor (left the call at 11:31am)
Lawrence Kitching, Vice Chair, Master HVACR Contractor
Ahmed Kabir, Consumer Member

Staff Present: **Chuck Marquette**, Executive Director, Mechanical Licensing Unit
Sloane Fried Kinstler, Assistant Attorney General
William Gross, Administrative Officer, Mechanical Licensing Unit

Guests Present: **Stephanie Anderson**, Executive Director, Heating & Air Conditioning Contractors of MD.
Sean Mallonee, Owner, SM Mechanical & HACC Board President
Doug Presley, AnnDyl Policy Group, Director, Government and Regulatory Affairs

Call to Order

Chairman Giangrandi called the Business Meeting of the State Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning, and Refrigeration (“HVACR”) Contractors (“Board”) to order at 10:38 a.m.

Mr. Jones moved to adopt the March 2025 meeting agenda. Mr. Weglarz seconded the motion; by a roll call vote, the Board unanimously approved the meeting agenda.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Jones to approve the business meeting minutes of the February 12, 2025, HVACR Board meeting without amendment or correction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weglarz and, by a roll call vote, unanimously approved by the Board.

Complaint Committee Report

Mr. Gross 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>
		24-0061	
		24-0062	
		24-0067	24-0067
		24-0063	
		24-0064	
24-0065			

A motion to approve the findings of the Complaint Committee was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Needham, and, by a roll call vote, unanimously approved by the Board.

Application Review Committee

There were no applications submitted; no Application Review Committee report was necessary. Mr. Magazi, head of the application review committee, recently resigned from the Board. Mr. Needham volunteered to head up the Committee going forward.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones to make Mr. Needham the new head of the Application Review Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kabir and, by a roll call vote, unanimously approved by the Board.

Review of Examination Statistics and License Totals

William Gross reported the following PSI exam statistical summaries for the month of February 2025:

	Candidates Tested	Passed	Failed	Pass Rate %
February 2025				
Total	56	21	35	38%

Cumulative- YTD				
Total	109	36	73	33%

Testing to date				
Total	13094	5635	7459	43%

There are currently 21,761 active licenses.

Correspondence

Counsel presented a request from an individual who had previously been ineligible for license renewal due to a tax lien, which granted the Comptroller the authority to block issuance. The tax lien has been resolved, and the applicant is seeking to renew their license that expired in 2011 without being required to take the exam.

A letter from the applicant was read to the Board. The applicant maintained they had stayed current in the industry by working with his brother, also a licensed contractor.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Weglarz motioned to approve the license renewal without an exam requirement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kabir and, by a roll call vote, unanimously approved.

Old Business

Status of House Bill 1162—HVACR Equipment Sales

The Chairman stated that, following the last meeting, the Board had sought amendments to remove the reporting burden imposed by the bill and to establish penalties for non-compliance. While these amendments have not been fully addressed, he expressed support for approving the bill.

Mr. Jones noted that the Board previously requested the bill to include stronger enforcement measures. He acknowledged that an amendment had been added, specifying penalties of "\$1,000 per violation, not to exceed \$5,000," which influenced his decision to now support the bill.

Mr. Weglarz raised concerns that the bill does not sufficiently reduce the administrative burden on the state and small businesses, nor did he believe it was necessary. He suggested that a simple addition to Bus. Reg. Art., § 9A-301 stating that it is illegal to purchase HVACR equipment without proper licensing, would be a more effective solution.

Mr. Mallonee reported that extensive outreach had been conducted regarding the bill, receiving strong support from small businesses, distributors, and legislators. He noted that no concerns had been raised about the reporting requirements being an undue burden on businesses.

Counsel inquired about how the Board would comply with existing , license exclusions in the law, which allow homeowners to perform HVACR work on their own homes and employees of a governmental unit providing services on a government-owned buildings, without a license. She pointed out that such individuals have the right to purchase equipment.

Mr. Presley agreed and emphasized that the bill includes language to allow individuals who meet existing licensing exemptions to purchase equipment.

The Chairman acknowledged that while this bill is not a comprehensive solution, it would encourage supply houses to be more diligent in verifying customer credentials. Additionally, it would impose fines on individuals attempting to purchase HVACR equipment who are not properly licensed.

Counsel expressed concerns regarding enforcement. She noted that existing laws already allow the Board to act against unlicensed individuals providing HVACR services. However, requiring suppliers to report purchases would place a new administrative burden on Board staff. Additionally, she raised concerns about the newly added subsection (E), which mandates that the Board adopt regulations by January 1, 2026, potentially creating additional burden and expense.

Mr. Presley clarified that the amendment the bill sponsor plans to introduce would remove the annual reporting requirement for suppliers.

Mr. Kitching highlighted that large distributors already enforce licensing requirements by requiring a master license to open an account and purchase equipment. However, smaller distributors may sell equipment to anyone without verification, which remains an issue.

Mr. Mallonee suggested that each master license should be assigned to only one company, making it easier for distributors to enforce compliance under the proposed legislation.

Mr. Kabir raised a question about how the bill would apply to homeowners purchasing HVACR equipment for a contractor to install. Mr. Presley responded that the legislation does not dictate how distributors must manage that process. Instead, it provides flexibility, allowing distributors to determine how to verify exemptions within their sales procedures.

Mr. Jones made a motion for the Board to support HB 1162; Mr. Kitching seconded the motion. The Board vote was tied, with Mr. Kitching and Mr. Jones voting in favor, and Mr. Weglarz and Mr. Kabir voted against, and Mr. Needham and Mr. Politzer abstaining. Chairman Giangrandi broke the tie, voting in favor of the motion.

Status of House Bill 92-HVACR License Restoration

Counsel stated that this is the bill the Board requested last year to extend the grace period for license renewal period after expiration from 90 days to four (4) years without requiring an applicant to retake the exam. Counsel advised that the bill advanced from the House Economic Matters Committee to the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee on February 14, 2025. Counsel further noted that as the bill received support in the House, it is, hopefully, unlikely to face opposition in the Senate.

New Business

HVACR permit requirements for Boiler Replacements

Mr. Jones noted that the HVACR Board in Queen Anne's County does not currently require permits for boiler replacements, as these are typically performed by plumbers. He inquired whether the requirements for obtaining a hot water boiler permit are determined at the county level.

Counsel confirmed that counties have the authority to determine permit requirements, the issuance of which, triggers a code compliance inspection. Counsel clarified that this decision falls within the jurisdiction of local authorities.

For those with concerns about permitting, Counsel advised starting with the county or municipal permitting office. If further clarification is needed, individuals can consult the county attorney or contact the Board, though the Board's authority on the matter may be limited.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Chuck Marquette updated the Board on his efforts to pursue updated reciprocal licensing agreements. He has corresponded with the Administrator of the District of Columbia ("D.C.") Board of Industrial Trades, and she has connected him via email with appropriate Board members. They have not yet responded to his emails. Mr. Marquette suggested that he did not think it should be difficult to agree on terms for reciprocity.

The agreement with Virginia currently applies to master and journeyman licensed by exam. The agreement with Delaware currently applies to master and journeyman licensed by exam. He asked that the Board consider whether he should explore apprenticeships as a pathway to reciprocal licensure in these jurisdictions. Mr. Marquette reached out to initiate conversations with Virginia licensing officials and has had no response.

Executive Director Marquette states that regarding the code update, the Board must determine whether it intends to retain and update its Code modifications or repeal them. He reminded the Board that Counsel had drafted regulatory language and distributed it to Board. Once the Board determines how it wishes to proceed, staff can seek regulatory concept approval from the Office of the Secretary. Executive Director Marquette will schedule a meeting with the Code Update Committee to discuss how to proceed.

Counsel's Report

Counsel did not offer a report.

Chairman's Report

There was no report offered by the Chairman.

Closed Session

Upon Mr. Jones' Motion, and Mr. Weglarz's second, the Board unanimously voted to convene in a closed session at 12:02 p.m., pursuant to General Provisions Article, to § 3-305(b)(2), (7), and (8), Annotated Code of Maryland, to consider license applications for applicants who disclosed a criminal conviction and to seek the advice of Counsel.

Application .01

Counsel presented an apprentice license application from an individual who disclosed a 2024 misdemeanor conviction for second-degree assault. The applicant was sentenced to incarceration for 10 years, with all but 18 months suspended, followed by five (5) years of probation. A probation violation could result in the imposition of the full term.

In the applicant's letter to the Board, the individual detailed their background, including a 12-year career as a Howard County police officer (2011-2023) with no complaints and past ownership of a 7-11 franchise. The applicant cited marital issues leading to false allegations and a jury trial, where they were found not guilty on 14 of 15 charges. The applicant served 18 months and used the time for reflection and personal growth, deciding to pursue an HVACR career. Since their release, the applicant has enrolled in five HVACR courses.

A letter from the Howard County Police Department confirmed their employment from June 20, 2011, to July 11, 2023, noting the separation was not in good standing.

After discussion, Mr. Jones moved to approve the individual's original apprentice license application, seconded by Mr. Weglarz, and the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Application .02

Counsel presented an apprentice license application from an individual who disclosed a 2021 felony conviction for first-degree assault. The applicant was sentenced to 30 days but was not required to serve parole or probation.

In the applicant’s letter to the Board, the individual explained that at the time of the incident they were employed as a police officer in Hyattsville and resided in an apartment complex in Columbia, MD. During the Covid-19 pandemic the applicant witnessed individuals causing a disturbance at the complex’s swimming pool and began recording the incident. The individuals confronted the applicant aggressively, and out of fear for their safety, the applicant displayed a duty-issued firearm but kept it holstered. Though the firearm was never pointed or raised, the individuals reported the applicant to the police, leading to an indictment and plea deal to avoid further legal consequences.

A letter from the shop superintendent at Stromberg Metal Works Inc., the applicant’s current employer, praised the applicant as an invaluable team member, highlighting their expertise in welding, professionalism, and dedication. The letter emphasized the applicant’s strong sense of responsibility, teamwork, and commitment to safety, supporting their licensure request.

After discussion, Mr. Weglarz moved to approve the individual’s original apprentice license application, seconded by Mr. Jones, and the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Upon a motion to return to the business meeting by Mr. Weglarz, seconded by Mr. Jones, and unanimously approved at 12:20 p.m., the Board reconvened its business meeting.

Adjournment

With no further business, upon Mr. Jones’ motion and Mr. Weglarz second, the Board voted to adjourn the March 12, 2025 meeting of the State Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning, and Refrigeration Contractors at 12:21 p.m.

Chuck Marquette
Executive Director

Date

Signed on behalf of the Board as voted on and approved on _____