**STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING**

**BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** July 17, 2025

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

**Location:** 100 S. Charles Street, Tower 1

 Conference Room 3309

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:** Joseph Radtka, Chairman

 Hayward Hinkhaus, Vice Chairman, Industry Member

 Craig Stokes, Industry Member

Robert Parker, Consumer Member

Megan Klepsig, Industry Member

**Absent:** Leif Hancock, Industry Member

Keith Horton, Industry Member

 Richard Bowers, Consumer Member

**LABOR Officials & Staff Present:** John Dove, Commissioner, Occupational and Professional

 Licensing

 Sarah McDermott, Asst. Commissioner, Occupational

 and Professional Licensing

Charles Marquette, Executive Director, Mechanical Licensing

Sloane Fried Kinstler, Assistant Attorney General

Matthew McKinney, Legislative Liaison, Occupational and

 Professional Licensing

LaKissha Thornton, Administrative Officer III

Ritchie Blymier, Investigator, Mechanical Licensing

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Wayne Fishpaw, Pipe Trades Technologies

 Kathy Stradley, MPHCC

 Laura Bjorn, JCM Associates

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Radtka called the July 17, 2025, Business Meeting of the Maryland State Board of Plumbing to order, virtually, at 10:36 a.m.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

A motion to adopt the agenda for the July 17, 2025 Board meeting was made by Mr. Stokes, seconded by Mr. Hinkhaus, and unanimously approved by the Board.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to adopt the June 12, 2025 Business Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Hinkhaus, seconded by Mr. Parker and unanimously approved by the Board without amendment.

**PLUMBING COMPLAINT COMMITTEE**

Vice-Chairman Hinkhaus reported the following findings of the Complaint Committee:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Closed Complaint** | **Under Investigation** | **Sent for A.G. Pre-Charge** | **Criminally Charged** |
| 25-0021 | 25-0009 | 25-0004 |  |
|  | 25-0017 | 25-0012 |  |
|  |  | 25-0018 |  |
|  |  | 25-0024 |  |
|  |  | 25-0025 |  |

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

**APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT**

There were no applications to be reviewed and no report necessary.

**REVIEW OF EXAMINATION STATISTICS AND LICENSE TOTALS**

Ms. Thornton reported the following statistical summary submitted by PSI for June 2025:

  **Candidates Passed Failed Pass %**

 **Tested**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Journey Natural Gas Fitter | 4 | 4 | 0 | 100% |
| Journey Plumber/Gas Fitter | 63 | 26 | 37 | 41% |
| Master Natural Gas Fitter | 1 | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| Master Plumber/Gas Fitter | 36 | 14 | 22 | 39% |
|  **TOTAL** | 104 | 45 | 59 | 43% |

Ms. Thornton further reported that since January 2025, 550 candidates were tested, 216 candidates passed, 334 failed, for a pass rate of 39%. Since the inception of the test, 12,488 candidates were tested, 4,544 candidates passed, 7,994 failed, for a pass rate of 36%.There are currently 13,860 active licensees.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to be discussed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion on Backflow Compliance Notification

Chairman Radtka requested that staff report the results of the request for backflow instructors to provide proof of their compliance with training and recertification requirements set out in COMAR 09.20.04.02. Ms. Thornton reported that she received the following replies:

1. 2Day Waterworks- David Hann, ASSE Certification
2. ABC Craftmasters: Mid-Atlantic – David Hann, ASSE Certification
3. Baltimore Metropolitan Chapter of ABC- Marc Wingred, ASSE & TREEO
4. Delaware Rural Water Association- Glenn Adamus, Nick Azmo, Steven Fox, William Hague, All ASSE
5. IAPMO- Sean Cleary, ASSE
6. Local 489- Larry Rice ASSE
7. MPHCC- Gregory Anderson TREEO, Ronald Hebb TREEO
8. Pipe Trades Technologies, Inc.- Michael Dobbs, Wayne Fishpaw, Marc Wingred, all ASSE
9. Pipeline Training Institute, William Sompayrac TREEO
10. Local 486- James Riley Christopher Person, William Benbow, all ASSE.

Ms. Thornton also reported that Chalk Instruction; Chesapeake Cross Connection; Yacovissi Mechanical; Kruger’s Training Academy; and Washington D.C. Joint Plumbing Apprentice Committee Local 5 had been removed from the list of approved backflow providers.

Discussion on Proposed Reciprocity Agreement with District of Columbia

Director Marquette reintroduced the discussion on a proposed reciprocal agreement with the District of Columbia (“D.C.”) stating that the D.C. Board of Industrial Trades staff had reviewed and agreed to the final draft of the agreement. He stated that the D.C. Plumbing Board is expected to meet in September.

(A member of the public joined the meeting at 10:47 but did not identify themselves.)

Director Marquette stated that the agreement with D.C. must be fully executed to take effect. He asked if any members of the Board wished to make any changes to the proposed agreement and confirmed that a backflow certification would be required to obtain and MD license via reciprocity. Counsel stated that, if the Board did not wish to make any changes, they could vote to approve the agreement or wait until after it had been discussed by the D.C. Board in September.

A motion to approve and execute the reciprocal licensing agreement between the Board was made by Mr. Hinkhaus, seconded by Mr. Stokes and unanimously approved by the Board.

Discussion of Senate Bill 175/ House Bill 222 – Fuel Gas Piping and CSST

Director Marquette reminded the Board that a requirement was that a study on CSST be conducted with members of the Department of Labor and the Office of the Fire Marshall. He continued, stating that as was typical, the Division of Labor and Industry would represent the Department of Labor in the study. He informed the Board that an internal meeting to plan the study was set to take place on July 23, 2025, which he and Ms. Thornton would attend. Director Marquette stated that after the initial meeting of Labor officials, the participation of Board members would be appreciated. Chairman Radtka volunteered to join the group and stated that, provided a quorum of the Board was not formed, that other members of the Board were welcome to participate as well. Mr. Hinkhaus also volunteered to join the study group. Director Marquette stated that he would provide them both with details and additional information as it is available.

Plumbing Code Update

Counsel reported that the proposed regulations to update the Plumbing codes were set to be published in the August 8, 20205 Maryland Register, beginning the 30-day public comment period. Counsel stated that she would keep the Board abreast of the status of the regulation.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Discussion on ICC Building Codes

Chairman Radtka stated that he had been informed that the ICC would begin publishing their codes in Spanish. He stated that he was aware that the IPC and IFGC were currently available in Spanish but was not sure if and what other codes were. He stated that he would update the Board as he obtained more information.

Discussion on PSI Backflow requirements

Chairman Radtka asked staff to confirm that PSI was accepting both the original 32-hour backflow certification and the 8-hour recertification backflow course to sit for the Journeyman and Master Plumber exams. Director Marquette stated that he contacted PSI and that they confirmed that both certifications were being accepted to sit for the exam.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Marquette stated that notices would be sent to all Master licensees reminding them that all persons that were employed by them or working under them must be properly licensed. He emphasized that the intent of the notice was to ensure that all individuals performing plumbing work are licensed and to ensure that plumbing apprentices did not work without proper supervision. Director Marquette continued, stating that the notices would also be sent to Journeyman and Apprentice licensees in the upcoming weeks and that similar notices would be issued by all of the Mechanical Licensing Boards. Chairman Radtka requested that a copy of the notice be sent to all the Board members as well. Director Marquette stated that he would distribute the notice to the Board and asked that the Board members inform him of any organizations that they felt should receive the notice as well.

**COUNSEL’S REPORT**

Counsel did not offer a report but did remind the Board that she had two applications to present in a Closed Session.

**CHAIR’S REPORT**

Chairman Radtka thanked the Board for their participation and asked that if anyone had any items that they would like to have considered for discussion that they be sent to staff to be placed on the agenda for the next or upcoming meetings.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The State Board of Plumbing convened in a closed session to review two (2) license applications at 11:00 a.m., via Google Meet, pursuant to § 3-305(b)(2) and (7) of the Gen. Prov. Art., Md. Ann. Code, to protect the privacy and reputation of license applicants and to obtain advice provided by Counsel regarding the license applications upon a motion by Mr. Stokes, which was seconded by Mr. Parker, and by a roll call vote, unanimously approved.

**REVIEW OF LICENSE APPLICATION:**

Application .01

Counsel presented an application submitted for an original apprentice Plumber/Gas Fitter license who was convicted in 2018 of (1) strangulation of a family member, a felony; (2) assault and battery of a family member, misdemeanor; and (3) malicious wounding, also a felony.

The applicant was sentenced to, for (1) incarceration for five (5) years; for (2) incarceration for 12 months; and for (3) incarceration for 15 years. The court indicated that the total sentence was 20 years, 12 months; of which 13 years, 12 months was suspended. The applicant served a total of approximately seven (7) years and was released on “good behavior,” which is Virginia's form of probation for a period of up to 15 years. Two of the offenses are classified as violent offenses.

Counsel stated that the applicant submitted proof that he has been employed in Virginia since their release and read a personal statement from the applicant regarding the convictions and activities since the release. Counsel read a letter in which applicant expressed remorse for their actions and reported that they had attended drug and alcohol counseling since their release.

A motion to approve the application was made by Mr. Stokes, seconded by Mr. Hinkhaus and unanimously approved by the Board

Application .02

Counsel presented an application submitted for an original apprentice Plumber/Gas Fitter license who was convicted of several offenses in Georgia but Counsel stated that the records did not provide the dates of conviction. The applicant was convicted of making terroristic threats, a felony in Georgia but a misdemeanor, classified as violent, in Maryland; possession of tools for commission of a crime; stalking; and possession of marijuana. The record does not indicate whether the remaining offenses are felony or misdemeanor, but all are nonviolent misdemeanors in Maryland. They were sentenced for the terroristic threat offense to incarceration for five (5) years with all time suspended except two (2) years, followed by probation for two (2) years. For all remaining offenses, the applicant was sentenced to time served.

A motion to approve the application was made by Mr. Stokes, seconded by Mr. Hinkhaus, and unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Hinkhaus moved to resume the Business Meeting. Mr. Stokes seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board at 11:10 a.m.

Mr. Hinkhaus moved that the Board approve its findings from the July 17, 2025 closed session. Mr. Stokes seconded the motion, which unanimously approved by the Board.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Before the meeting was adjourned, Chairman Radtka asked Commissioner Dove whether he wished to address the Board. Commissioner Dove declined and thanked the Board for their participation.

Director Marquette announced to the Board that, beginning in August, all Board meetings would be recorded. He informed the Board that a separate link for Closed Session meetings would be sent with the meeting invite and the Board would leave the Business Meeting to enter a Closed Session, moving forward.

Upon Mr. Hinkhaus’ motion, and Mr. Stokes’ second, and the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Charles Marquette Date**

**Executive Director**

**Signed on behalf of the Board as voted and approved on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**