

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS
Minutes of the Special Board Meeting
Held virtually, Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 10:30am

Board members participating were Chairwoman Karen Purcell, PE; Vice Chair Michael Kidd, PLS; Angelo Spata, PE; Thomas Matter, public member; Matthew Gingerich, PLS. Lynnette Russell, PE; Robert Fyda, PE; and Brent Wright, PE/SE were excused. Also participating were Patty Mamola, Executive Director; Chris MacKenzie, Board Legal Counsel; Susan Fischer, Board Government Affairs Liaison; Murray Blaney, Operations/Compliance; and Louisa Kern, Administrative Assistant.

1. Meeting conducted by Chair Karen Purcell, call to order and roll call of board members to determine presence of quorum.

Ms Purcell called the meeting to order at 10:30am.

Ms Mamola did a roll call and determined a quorum was present.

Those participating in the meeting introduced themselves.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public comment.

Chairwoman Purcell said that before moving to public comment, she would like to read the mission statement of the board as a reminder of the board's purpose.

The purpose of the board as stated in Nevada Revised Statute 625.005 is to safeguard life, health and property and to promote the public welfare by providing for the licensure of qualified and competent professional engineers and professional land surveyors and our mission is founded on the board's purpose, the board's mission is to uphold the value of professional engineering and land surveying licensure by assessing minimum competency for initial entry into the profession and to insure on going standard of professionalism by facilitating compliance with laws regulations and code of practice and to provide understanding and progression in licensure by openly engaging with all stake holders.

There was no public comment.

4. Board approval of non-appearance applications for initial licensure. Refer to Addendum A for list of applicants.

21-24 A motion was made by Mr Matter, seconded by Mr Spata to approve the initial licensure applications with recommendations as noted. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms Russell, Mr Fyda, and Mr Wright were not present for the vote.

5. Discuss Nevada Senate Bill 402 related to endorsement licensure.

Ms Mamola said SB 402 is related to endorsement licensure for active military, military spouses, veterans, and spouses of veterans. It requires us as a board to issue a license within 30 days. In addition, if one of those persons are licensed in another state and are in good standing, we would have to reduce our application fee for that group to one half of the initial application fee. The bill also eliminates any state exams for that particular group and it allows the executive director to issue licenses to that group to make sure we meet that 30 day turnaround requirement. Ms Mamola said it is presented for the board to consider taking a position on the bill.

Mr Spata said some of what is outlined in the bill we already implemented or are working on. He asked if there were aspects of the bill that the board had not already considered with regard to the efficiency of the licensure process.

Ms Mamola said the bill included provisions for eliminating state specific exams which is not something that internally had been considered. We are working on provisions for veterans and veteran spouses but hadn't yet determined what the recommended action would be. We are still in the data gathering phase.

Mr Kidd asked for input on whether not taking a position, staying neutral, would be seen negatively by legislators.

Ms Fisher said I think it's a great opportunity for us to say, we're already doing this. Along the lines of, we appreciate you are asking the boards to do this, but just so you know, we already have these procedures in place and have been expediting licensure for active military and military spouses – as the board did by holding an interim board meeting to do just that last month for an initial license applicant. Ms Fisher said she tells legislators that this board is pro-active, it is a good opportunity to be able to brag a little bit.

Mr MacKenzie said I agree that it is a good opportunity to put some shine on things, but with not having a definitive program for veterans up and running, I may caution you against self-promotion just yet. Sometimes silence is good too.

Mr Gingerich said I support the idea of what they're trying to do here, but if you uncouple the examination process for our spouses and veterans, are you really uncoupling it for everybody else as well? If it's good for them, then why wouldn't it be good for everybody else?

Ms Mamola agreed with Mr Gingerich's point. She said our philosophy is if we're going to create a process to expedite for a certain group then we should use that to expedite for everybody. So, if we waived exams for some, then we should be doing that for all. Ms Mamola added that Senator

Spearman had commented at a recent meeting about occupational licensing boards that people in the military are tried and tested, and they shouldn't have to take another exam when coming to Nevada to prove their worth to practice in the state.

Ms Fisher said that may apply to active military because they have been tested in their military service but that same doesn't apply to their spouses. Not wanting to lead the board in any way, but I don't know why we would waive exams for the spouses. Ms Fisher asked for clarification on the frequency of the state specific exams.

Ms Mamola said engineers are required to do a take home open exam that they can do at their convenience. The land surveyors are different though, it is currently a closed book exam on Nevada specific laws like mining law, water law, planning law etc, and is scheduled to suit the applicant. She added the PLS exam is proctored virtually – over webcam – so the applicant does not need to travel. They can do it at a time and location (at home if they want) of their choosing.

Ms Fisher said that process does not seem burdensome so I don't necessarily see why you would waive that unless you believe it is okay to waive. I would suggest an amendment.

Ms Mamola said it would be good to pursue getting an exemption but since we don't have all that we are doing in regulation, it is currently in policy, it would be unlikely it would be considered. She added we will need to move what we are doing to policy to regulation in the next interim session.

Ms Purcell said her opinion is to stay neutral and or silent and then see where the bill goes, since we are doing a lot of what the amendment is asking anyway.

Ms Mamola said maybe we can try to work behind the scenes with Susan or Chris to remove the exams clause.

Ms Fisher said we can have a conversation with the committee chair, and committee members and make that suggestion.

Mr Spata said we are already expediting the process and even with state specific exams we can stay within the required 30-day window.

21-25 A motion was made by Mr Spata, seconded by Mr Gingerich to to stay neutral on SB 155 other than working behind the scenes with Ms Fisher and Mr MacKenzie on a possible amendment with regard to state specific examinations. The motion passed unanimously. Ms Russell, Mr Fyda, and Mr Wright were not present for the vote.

6. Public comment

There was no public comment.

7. Adjournment

Ms Purcell thanked the board members for their participation and adjourned the meeting at 10:54am.

Respectfully,

Patty Mamola
Executive Director