STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Harold Runnels Building, 1190 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

MEETING MINUTES
MEETING OF THE UTILITY OPERATORS CERTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD
January 22, 2026

Present:	Cathie Eisen, Chair Maria Gilvarry, Vice Chair Bobby Towle Sydney Hoke Michael Alvidrez Ivan "Mike" Abell Jennifer Cortez
Absent:	None noted
Others present:	Pam Jones, Board Administrator Luis Lopez, Paralegal, Office of Public Facilitation Carlos Gonzales Mr. Youngblood Veronica Serrano Brian Bennon Bryan Matthews Amy Northam Jason Herman

The Chair called the Board into order at 9:03 A.M.

Item 1. Roll call.

Action: Chair Eisen called the roll and a quorum was present. Guests were introduced.

Item 2. Approve January 22, 2026 agenda.

Action: The Board reviewed the January 22, 2026 meeting agenda. A motion was made by Vice Chair Gilvarry, Member Byers seconded, and approved to accept the agenda as presented. The motion passed.

Item 3. Approval of the October 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

Action: The Board reviewed the October 9, 2025 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Member Byers, Member Abell seconded, and approved to accept the minutes. The motion passed.

Item 4. **Public Comment.**

Action: Public comment was received. No action was taken by the Advisory Board.

Item 5. **UOCP Advisory Board 2026 Open Meetings Act and updates.**

Action: Chair Eisen led discussion regarding 2026 Open Meetings Act requirements and Board updates. The Board discussed procedural expectations for conducting meetings and continuing Board business during the calendar year.

Item 6. **Drinking Water Bureau updates.**

Action: An update from Brian Bennon regarding the Drinking Water Bureau was provided including information on a update to the Drinking Water Rules at 20.7.1.0 NMAC, which will include new facility sizes that relate to chlorinated systems. It is all in draft format now and early stages to be updated.

Item 7. **NM Operator Certification Program updates.**

Action: Brian Bennon was scheduled to present updates on exam statistics, reformatted Need-to-Know documentation, and a draft action plan. Discussion reflected significant interest from attendees and stakeholders regarding operator training, testing content, and educational resources. Discussion included lower-level operator training needs, continuing education for very small systems, regionalization, exam preparation resources, and the content covered on certification exams.

Board members and participants also discussed the value of more specific guidance for instructors, the relationship between exam content and available study materials, and interest in making Need-to-Know information and related materials available to instructors and operators. Additional discussion addressed possible online and app-based training tools for rural areas, older crossover credit practices, study manuals and standards used in instruction, and requests for Need-to-Know criteria and examination pass-rate information.

Item 8. **New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association.**

Action: Member Byers provided the New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association update. Training opportunities and operator education needs were discussed during the meeting, including interest in specialized training for small water systems and self-paced online training options.

Item 9. **NM Surface Water Quality Bureau – Point Source Pollution Program update.**

Action: An update from Susan Lucas Kamat regarding the Point Source Pollution Program was provided including information on an upcoming hearing before the WQCC regarding amendments to ground water surface protections. Additional staff will be added to build capacity and streamline permit applications.

Item 10. **NM Ground Water Quality Bureau – Domestic Waste Team update.**

Action: An update was provided by Jason Herman regarding the Domestic Waste Team, including notice that the new online permit application is live.

Item 11. **Compliance and Enforcement Bureau update.**

Action: The agenda included an update from Avery Young for the Compliance and Enforcement Bureau. She was called upon by the Chair and was not present.

Item 12. **Other business (including next meeting date).**

Action: The Board addressed other business and discussed the next meeting date. The next meeting date was discussed and will be scheduled for February 16, 2026.

Item 13. **Adjournment by roll call.**

Action: A motion was made by Member Byers and seconded by Member Alvidrez to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned by roll call at 12:48PM.

Cathie R Eisen
Board signature

3/12/2026
Date