



MEETING OF THE UTILITY OPERATOR CERTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD
THURSDAY November 14, 2024
9:01 A.M.
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA CISCO WEBEX MEETING

AGENDA ITEM 1. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Members present: Cathie Eisen, Chair
Dale Graham
Maria Gilvarry
Sydney Hoke
Craig Byers
Rick Mitchell
Bobby Towle
Filiberto Aguirre, Jr.

Absent: Ivan Abell, Vice Chair

Guests: Joe Martinez, NMED-DWB Chief
Tanya Trujillo, NMED-DWB SWIG Manager
Eric Hall, NMED-UOCP Team Leader
Nile Carver, NMED-DWB UOCP
Nafis Fuad, NMED
Jason Martinez, NMED-SWQB
Steven Garner, CA-NV AWWA
Virgiline Ongkingco, ERG
Janet Cherry, ERG
Steve Geil
Martin Lopez, President New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association
Brian Bennon, ITCA
Amy Northam, WUIC-SW
Jeff Pompeo, ABCWUA
Peter Nathanson
Adam Lucero
Cherie Barker
Wellyem Guerra
Larry Pierce, Glorieta Geo Science

Chair Eisen noted that the meeting was being recorded.

ACTION: Roll was called, a quorum was present

AGENDA ITEM 2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL: MEETING AGENDA

DISCUSSION: Chair Eisen asked the Board Members if they have reviewed the agenda and if there were any corrections needed. Chair made a correction to Item 3 for the meeting minutes to be dated September 12, 2024. There were no other changes.

ACTION: Chair Eisen asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes with the adjusted changes. Member Mitchell made a motion to accept the minutes with the changes made. Member Hoke made a second to the motion. The Chair took a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

52 **AGENDA ITEM 3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL: MEETING AGENDA**

53

54 **DISCUSSION:** Filberto Aguirre joined the meeting. Chair Eisen had corrections, line 80 was and instead of
55 sand, line 100 Eric Hall needed to be capitalized, and line 538 the spelling of Byers needed to be
56 corrected. Member Gilvary made a correction on line 93 for Filiberto's name to be corrected.

57

58 **ACTION:** Member Byers made the motion to approve the agenda as amended. Member Towle
59 seconded the motion. Chair Eisen asked for a voice vote and the motion carries unanimously.

60

61 **AGENDA ITEM 4 JANET CHERRY-IPR/DPR**

62

63 **DISCUSSION:** Janet Cherry introduced ERG. The firm is working as a consultant for the NMED to develop
64 rules for the Direct and Indirect Potable Reuse Rule and operator certification requirements for the
65 facilities that are implementing Direct and Indirect Potable Reuse. She introduced Virgiline of ERG, Steve
66 Guilles and Steven Garner from California AWWA Section. She gave the presentation over to Virgiline
67 Ongkingco. She offered a presentation on what has been developed so far and explained the various
68 treatment processes. She reviewed staffing requirements and suggested the need for the Reuse portion
69 of the system to be required to have an operator on site at all times. She then defined the proposed
70 staffing needs for the other various systems and presented the possibility of a supplemental certification
71 to a Level 5 for these systems. These are all under consideration at this time and open for further
72 discussion. Lead Operators would be required to have a Level 4 Certification and all Shift Operators
73 would be required to hold a Level 3 Certification. She also offered discussion on what levels would be
74 required for the Distribution System Operators.

75 Their suggested training requirements included specialized training through an accredited program,
76 applicable training by the manufacturer of the treatment units and the development of an in house
77 training program for the certified operators to include an academic and hands on portion. They also
78 encourage annual training for Decision Makers including rate setting. She then gave the presentation to
79 Steven Garner regarding the overview of the program history in California and the organizations who
80 were associated with the development of these programs. Numerous agencies and committees came
81 together on the 2015 California DPR Feasibility Expert Panel for what Mr. Garner believes to be the first
82 and only jointly operated Drinking Water and Wastewater Certification Program in existence. In 2015
83 this group and the State of California called for a new program to bridge the gap between the water and
84 wastewater certification programs. Funding and support made it possible for this program to be pulled
85 together by 2019. He explained the four steps of the process including a handbook review, application
86 completion, exam scheduling and ongoing education requirements. He then reviewed minimum
87 requirements which are listed on the AWT website, including the proposed requirements for the Water
88 Grade 5 Certification. He also detailed the various Advanced Treatment Processes and detailed the
89 Content Domains for the various exam levels by percentages and details of various tasks and proficiency
90 requirements. He then offered the progression of the various levels of certification beyond Grade 3 and
91 then detailed the various study resources currently available in the absence of a specific Study Guide, as
92 well as their specific formula guide related to the discussed content.

93 Current operators certified by AWTO as of 11/13/24 are 173 Level 3, 52 Level 4 and 39 Level 5.

94 Maria Gilvary commented the mention of the various certification levels and that in New Mexico we
95 only had a Water Distribution Certification and not Wastewater and that finished water would be
96 delivered under the Water Distribution Certification only. She added that on the ADR Level three she
97 heard two different definitions on the certification levels and she thought that the operator should hold
98 a Level 3 in both water and wastewater. Mr. Garner clarified that in California and Nevada, the
99 individual was required to have either a Level 3 in water or wastewater to move forward to higher levels

100 though a certification in both fields was ideal to understand all treatment issues and that New Mexico
101 could require that. Maria suggested a deeper discussion of this issue, which Mr. Garner also alluded to
102 the state regulations that would also influence any Equivalency applications we might receive. He also
103 offered that in California and Nevada they do have a Distribution Certification but that Collections
104 certifications are Association based.

105 Peter Nathanson intervened and Chair Eisen interrupted and then Maria Gilvarry brought up a point of
106 order if it was appropriate for anyone outside the board could contribute. Eric Hall suggested that Mr.
107 Nathanson could put his questions in the chat but that the discussion was specific to the Board only. Ms.
108 Gilvarry also clarified that the questions in the chat could be raised by a board member if desired and
109 also that there were specific rules of order for this subject. Mr. Hall also suggested that Mr. Nathanson
110 could bring his question up under Public Comments.

111 Chair Eisen tried to comment. Craig Byers had a question for Virgiline regarding Training towards
112 advanced credits. She said these are all under development and that certain treatment trains are not
113 currently in use in New Mexico and that the training needed to be pertinent to those specific processes.
114 The rule is still being drafted, and one of the suggestions is that the manufacturer of these processes
115 provide specific training on that equipment for that purpose. Mr. Byers expressed his concern as we do
116 not currently have accredited programs for these processes, and how do we get to that. Maria also
117 mentioned that she believes that ERG is making recommendations to develop such programs and to
118 help develop the AWT Programs and to add these to our Operator Certification requirements. She also
119 requested a copy of these slides for further review. Janet said that much of this is still under
120 development and wanted to avoid any misunderstanding and was that it was also in need of Stake
121 Holder approval before they are final so they should not be utilized beyond this presentation. Mr.
122 Garner offered that some of the information is current in Nevada but the remainder is simply
123 suggestions for New Mexico at this time.

124 Chair Eisen called in, thanked Mr. Garner, and mentioned that the Board was not aware that this
125 process had been started but that it was heartened to see us moving forward with the development of
126 these additions to the Certification Program. Mr. Garner brought up that they are currently reviewing
127 the Job Task Analysis for the Grade 3, 4 and 5 skill sets. He said this would be a prime time for New
128 Mexico and our subject matter experts to join in and that ERG would consider an open welcome
129 whether or not we wanted to adopt this program. He described the other sorts of participants and said
130 this would be an ideal opportunity for is. Chair Eisen mentioned she had participated in similar
131 gatherings of this sort while working with the Intertribal Council of Arizona and Brian Bennon and that
132 they had been very beneficial. For us to have a seat at the table would be very valuable and she
133 encouraged us getting involved in the process. Mr. Garner offered more details on the committee
134 development and the way the process moved forward, as well as defining the various grades. Chair
135 Eisen asked about the development of future Study Guides for a uniform text for us to go to. Mr. Garner
136 responded by all means and that John Roe with the UOC Water Programs had developed an extensive
137 amount of content but that that product has been pushed out and has not been published as of now. A
138 current fund-raising effort from California Water Board and AWWA is being developed and the
139 opportunity for others in New Mexico to develop these could also be considered and is a 2025 objective.
140 Chair Eisen called for other questions. Maria Gilvarry asked what are the next steps for the Board and
141 the NMED DWB to proceed with this process. Eric Hall responded that we needed to develop a proposal
142 and to see what we needed to do with our regulations as the next step. Maria queried as to where we
143 could get involved and what are we doing. Mr. Garner said there was a meeting of Subject Matter
144 Experts next week and that they would be discussing further the job descriptions and requirements for
145 these certification levels. They will then develop need to know and exam items that touch on task
146 statements using a validated set of study materials. Maria Gilvarry suggested that we make a request
147 that we be party to whatever meetings it was appropriate for us to attend. She also suggested a future

148 board discussion on how we advance with this process. Eric Hall said this would be a good task for the
149 Board and that we could also develop an SOP for this process. Mr. Garner also said he has met with
150 other Boards and Agencies and he is willing to assist us in this process. Chair Eisen addressed Eric Hall
151 asking that we have access to any accessible meetings that it is appropriate for us to participate in and
152 noted confidentiality clauses also. She also asked that Mr. Hall make arrangements for us to have a seat
153 at the table for these discussions, a subject matter expert or a Board member. Maia Gilvary asked if
154 Chair Eisen wanted to make this an official motion, if appropriate. Mr. Hall said it was not an action item
155 so we could not make a motion at this time. Chair Eisen wants to put this on the next Agenda and wants
156 to expedite this if at all possible. Mr. Garner offered there will be many more meetings and that much of
157 it is done on line and there is time for us to get involved. Maria Gilvary asked if we can move forward
158 with getting involved and Chair Eisen posed the question if we can move this forward internally and
159 request having a Board Member at the table. Ms. Gilvary corrected the request and asked that we
160 simply have access to any material we could review until we can make a formal decision as to who
161 would be an active part of the process. Mr. Garner offered his email address and reiterated that it would
162 require a confidentiality form and the proper credentials to be eligible. Chair Eisen said she would follow
163 up to obtain additional information. Mr. Garner offered the candidate handbook for our review. No
164 further questions.

165

166 Eric Hall asked to combine Items 6, 7 and 8 to allow Joe Martinez to discuss his input. Mr. Garner
167 requested that he be allowed to stay for the meeting and Mr. Hall welcomed him to stay. Mr. Byers
168 intervened that we were on Agenda Item 5 and Mr. Hall gave the meeting back to Chair Eisen.

169

170 **AGENDA ITEM 5 STUDY GUIDES/REGULATIONS**

171

172 **DISCUSSION:** Eric Hall offered to table this item for now. Chair Eisen tabled Item 5 for now and rolled
173 into Item 6.

174

175 **ACTION:** Joe Martinez suggested that we make a motion to combine the agenda items and Maria Gilvary
176 made a motion to combine Items 6, 7, and 8 into an agenda item and Dale Graham made a second.
177 Chair Eisen clarified the motion to include tabling Item 5, and called for a voice vote. The motion carried
178 unanimously.

179

180 **AGENDA ITEM 6 UOCP PROGRAM DISCUSSION**

181

182 **DISCUSSION:** Joe Martinez gave an overview of what is happening in the NMED DWB and specific to the
183 UOCP. Mr. Martinez thanked Chair Eisen for bringing the Board's concerns regarding Certemy and the
184 UOCP Program activities to his attention. He stated that he shared with Chair Eisen that there had been
185 ongoing discussion internally regarding these issues and that one of the big things that the DWB is
186 looking at for the next year was to restructure the UOCP. Currently the program falls under SWIG
187 (Sustainable Water Infrastructure Group) which is a group within the DWB which offers Technical,
188 Managerial and Financial support to systems statewide, as well as many other tasks. Originally the
189 structure of that program had it make sense for the UOCP to fall under that program but as many more
190 requirements came down from EPA and more Grant Funds came in as well as more work the focus of
191 the DWB shifted to more assistance efforts and unfortunately that left the UOCP behind. They want to
192 change that to offer more support to the operators and the program so they are going to make the
193 UOCP a stand-alone program within the DWB to improve the focus on the program and the needs of the
194 operators. This will entail creating a manager position who would be the Program Manager and look out
195 for the needs of the Program and the Operators. Future structure would take Eric Halls current position

196 as Team Leader and have that person report to the Program Manager. The secondary part of that
197 structure would be to create additional teams within the program to address training, develop study
198 guides, testing, develop an operator recruitment and retention program to bring more operators into
199 the career field and work with different organizations to try and build out the pipeline of operators. The
200 training team which includes NMWWA, NMRWA and the DWB, would work on a standardized
201 curriculum so training providers would all be training to the same levels, would be beneficial for all
202 operators, and adhere to the highest standards of all states. The big vision is for a stand-alone program
203 that can advocate for funding and operators needs so those are being met.

204 Chair Eisen thanked Joe for all of statements and offered her support for his suggestions to let the
205 program stand alone and that it was a much better approach. Joe commented also that he wanted to
206 state that this did not reflect on the current program and the staff and all of the efforts they have made
207 with the limited resources that they have had to work with. He said that they all recognize that the
208 statewide needs exceed their capabilities and that they are a little bit overwhelmed at present. He also
209 wanted to say that we have discussed this plan with the Cabinet Secretary and he is fully on board and a
210 champion of the UOCP in general and the utility operators across the state and that the Secretary also
211 has some big plans for the program and the operators as a whole that he cannot discuss at this time.
212 Over the next six to 12 months and going forward there will be some big changes going into the future.

213 Joe Martinez paused for questions and addressed the questions in the chat. One asked what the time
214 frame was for the new positions and the job postings. His response was that it is hard to say but as for
215 the initial part is that the manager position should be up within the next two months, though the
216 process at the state level is slow. Paperwork is in HR to review and then it will be posted. Once that is
217 done they will start to generate paperwork to start filling some of the positions he has mentioned. What
218 is the time frame for restructuring? That is likely a two or three year plan, but first steps will be by the
219 end of June, the end of this fiscal year. The they would move forward on additional positions.

220 Chair Eisen asked what they were going do for the interim. Joe stated that was a good question and led
221 into that they were starting to interview for temporary positions, and have one coming in for Santa Fe to
222 address backlog of work and to do some of the tasks left undone when one staff member left. Secondly,
223 in regard to Certemy and application issues, Joe has had some preliminary discussions with Janet Cherry
224 of ERG as they have done a lot of work with NMED and DWB, to have them come in and assist the UOCP
225 with the backlog of work and to find any deficiencies in their process and to work with Certemy to iron
226 out the issues with the operators and the program. Mr. Martinez said that this could cause some issues
227 that may not be popular but what they are doing is to temporarily pause applications so that they can
228 work with the team and Certemy to address where the problems are for approximately three weeks or
229 sooner if issues are addressed more quickly. Joe wanted to present this to the board first to see if there
230 were questions or concerns before they presented it to the general public.

231 Maria Gilvary thanked Mr. Martinez and then commented on Certemy and suggested prioritizing
232 renewals to assure that the Certifications didn't lapse and that she also agreed that a slight delay in
233 testing would help with keeping others in compliance. Regarding future organization she suggested
234 having enough depth to allow for people moving up or on instead of just minimal staffing to avoid lapses
235 in adequate staff presence. She recognized the challenges of creating redundancy in government
236 organizations but wants to avoid future situations such as we currently face. She thanked Joe Martinez
237 again for all of his efforts. Mr. Martinez thanked her for her comments and the concerns regarding the
238 renewals, which he had not discussed with the team but that it has crossed his mind and will have that
239 discussion with Eric, staff and ERG. Joe agreed that renewals were important as that has a direct impact
240 on the operators and will discuss that. Joe has a meeting with ERG later in the day to discuss their
241 approach. Another idea he has is that they would, in the process, also develop some training materials
242 for our team as well as the operators as a whole so they would be learning the Certemy platform a little
243 better and see how that turns out. To Marias other point he agrees we need more depth and one of the

244 main benefits of the reorganization is that the Program Manager would be tasked with looking at
245 funding to build out the program to the levels we need it to be. The new manager will take on that task
246 and seek more funding, and possibly some legislative funding or other things that they haven't thought
247 of.

248 A call in user, (Name?), with ERG intervened and asked Joe Martinez about the current focus for the ERG
249 team. She said that they have talked about recertifications as well as equivalencies and that is a main
250 focus for the team with the exam applications coming in also being a priority but the other requirements
251 being the primary focus. Chair Eisen asked, regarding Certamy, that although we are already committed
252 and trying to address issues with the limited staff on hand that there are still a lot of glitches and she
253 wants to know if there is a Plan B if this new effort doesn't work as this issue has been going on since
254 June. Mr. Martinez responded that there have been talks of what we will do if Certemy doesn't work out
255 but wants to make a full evaluation of Certemy with the ERG contractors before they go in that direction
256 but that the DWB Management Team has sat in on some discussions with other vendors, not specifically
257 on the Utility Operator platform, but about tools that will help the program in general. Some of the
258 vendors have tools that can track certifications. They haven't gone deep but there are a couple of
259 vendors that have similar things that they can look into. Chair Eisen mentioned the portal for the Lead
260 Service Line Inventory and that it worked well for her and that Certemy seems very problematic. Eisen
261 then summarized what she heard Joe suggest as to what ERG was going to do and that they would
262 bridge the gap of absent staff until we move forward. Joe said that ERG would not be a part of the
263 restructuring of the program but that they were there to evaluate the Certemy Program to access its
264 viability so that the DWB could make the decisions to do something different. Chair Eisen thanked him
265 again, and said that with Kendall and Eric leaving that leaves Nile by himself and asked what was going
266 to be done in that event. Joe responded there are temps coming in to assist and that he has discussed
267 with ERG that if they can learn the process if they would perhaps be able to review applications when
268 Kendell leaves at the end of the month and Eric leaves also. He wants to make sure that is covered
269 under the current contract as they cannot be tasked with that effort if it is not.

270 Tanya Trujillo interjected that they do have a brand new staff member who is on the call and there is
271 another position being filled, so there will be more staff to assist Nile so he won't be solo. Joe Martinez
272 affirmed that statement and commented that they have been trying to do a transition plan for a double
273 fill for those positions but things moved slow so they have not been filled but hopefully over the next
274 two weeks more staff can be brought in. One new staff member started on Monday. Maria Gilvary
275 wanted to iterate that Joe and Eric and staff have been working on the Certemy issues for quite a while
276 but that it isn't on the staffs' shoulders to fix it. She knows that they are doing their best but she wanted
277 to raise awareness that DWB and UOCP staff have been working very hard to get Certemy to get their
278 program to do what it should do but that effort should be on Certemy's shoulders, not the staff. Joe
279 responded that he agreed but there are some things we need to communicate to them to make those
280 known and if there are things outside of the contract, we need to address those but it should be an all
281 inclusive program to track applications and certifications. He also said that Eric and the team have met
282 with Certemy a lot and trying to work through issues.

283 Chair Eisen added that we also need to address the preservation of operators training transcripts and
284 assure that they are available. Joe alluded to the previous discussion he and the Chair had, and shared
285 with the group that the transcripts have not transferred over into Certemy and that he had suggested
286 that we perform that task. This needs to be done internally rather than placing that burden on the
287 operators to do that for themselves. He can't remember if they have discussed it with IT to download
288 that information and to give it to Certemy to populate the program with that but he is going to have that
289 conversation to have them do this. The Chair just wanted everyone to be aware of that concern as
290 Certman is already in hibernation and to assure that those valuable records do not get lost.

291 Chair Eisen had one more question regarding who was going to lead the program in the interim after
292 Eric Hall leaves. Line of command is that Tanya is next in line as supervisor and Joe will help all that he
293 can with the transition also. Joe also said that is why getting the Manager position filled is so important
294 so that individual can take on those job duties. The time frame is a couple of months and paperwork
295 needs to be reviewed by HR and then, once approved, it will go to SPO to post the position. Chair Eisen
296 asked if it could be expedited and Joe has discussed this with his leadership and he has their support to
297 do that now. He fully expects that to happen and that it won't be fast but it will be faster than it usually
298 is. Eisen expressed her concerns yet again and expressed her appreciation for all of the efforts being
299 made.

300 Bobby Towle asked about the pause on exam applications and asked if that was just new applications or
301 all applications that have been submitted. Joe Martinez responded that he is working with Eric but that
302 what he envisions is that all applications have been paused and there will be case by case discussions to
303 address renewals. The present the links for exam applications will be pulled down from the website and
304 be unavailable for essentially three weeks. Chair Eisen voiced the obvious concern of the current backlog
305 for the last couple of months and Eric said he last heard it was around 200 applications. Eisen said that
306 the chief concern is that people's job descriptions have time frames for advancement, as well as new
307 applications and that there is a high level of frustration in the operator field right now. She said that
308 there needs to be an explanation on the web page explaining the reasons for the delays due to the
309 transition. Joe has a template of emails going out to operators to let them know that the pause in
310 applications in no way is the result of the applicants doing anything wrong so they can explain the issue
311 to their supervisors and help the operators. ERG has offered to help process applications once they learn
312 the process. He does not know how long that will take but hopefully it will help get through the backlog
313 sooner than we would alone. Eisen suggested that Nile Carver is under a huge burden and needs all the
314 help he can get as he is the cornerstone of the program. Mr. Martinez said that Nile and Kendall did
315 come to him with their concerns regarding the backlog of applications. Joe said that in situations like this
316 it is easy to take an action like pausing applications but without informing operators it can cause more
317 problems. He reached out to ERG first to have a solution and to run it by the Board and to do this in a
318 well thought out fashion.

319 Rick Mitchell asked about an existing renewal application and asked if that was part of the backlog. Eric
320 Hall commented that the individual in question still had some steps to complete and that he would look
321 into it. Joe Martinez noted that Peter Nathanson has a question but first he wanted to share the letter
322 he was sending to the operators and what it had to say. He said, "We understand the level of frustration
323 at this time but wanted to explain that this has not been caused by any action or inaction on the part of
324 the applicant. He wants to make it clear that it is not the applicants' fault that there is a delay." Joe then
325 acknowledged Peter Nathanson who had a question if there were other states using Certemy and what
326 their experience is and that the NMWWA will have a Short School in January and that UOCP staff usually
327 provides program information and that they could dispel rumors on certification and Certemy to keep
328 things moving in a proper direction. Chair Eisen began to intervene but Maria Gilvary made a clear
329 statement regarding the fact that meetings would go on forever if we are allowing public comments
330 constantly and there needs to be a decision. Chair Eisen said that she did allow him to make a point but
331 that she was going to ask him that any further discussion would need to go to Public Comment. Joe
332 Martinez apologized for it also, and then went on to say that other states have used Certemy for
333 different types of certifications but didn't know if any others were using it for Operator Certifications
334 but that as everyone does things different, we may still be having challenges because we do things in a
335 certain way in New Mexico. We still have to work through the process which is what ERG will be helping
336 us with. Regarding a presentation at the Short School, Joe has not discussed that with Eric but Eric will
337 also be gone by that time, probably fishing but the DWB will have representation at the school and
338 hopefully applications will be being processed by that time in January. Chair Eisen asked for any other

339 comments and thanked Joe and Tanya yet again and Joe thanked the chair for bringing her concerns to
340 him. Joe also thanked Eric, Nile and Kendall and to recognize all of their efforts to keep things moving.

341
342 Chair Eisen also inquired as to who her point of contact would be once Eric exits his position. Joe said he
343 will have that discussion and let me know. Tanya Trujillo said that Chair Eisen was free to reach out to
344 her and to make sure to put an exclamation point on it. Chair Eisen expressed her thanks yet again and
345 asked for further questions and noted the burden falling to Tanya. Joe Martinez thanked the Board and
346 the Utility Operator community present at the meeting for being understanding of the situation and
347 regarding the pause we were going to have to do with the applications, something we don't want to
348 have to do but we appreciate the support. Chair Eisen also thanked Joe and Tanya for hearing her out
349 and the efforts they are making to move things forward. She also commended the team for going
350 through a very difficult time.

351
352 **ACTION:** No action was taken.

353
354 **AGENDA ITEM 7 CERTAMY UPDATE**

355
356 **DISCUSSION:** Included in Item 6.

357
358 **AGENDA ITEM 8 DRINKING WATER UPDATE**

359
360 **DISCUSSION:** Included in Item 6 but Chair Eisen asked Tanya Trujillo if she had any further comments.
361 Tanya said that Joie Martinez captured much of the discussion but that she had been working, a few
362 members of her program have been working with ERG staff and that her team is in the middle of a hiring
363 jag so if we know of anyone who is interested in working for the Program they should reach out to her.
364 They should make sure that the timelines are good and that their manuscripts are up to date and that
365 other than that they are trying to address items as they come. Chair Eisen asked a question regarding
366 persons possibly interested in the open positions and if they need to wait to reach out to Tanya or Joe
367 before the job is posted. Tanya said they should watch for the job postings and that the Team Lead
368 position should be posted so it was also available. She said there was not much to discuss other than
369 what type of support they would be doing. She doesn't meet applicant prior to application process so
370 they should detail their application and resume as best they can for the best review. Eisen also asked,
371 regarding the Team Lead position being filled before the Manager position is opened, as to the order of
372 applications if the person who took the lesser position and then was interested in the Manager position
373 if they could then apply for that also. Tanya noted the obvious challenges of that process but stated that
374 it was acceptable and had been done before and that the issues could be addressed and she would be
375 willing to consider that. The Team Lead position could always be reposted as the paperwork was already
376 completed. She also pointed out that the Manager position would not report to her but to Joe Martinez
377 so he would be the one to make that final consideration. At this time the Team Lead will report to
378 Tanya. Chair Eisen said that in the interest of bringing in the best candidates and getting someone on
379 board that was an important question. No other questions.

380
381 **AGENDA ITEM 9 NEW MEXICO WATER WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION**

382
383 **DISCUSSION:** Martin Lopez had to leave but he left a note in the chat that they were continuing on their
384 updates on Association documents, seeking nominations for annuals and they still need a President
385 elect for next year and that maybe Craig Byers could provide additional information. Craig said that they

386 had a President elect but they are still seeking a keynote speaker for the Conference Banquet and the
387 Awards ceremony. There were no questions.

388

389 **AGENDA ITEM 10 NM SURFACE WATER QUALITY BUREAU-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM**
390 **UPDATE**

391

392 **DISCUSSION:** Jason Martinez said that they have completed interviews for two vacancies, one on the
393 Permitting Team and one on the Compliance Team and that hopefully they will be filled soon. The
394 Surface Water Advisory Panel has completed their meetings for the MDA Permitting Program and there
395 should be a publication on that coming out in December. We can reach out to him or Susan for
396 additional information. End of updates.

397

398 **AGENDA ITEM 11 NM GROUND WATER QUALITY BUREAU-DOMESTIC WASTE TEAM UPDATE**

399

400 **DISCUSSION:** No discussion.

401

402 **AGENDA ITEM 12 NM OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM UPDATE**

403

404 **DISCUSSION:** Eric Hall said that we had already covered a lot. There were two things, that he will be
405 retiring by the end of this month and he introduced Carlos Gonzales, a new team member and placed
406 him on camera for the meeting attendees. Mr. Gonzales introduced himself and offered that he had
407 spent 26 years in the Department of Health and transferred to the UOCP and is looking forward to
408 working with the Program. The Board welcomed him. Brief discussion between Eric and Bobby Towle
409 and parting words for Eric Hall. Chair Eisen expressed her appreciation for all of Eric's efforts and he
410 offered he might join the Board in the future. He commended the Board for being the best ever.
411 Everyone offered congratulations to Eric for his retirement. Maria commented that the Board benefited
412 from him as well.

413

414 **AGENDA ITEM 13 OTHER BUSINESS (INCLUDING NEXT MEETING DATE)**

415

416 **DISCUSSION:** Eric offered some other business. Jeff Pompeo had some questions on fluoride and asked
417 if we knew if there were other systems besides the ABCWUA who are adding fluoride and if so, what are
418 the concentrations they are bringing it up to. Maria Gilvarry asked if she can pose this question to
419 someone off line or if it was more appropriate for it to be answered off line. Maria asked Eric who could
420 answer the question and he suggested that the Compliance Team might have more knowledge of the
421 answer and what dosages they are feeding. Maria suggested going to Drinking Water Watch or directly
422 to their compliance officer. Mr. Pompeo said the information was not on Drinking Water Watch and he
423 has already looked. Joe Martinez offered that he thinks the reason that the ABCWUA brought this
424 question to the Board is because they wanted to get some actual answers from the water systems about
425 fluoride injection in their water systems and how they were going about it which was information that
426 the Department was unable to provide. Jeff confirmed that Joe was correct. Maria Gilvarry commented
427 that she knew that Las Vegas did not use fluoride but if we could direct his questions to anyone who has
428 maybe they could answer his questions. Joe Martinez suggested that if they wanted to have the DWB
429 work with the Authority to send out a survey to systems across the state that they could fill out on line
430 and the DWB could share the responses with the Authority. Mr. Pompeo thanked Joe.

431

432 Rick Mitchell commented that Farmington used to inject fluoride. Chair Eisen also offered the NMRWA
433 works with many systems and they might be able to answer his questions. Chair Eisen asked for any
434 other comments and thanked Mr. Pompeo for his attendance.

434
435 Peter Nathanson had comments and Eric asked if we wanted to give him the floor for other business. He
436 was allowed two minutes. Mr. Nathanson said that at the last meeting we had discussed Study Guides
437 and he had mentioned that he might put something together for those updates. Chair Eisen had
438 suggested that he create an outline and he had not done that and he needed some direction for the
439 DWB and Management Team if the that would be acceptable or if the DWB wanted to that in house,
440 through and RFP or fee based work or a formal MOU or agreement. He mentioned that Fred Ragsdale
441 had done in the past. He wanted to know what approach was preferred before he moved forward or
442 wait and see what Joe Martinez had planned with the restructuring plans as it might be a moot point.
443 Chair Eisen thanked Mr. Nathanson and commented that Joe had mentioned that ERG might work on
444 that and that it was also going to be a part of the Program going forward. She said she appreciated
445 Peter's foresight and asked for comments from Eric or Joe. Joe said that if they had someone work on
446 the Study Guides for payment or some other agreement there would have to be a contract in place so
447 they could outline the specifics that they would need out of that Study Guide. The second part would be
448 that his initial thoughts are that, although it is not ideal, that we wait until the Program is restructured
449 and fill out that group and see what the new Manager wants to do and see if they wanted to work with
450 someone under contract or develop those Study Guides internally. Chair Eisen thanked Joe and asked
451 Eric for additional comments. He had none.
452 Chair Eisen asked Joe Martinez if there was anything that the Board could do in regards to seeking
453 additional support for the Program and Joe responded that they won't be shy in asking for assistance
454 and that we should just be prepared.
455 Eric Lucero expressed some concerns regarding some of the regulations under 20.7.4 and said that he
456 had brought these up to Tanya in the past and he had wanted to attend some meetings but hadn't had
457 the time to do so. He didn't know if we could discuss it here or outside of the meeting and perhaps add
458 it to the Agenda. He has a list of the Board Members and asked if he could speak to them individually.
459 Maria said he could make comments under Public Comment but there would not be a discussion but
460 Adam could reach out to Eric after the meeting. Chair Eisen asked if he wanted to share anything and
461 then we could put it on the next agenda. Mr. Lucero offered that his main issue is that even though he
462 understood that there was some loose wording in the regulations but that under the state and federal
463 regulations it says that the water systems can repair line breaks and take care of ongoing maintenance
464 but it does not say that the operators are qualified to do this. When you look at the CLDs regulations
465 those are very specific as to who can and can not work on plumbing fixtures and he would just like to
466 see something more specific that authorizes operators to do this kind of work. He knows that it has been
467 stated in trainings before and that there have not been any issues. He said he understands that it is up
468 to the individual to interpret the rules but even if they are worded loosely, it could be interpreted in a
469 different manner and he wanted to see something somewhat more specific that would protect the
470 operators a little more. Maria suggested that it should be a future board item. Chair Eisen commented
471 that we could put this on the next agenda for discussion. Maria suggested that Eric and Adam review the
472 issue and that Eric could develop a future approach.
473 Amy Northam was present but made no comments and was encouraged to use the chat. Dale Graham
474 commented that we skipped over to Public Comment without setting another meeting date and Chair
475 Eisen apologized for being out of order in the progression of the meeting. There was discussion as to
476 when we should meet. Next meeting date was set for Thursday, January 9, 2025. Everyone agreed. Steve
477 Garner commented that if there was a need to make a board decision regarding our participation in the
478 ERG meetings and did we want to deal with that before January 9, 2025. Chair Eisen said that would very
479 valuable. Maria Gilvarry asked if we could have a short meeting in a couple of weeks just to discuss
480 IPR/DPR and the Boards involvement in the DWB in their efforts to move forward. Eric Hall said that
481 with the requirement for posting the Agenda there is no way we could do that in a couple of weeks.

482 Chair Eisen asked if it was possible to schedule a Special Meeting and Eric said we still had to do
483 notifications so he had to look into that. Maria recommended that it be one item and to keep it short.
484 Maria corrected that someone from the DWB could attend the ERG meeting and then the Board could
485 have it on the January agenda. Eric suggested that we shoot for that for now. Perhaps Tanya could
486 participate. Steve Garner asked who he could send the Confidentiality Agreement to expedite the
487 process. Chair Eisen said if arrangements could not be made, we would then consider a Special Meeting.
488 Amy Northam asked if Janet was the point of contact on reuse questions and are MBR Systems included
489 for wastewater quality. Eric said Janet is the point of contact. The other question was if MBRs qualified
490 for reuse experience and it would be a question for Janet. Eric said we are not far enough along to
491 comment on that. Eric read a question on Study Guides and said that he is glad that everyone
492 understands that they need to be updates and we will need some help with that. That being said, the
493 regulations for California are becoming vastly different from New Mexico and Sacramento Manuals are
494 giving right answers for the manual but wrong answers for New Mexico and how do we address this as
495 instructors? Eric said that right now we have not changed anything in our study guides and that all he
496 can suggest is to teach to the need to know and if they are changing the Sacramento's that much then
497 that is something we need to look at. Chair Eisen said that as we are in such a transition right now that
498 hopefully as the program is restaffed and expanded that those issues would be looked at. If those guides
499 are changing that much there is an issue there and that she would encourage Amy to discuss this at the
500 Short Schools so that those who are testing would be encouraged to notate which questions have issues
501 as it is a broad issues and needs to be looked at. She stated that we have always suggested that people
502 taking the exams or who are using the Sacramento Manuals note specific questions for review and that
503 our people who are testing are the 'canaries in the gold mine' for the test questions. Eric said we are
504 running outside of our time. Another question Eric brought for Amy was asking which Study Guide
505 editions should people be using as they differ from the NMED website and the NMWWA site. Chair Eisen
506 said that we need feedback from everyone as to the need for us to make a review. Eric said that we
507 would take one more comment. Maria said we have two minutes per person so Peter could talk to Eric
508 later. The Chair asked for any other comments or questions. She apologized for the overlap on the
509 Agenda and asked for comments before adjournment and encouraged the Board to make more
510 comments.

511

512 **AGENDA ITEM 14 PUBLIC COMMENT**

513

514 **DISCUSSION:** No discussion

515

516 **AGENDA ITEM 15 ADJOURNMENT BY ROLL CALL**

517

518 **DISCUSSION:** No discussion.

519

520 **ACTION:** Craig Byers made a motion to adjourn and Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. Chair Eisen
521 repeated the motion and conducted roll call. Chair Eisen called members names; Michael Able was not
522 in the meeting, Dale Graham, "Yes", Sydney Hoke, "Yes", Maria Gilvary, "Yes", Bobby Towle, "Yes", Rick
523 Mitchell, "Yes", Filiberto Agurre, "Yes", Craig Byers, "Yes". Meeting adjourned at 1125. Thanks were
524 exchanged.

525

526

527

528