



1                   **MEETING OF THE UTILITY OPERATOR CERTIFICATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
2   **THURSDAY January 19, 2023**  
3   **9:48 A.M.**  
4   **HELD VIRTUALLY VIA CISCO WEBEX MEETING**

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6           **AGENDA ITEM 1. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

7           **Members present:** Cathie Eisen, Chair  
8                                   Dale Graham  
9                                   Ivan (Michael) Abell  
10                                  Maria Gilvarry  
11                                  Sydney Hoke  
12                                  Bobby Towle  
13                                  Joe Bailey  
14                                  Rick Mitchell

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16           **Absent:** Filiberto Aguirre, Jr

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18           **Guests:** Eric Hall, NMED-DWB Manager  
19                                  Anita Tavasci, NMED-DWB UOCP  
20                                  Kendall Crowe, NMED-DWB UOCP  
21                                  Nile Carver, NMED-DWB UOCP  
22                                  Susan LucasKamat, NMED-SWQB Point Source Regulation  
23                                  Avery Young, NMED-GWQB  
24                                  Craig Byers, NMWWA  
25                                  Cheri Barker, Jacobs Engineering-Rio Rancho  
26                                  Martin Torrez, NM Water Service  
27                                  Janet Garcia  
28                                  Mark Hill

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30           **ACTION:** Roll was called, a quorum was present

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32           **AGENDA ITEM 2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL: MEETING AGENDA**

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34           **DISCUSSION:** Chair Eisen asked the Board if anyone found any corrections of the meeting agenda.

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36           **ACTION:** Member Gilvarry made the motion to accept the agenda as presented. Member Bailey  
37           seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carries unanimously.

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39           **AGENDA ITEM 3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL: NOVEMBER 10, 2022 MEETING MINUTES**

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41           **DISCUSSION:** Member Gilvarry stated that the meeting minutes from 11/10/2022 needed a correction.  
42           On page 3 on line 128 it is written that she would be open on November 19<sup>th</sup> but she is fairly certain that  
43           she had said that was supposed to be January 19<sup>th</sup>.

44  
45           **ACTION:** Member Mitchell made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Member Towle  
46           seconded the motion. Chair Eisen took a voice vote. The motion carries unanimously.

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48           **AGENDA ITEM 4. UOC ADVISORY BOARD OPEN MEETINGS ACT RESOLUTION**

50 **DISCUSSION:** Chair Eisen read the complete Calendar Year 2023 Open Meetings Act Resolution. After  
51 reading the resolution Mr. Hall asked that Chair Eisen sign/date the resolution and email a digital copy  
52 and mail the original copy to himself.  
53

54 **AGENDA ITEM 4: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**  
55 **PERSONS**  
56

57 **DISCUSSION:** Member Gilvarry nominated Cathie Eisen for the position of Chair of the Advisory Board.  
58 Cathie Eisen accepted that nomination for the Chair position.  
59

60 **ACTION:** Member Gilvarry made a motion for Cathie Eisen to fill the position of Chair of the Advisory  
61 Board. Member Bailey seconded that Cathie Eisen be elected for the Chair position. Role call was taken  
62 for vote. The motion carries unanimously.  
63

64 **DISCUSSION:** Chair Eisen asked for a nomination and a motion for the UOC Advisory Board Vice Chair  
65 position. Member Bailey made a nomination for Michael (Ivan) Abell for the position of Vice Chair.  
66 Member Abell accepted the nomination.  
67

68 **ACTION:** Member Bailey made a motion for Michael (Ivan) Abell to the position of Vice Chair. Member  
69 Towle seconded the motion. Chair Eisen took a voice vote. The motion carries unanimously.  
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71 **AGENDA ITEM 6. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF (2) WQCC, (WATER QUALITY CONTROL**  
72 **COMMISSION), REPRESENTATIVES FOR 2023**  
73

74 **DISCUSSION:** The Board briefly discussed the 2022 and previous year's Representatives. Chair Eisen  
75 asked if Member Gilvarry would be interested to be a representative. Member Gilvarry declined.  
76 Member Bailey nominated Sydney Hoke. Member Hoke accepted the nomination.  
77

78 **ACTION:** Member Bailey made a motion that Sydney Hoke act as a Representative on the WQCC Board.  
79 Member Mitchell seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carries unanimously.  
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81 **DISCUSSION:** It was discussed that Rick Mitchell be appointed as a Representative of the Advisory Board  
82 on the WQCC panel.  
83

84 **ACTION:** Member Abell made a motion for Member Mitchell to sit as a Representative on the WQCC.  
85 Member Hoke seconded the motion. Chair Eisen took a voice vote. The motion carries unanimously.  
86

87 **AGENDA ITEM 7. DISCUSSION OF CERTIFICATION EXAM P-VALUE ANALYSIS**  
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89 **DISCUSSION:** Nile Carver of the UOCP shared the exam pass rate statistics from calendar year 2022 and  
90 P-value, (Probability-value), bar chart on the screen. He went on to discuss how the P-value statistics  
91 are being used to evaluate the strength or weaknesses of each question on all of the exams given. If a P-  
92 value was exceptionally low then that question would be researched as to what the possible reasons it  
93 was having such a low probability for being answered correctly. Member Gilvarry asked that the  
94 Program follow-up, after the tests, with a questionnaire. Member Gilvarry suggested that the  
95 questionnaire have questions dealing with what study material was used and how much time was spent  
96 studying in preparation for the exam. Member Gilvarry is concerned that the applicants are not  
97 spending enough time studying or that the questions on the exams are not appropriate for the level of

98 exam. Member Gilvarry is not wanting to make any assumptions as to why some of the pass rates are  
99 low but instead suggesting the questionnaire be used to gather individual data. Eric Hall did state that  
100 there is a questionnaire developed that has been turned into the Drinking Waster Bureau Chief for  
101 review. He went on to state that the questions on that questionnaire can have additional questions  
102 added. Chair Eisen stated that there could many sets of variables as to why some exams are more  
103 difficult to pass. She suggested that the Board could get together to perform a collaborative review.  
104 Member Abell stated that the new operators coming into the field possibly are not spending as much  
105 time as they should studying and re-visit the process of updating the study guides. Mr. Hall stated that  
106 these are study guides which make passing the lower levels possible. Once they transition into the  
107 upper levels then the persons taking those exams must move into more advanced study material to pass  
108 their exams. Member Gilvarry pointed out that anyone that has passed the upper level exams most  
109 likely have large totes lying around that are full of study material and notes. Chair Eisen stated that  
110 some of the questions in the exam cover processes that there may only be one system in the state that  
111 utilizes that particular process and unless that process is studied most persons would not know how to  
112 answer the questions about it. Nile Carver did mention that the lowest P-value question on the exam  
113 was a very simple question and his evaluation of why persons are missing it was caused by over-thinking  
114 the question and choosing a more technical answer that was incorrect. Chair Eisen made the comment  
115 that she does not want operators using the difficulty of the exams as an excuse for not passing it. She  
116 went on to state that moving into the computer-based exams was a very good decision since doing so  
117 provides statistical data to be able to evaluate the exams as opposed to the paper-based exams.  
118

119 **AGENDA ITEM 8. NEW MEXICO WATER AND WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION**

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121 **DISCUSSION:** Craig Byers' stated that the New Mexico Water and Wastewater Association, (NMWWA),  
122 has an upcoming conference in Las Cruces. The NMWWA is working hard to get back toward in-person  
123 trainings. Mr. Beyers stated that Lorenzo Sanchez will be taking over in 3 days as President of the  
124 NMWWA for 2023.  
125

126 **AGENDA ITEM 9. DRINKING WATER BUREAU UPDATE**

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128 **DISCUSSION:** Mr. Hall stated that the Drinking Water Bureau is losing Jill Turner and hopefully by the  
129 next Advisory Board meeting we will be able to announce her replacement. Member Abell wanted to  
130 thank the Drinking Water Bureau for providing a waiver for Dioxin. Chair Eisen stated that her and the  
131 Board will miss Jill with all of the great things she had done for the Program and the Board.  
132

133 **AGENDA ITEM 10. NM SURFACE WATER QUALITY BUREAU-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM**  
134 **UPDATE**

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136 **DISCUSSION:** Susan Lucas-Kamat stated that the Surface Water Quality Bureau, (SWQB), has had (2)  
137 retirements since the last meeting. Barbara Cooney retired after 21 years of service with the Point  
138 Source Regulation Section. Also Erin Shay, formerly Erin Trujillo, retired in December after 23 years  
139 working for the State of New Mexico with 17 of those years working in the Point Source Section. The  
140 SWQB will be advertising those positions. The SWQB is continuing to work on the State Surface Water  
141 Discharge Permitting Program. The person that had been hired and accepted the lead position will be  
142 announced in the near future. They will be starting in February. The SWQB does have (2) new staff  
143 members for the Surface Water Discharge Permitting Program who should be starting in March or April.  
144 The other news that Susan provided an update on is that the EPA and he Army Corps of Engineers just  
145 published the Waters of the United States Rule which put New Mexico back in 23-2015 Waters of the

146 United States. For New Mexico that gives the state coverage of the ephemeral and intermittent streams  
147 again. Susan stated that she and Jason Martinez will be teaching sample recording and reporting for  
148 NPDES permits at the NMWWA short school in Las Cruces. The SWQB still has a free training for  
149 nutrient optimization that is also being held in Las Cruces in the month of March. Susan said she has a  
150 flyer for that event if anyone is interested in that training. Chair Eisen said Barbara will be missed and  
151 Susan responded that both Barbara and Erin both have many years of combined institutional knowledge  
152 and operational contacts.

153

154 **AGENDA ITEM 11. NM GROUND WATER QUALITY BUREAU-DOMESTIC WASTE TEAM UPDDATE**

155

156 **DISCUSSION:** Avery Young stated that their Team is under-staffed and they currently have a Reuse  
157 Team Leader position posting on SPO, (State Personnel Office). They are hopefully in the process of  
158 hiring (2) people and should be advertising 3-4 positions in the next couple of months. If anyone is  
159 interested in joining the Pollution Prevention Section that does the discharge permits for wastewater  
160 treatment plants and industrial facilities please contact her for updates about position postings.

161

162 **AGENDA ITEM 12. NM OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM UPDATE**

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164 **DISCUSSION:** Eric Hall stated that the Program is working on Regulation revisions to hopefully present  
165 before the WQCC in the near future. Mr. Hall said the Program members will be attending the NMWWA  
166 school next week at different times, Anita and himself will be providing training. Other than that the  
167 Program has been working on the P-values of the exams and working towards getting the tests in good  
168 shape. Chair Eisen asked Mr. Hall if the Operator-in-Training, (OIT), is on the regulation revisions and if  
169 he knew what the timeframe is on that. Mr. Hall replied that the OIT initiative is definitely part of the  
170 regulation revisions and currently he does not know what the timeframe for going before the WQCC is.  
171 Mr. Hall did state that the attorney is getting the Advisory Board member appointment scheduled for  
172 next July WQCC meeting. Chair Eisen asked if that would be a good timeframe for getting the regulation  
173 revisions done. Mr. Hall said he hopes so. Chair Eisen stated that the OIT initiative is a big deal and if he  
174 had any ideas about promoting it. Mr. Hall replied that the first step is to get the regulation revisions in  
175 place and approved by the commission then we can work on promoting it.

176

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

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179 **DISCUSSION:** Chair Eisen asked if there was any additional business to discuss. No one brought up any  
180 other business. Chair Eisen asked Mr. Hall what the next meeting date should be. Member Abell asked  
181 if the next quarterly meeting should be between April and June. Mr. Hall replied that he was thinking in  
182 the month of May and asked the Board members if Thursday May 18<sup>th</sup> would work. Member Abell  
183 stated that he has a Board meeting on that date. Mr. Hall suggested May 11<sup>th</sup>. All of the Advisory Board  
184 members agreed that date would work fine.

185

186 **AGENDA ITEM 14. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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188 **DISCUSSION:** Chair Eisen asked if there were any Public comments from anyone present. None were  
189 provided.

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191 **AGENDA ITEM 15. ADJOURNMENT BY ROLL CALL**

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193 **ACTION:** Member Bailey made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Member Abell seconded the motion.  
194 Chair Eisen began roll call; Joe Bailey: yes, Dale Graham: , Sidney Hoke: , Ivan Abell: yes, Bobby Towle:  
195 yes, Maria Gilvarry: yes, Rick Mitchell: yes. Chair Eisen thanked all the Board members and guests for  
196 attending and contributing.  
197  
198 The quarterly meeting of the Utility Operator Certification Advisory Board adjourned at 10:57 am on  
199 Thursday January 19, 2023.