

## **Nevada Certified Drinking Water Operator's Forum Minutes**

Summary minutes of the meeting of December 2, 2008

The meeting began at 10:06 a.m. in the Nevada Department of Conservation 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room, 901 S. Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada.

The meeting was videoconferenced to NDEP Las Vegas Office, Red Rock Conference Rm, 2030 E. Flamingo Rd. Ste. 230, Las Vegas NV, and Great Basin College, 1500 College Parkway, Lundberg Hall, Room 114, Elko NV. The meeting was also teleconferenced at telephone number 1-888-363-4734, access code 1515199.

### **1. Call to Order**

Forum Member Harvey Johnson presided over the meeting for Chairman Cameron McKay

Members Present: Harvey Johnson; John Hulett; Marcellus Jones (LV video-conference); and Lynn Forsberg (Elko video-conference).

Members absent: Chairman Cameron McKay; Bob Foerster

Representing the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), Bureau of Safe Drinking Water were: Jennifer Carr, Bureau Chief; Steve Brockway, Environmental Scientist; Nan Paulson, Administrative Assistant.

Also Present: In Carson City: Ron Penrose; Mike Workman; Don Allen. In LV: Rick Mills, Tom Georgi (via videoconference). In Elko: Dale Johnson (via videoconference). Gina Enriquez and Debby Kaye from AWWA (via teleconference).

### **2. Approval of Minutes – September 23, 2008 Meeting**

**Motion:** John Hulett moved to approve the minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Marcellus Jones, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

### **3. Report on September 2008 Exam Analysis**

Harvey Johnson noted that the low scores were getting higher than they had been in March and June. John Hulett stated that there seemed to be a trend toward better grades in March in some areas. Jennifer Carr mentioned that the Nevada Rural Water Conference may also help operators achieve a higher score.

Jennifer Carr said that the names of operators who pass the tests will have their names and the grades they tested for listed in Water Lines. Joe Beard has been listing this information so operators can be recognized for their achievements. No personal information other than names and grade types will be listed.

### **4. Training Needs and Focus for March 2009 Exam – (All)**

Jennifer Carr shared that training needs are being posted on the NDEP website. Cross referencing information with exam analysis will help operators see what areas should be studied more prior to testing. Lists will be posted showing which areas of the test were most missed.

Debby Kaye mentioned that the Range of Knowledge will be similar between the ABC and AWWA exams. She added that the current exam report is relevant, and that although reference material may be different, the content should be similar. ABC will do all of the testing.

Ron Penrose noted a positive side of this change is that each tester will be given information letting them know their areas of weakness. This will help encourage operators to study those areas.

Debby Kaye added that testers can look on the website to see the list of study materials.

Lynn Forsberg suggested the NRWA and Training Coalition should be encouraged to share the top three areas that need to be studied more.

Harvey Johnson talked about the testing in March at the conference. It was agreed that Friday was most likely the best day for the Forum Meeting to be there.

## **5. Report on Progress, Wastewater Collection Certification Program – (Harvey Johnson)**

Mr. Johnson advised the members that the first round of on-line testing for Plant Maintenance Certification has been done. ABC gave good comments on this method of testing.

Forty or more people took the trial test for voluntary certification for Wastewater Operations. The test results should be in soon.

Bob Foerster and Harvey Johnson discussed issues related to a new Pond Certification. ABC has a Small Wastewater Standardized Certification test. This test was compared to the present Grade I test and it appears a bit more difficult so it would require regulation changes. Collection System Certification is not the main topic on the Agenda at this time. Although it is a priority, it will be discussed in more detail later after Pond Certification and CEUs are addressed.

CEU issues are also being discussed on the Wastewater side. A wastewater survey regarding them has been given to NWEA and NDEP for review. Support for having a CEU requirement seems broad. Adding a requirement for CEUs would need a regulation change.

## **6. Finalize Forum Name, Mission and Operations Charter – Action Item**

Jennifer Carr read the Mission Statement and Goal from the Mission and Operations Charter document (Attachment 1) and asked for suggestions for an acronym or name for the Forum. No suggestions were made, so it will not be changed. This was approved by Ron Penrose.

Ms. Carr shared the news that NDEP now has a website for the Forum. It is not complete yet but is in the process of being developed. It can be viewed at <http://ndep.nv.gov/dwo/index.html>. It is hoped that this website will increase the communication opportunity between NDEP and the Operators.

In regards to membership, Marcellus Jones asked how often the Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions should be rotated. He asked if 2 years would work well. Ron Penrose and Harvey Johnson agreed that would be a good time frame. Membership will stay as it is in case the Forum reverts back to being a Board in the future. With regard to item 3.6, Harvey Johnson recommended that the member's renewals be staggered to make sure that all the members of the Forum are not all replaced in the same year. A roster of the members and the years in their positions will be posted onto the website.

Jennifer Carr asked the members to consider if they would like to keep the current schedule of quarterly meetings or if changing them to three times a year would be beneficial. The membership desires to keep them at quarterly at this time. Great Basin College is being generous by allowing the NDEP to coordinate videoconferencing there without a charge. If this changes, it will have to be discussed due to financial requirements.

For the March 2009 meeting, Jennifer Carr said the Agenda will be sent to all operators we have an email for, not just the operators who have requested it. Currently, we only send to those who have asked for the emails.

Ron Penrose made a motion to approve the Mission and Organizational Structure with the recommended discussion regarding staggering the initial member terms. Harvey Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## **7. Brainstorm Agenda Items for 2009 Meetings- (All)**

In order to facilitate the development of future agendas for the Forum, Jennifer Carr asked for ideas that members and participants have for future meetings.

John Hulett talked about having guest speakers for the Forum. It was suggested to have speakers talk about a status summary on the Ground Water Rule, LT2 and Stage 2 rules, and backflow program testing. Steve Brockway advised that, because of the varied tests, the AWWA should do the testing for Nevada.

Ron Penrose suggested an update on reclaimed water for irrigation and storage. Waste water treatment may expand to residential irrigation use and ASR. Groundwater reinjection is another topic for discussion.

Mike Workman asked for a recap on State budget related issues. Jennifer Carr said that should be available in June after the Legislative Session closes.

Marcellus Jones expressed an interest in Forum Members being available at conferences to talk with operators. Jennifer Carr agreed that this is a good idea.

Another topic for a speaker is CUPSS. Lynn Forsberg stated that with this already in use, a speaker for it would be helpful.

A suggestion to have a power point presentation to demonstrate the change from AWWA testing to ABC was made by Ron Penrose. He said having this for the March Rural Water Conference would be good.

Jennifer Carr requested suggestions for items to be put onto the website. NDEP wants this site to be a “go to” site for operators. If possible, this site can be shown at the conference to help operators use it.

## **8. Regulatory/NDEP Update – (Jennifer Carr)**

Jennifer Carr talked about how the GWR is progressing. 2009 activities will include: (1) operator outreach and education; (2) regulation development; (3) NDEP will provide assistance to PWSs to meet the requirements that start December 1, 2009 and will provide guidance for submitting optional triggered monitoring plans – or proof of 4-log removal/inactivation & ensuing requirements; (4) preparation of the primacy revision application to the US EPA. Patty Lechler is the lead BSDW staff person on this rule.

Regulation revisions for LT2 and Stage 2 DBPs are ongoing, but getting more drawn out than originally anticipated. Workshops will occur in the first half of 2009 with the June SEC hearing targeted for adoption. Primacy revision paperwork is due to EPA by January 4, 2010.

Arsenic extensions to eligible facilities were granted by the SEC at the November 12 hearing. NDEP Engineering Branch staff will be contacting Systems whose exemptions will expire. Meetings will be conducted with each one to determine compliance timeframes and to negotiate milestones for individualized FOAVs and Administrative orders (on Consent).

Congress is expected to put forth an economic stimulus bill soon (if not before the end of the year, then soon after the Obama Administration takes over). The stimulus bill is very likely to include DWSRF and CWSRF loan money – with tight turn around, but probably no state match requirement - therefore we may be able to offer very attractive interest rates, possibly zero. Now may be the time to move on a capitol improvement project – for Arsenic or otherwise.

A letter was sent to water systems from the SRF program regarding a re-opening of the priority list (Attachment 2). Regarding the SRF, Jennifer Carr asked that ideas be given to Adele Basham. She needs to have a revised list by January 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### 9. Member's Open Comments:

Marcellus Jones suggested having their supervisor's renewal dates differ, such as one half be due one year and the other half be due the next. NDEP is not opposed to this and will work with the LVVWD to accomplish this if the data base can make the changes.

Ron Penrose shared that he mailed the test exit questionnaire to the operators who tested in September. Some have been returned (approximately 25-30), and they have been forwarded to Bob Foerster.

Harvey Johnson asked if there were any other comments. Having none, he moved the meeting to item 10.

#### 10. Public Comments

There were none.

#### 11. Schedule Next Meeting – March 10-13, 2009 at the Nevada Rural Water Association Conference.

Jennifer will work on the date with Bob Foerster.

#### 12. Adjourn

The Forum meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

## Attachment 1

# NEVADA CERTIFIED DRINKING WATER OPERATOR'S FORUM

## Mission and Operations Charter

~ 2008 ~

### Forum Mission

The mission of the Nevada Certified Drinking Water Operators Forum (the Forum) is to support the protection of human health and the environment through certification of qualified water system operators.

To meet this mission, the goal of the Forum is to continue to build on the foundation created by the Nevada Water Operator Certification Advisory Board. Participants in the Forum will continue to: openly identify and constructively discuss issues regarding the education, training and testing of water system operators in Nevada; coordinate project efforts and disseminate information; and enhance public input by providing an open access collaborative forum for the exchange of information.

### Forum Operations

#### 1. Name

- 1.1 This organization will be known as the Nevada Certified Drinking Water Operator's Forum or NCDWOF or the Forum.
- 1.2 The address for the Forum shall be that of the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, 901 South Stewart Street, Suite 4001, Carson City, NV 89701.
- 1.3 The NDEP will host the Forum's website at <http://ndep.nv.gov/dwo/index.html>.

#### 2. Goals

- 2.1 The Forum will be the established organization for valuable two-way exchange of information on Operator Certification testing, training needs, regulation implementation issues, and other items and concerns between Certified Operators and the NDEP.
- 2.2 Members and participants will:
  - ◆ Openly identify and constructively discuss issues regarding the education, training and testing of water system operators in Nevada;
  - ◆ Coordinate project efforts and disseminate information; and
  - ◆ Enhance water system operator and public input by providing an open access collaborative forum for the exchange of information.

#### 3. Members

- 3.1 The seven sitting Advisory Board members will become the charter members of the Forum.
- 3.2 The current Advisory Board Chair will become the Forum Chair, to be rotated among Forum members on a two-year basis.

3.3 Future membership will reflect the intent of NRS 445A.870. Official members will include:

- ◆ A representative of the American Water Works Association;
- ◆ A representative of the Nevada Rural Water Association; and
- ◆ A member of the general public.
- ◆ Membership will also include four additional water system representatives from small, medium and large systems in both rural and urban areas of Nevada.

3.4 The Membership Roster will be published on the Forum website.

3.5 The NDEP Bureau of Safe Drinking Water will remain committed to active participation in the Forum.

3.6 The term of membership shall be two years. Members can volunteer to be re-confirmed for additional terms. Vacancies will be filled by volunteer applicants at a regularly scheduled meeting, following announcement to the mailing list. Volunteers will be asked to provide background information and a statement of interest in serving on the Forum. Preference will be given to regular Forum participants.

#### **4. Meetings**

4.1 The Forum will meet quarterly until changed by a consensus of the membership, with input from the regular participants.

4.2 The NDEP will host Forum meetings and prepare minutes for approval. Videoconference capability to Las Vegas and Elko will be provided as resources permit. Teleconference call-in service will be provided as resources permit.

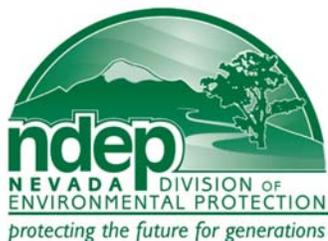
4.3 Notices and meeting agenda will be sent to participants at least ten (10) days prior to the meetings and each agenda will include an opportunity for public input and discussion.

4.4 The NDEP will provide a website and staff to maintain the Forum's historical records and to announce meetings and agendas.

4.5 The NDEP will maintain an electronic mailing list for notices and agenda announcements. Opportunity to sign up for the mailing list will be provided on the Forum webpage and the NDEP Operator Certification Program webpage. Notices and agenda announcements will also be sent to all Nevada Certified Operators with e-mail addresses registered in the NDEP Operator Certification database.

4.6 When formal resolutions, recommendations or other actions by the Forum are warranted, they will be agendaized as an action item and agreed upon by consensus of the Members. Consensus is reached when it becomes evident through deliberation that every member, at the very least, does not *oppose* an action or decision. In its deliberations, the Forum shall use appropriate tools for developing consensus, and shall seek to exhaust every reasonable and practicable effort to reach consensus.

## Attachment 2



# STATE OF NEVADA

Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

*Jim Gibbons, Governor*

*Allen Biaggi, Director*

*Leo M. Drozdoff, P.E., Administrator*

November 25, 2008

Dear Water/Wastewater Utility:

Congress is considering an economic stimulus package that will provide significant federal funding for water and wastewater infrastructure with the hope that providing funds for infrastructure will create jobs. Whether the bulk of the funds would come via loans, grants, or some other mechanism remains to be seen. It is suspected that monies would be disbursed through established channels, such as state revolving funds, rather than as part of an "earmark bill."

Nevada has established state revolving fund (SRF) programs for both drinking water and wastewater. These programs annually solicit for new projects. Although the stimulus package has not yet passed Congress, NDEP is preparing to be able to get the money out quickly should it become available. Since the possible stimulus package monies are likely to have very aggressive time schedules for initiating construction, we are opening both our Clean Water and Drinking Water Priority Lists to new projects. The terms of the stimulus will not require state match; therefore we will be able to offer very attractive interest rates possibly including zero interest for projects that qualify.

NDEP is soliciting utilities for possible projects that will be ready to construct within 6 to 9 months. If you did not submit a project for the current Priority List and have a project that you would like considered for stimulus package funds, please submit the attached Pre-Application by January 5, 2009. We will be soliciting for projects for next year's Priority List in the near future. This request is to add projects interested in possible stimulus funds to our current Priority List.

If you have any questions about Drinking Water or this letter feel free to contact me at (775) 687-9488 or contact Morris Kanowitz at (775) 687-9425 regarding Clean Water SRF.

Sincerely,

Adele Basham  
Office of Financial Assistance