

NORTH DAKOTA STATE ELECTRICAL BOARD MINUTES

Monday, January 5, 2015

The North Dakota State Electrical Board meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by President Earl Scherer at the office of the North Dakota State Electrical Board, 1929 N. Washington Street, Suite A-1, Bismarck, N.D. Members present: Rodney Mayer, Ben Koppelman, Karen Karls and Kyle Miller. Also present: James Schmidt, Executive Director; Paula Glass, Office Manager; and Ed Christian of NECA.

President Scherer asked for further Agenda items to appear at this meeting. James Schmidt added a request that was received for exam accommodations; and Rodney Mayer questioned well-being of inspectors. There being no further Agenda items, it was motioned by Kyle Miller and seconded by Rodney Mayer that the Agenda, as amended, be approved. Motion carried.

President Scherer asked for any comments on the Consent Agenda items. Motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Kyle Miller to approve the Consent Agenda items. Motion carried.

Mr. Schmidt reported that the Board received eight applications with seven candidates being interviewed for the two roaming electrical inspector positions. Tom Crawford and Mark Moderow accepted and were hired to start January 12, 2015.

Discussion commenced on continuing education courses and what could be considered as non-code credit. Several subject matters were reviewed to determine if they would qualify per N.D.C.C. §43-09-15.1 and North Dakota Laws, Rules & Wiring Standards §24-02-01-22, which 50 percent shall be based on the 2014 NEC and the remaining credits related to the electrical industry.

At 9:15 a.m., Scott Porsborg, Special Assistant Attorney General, entered the meeting.

Further discussion took place on continuing education with input from Ed Christian of National Electrical Contractors Association with emphasis on safety training.

Mr. Schmidt, based on recent conversations, indicated that the Board may need to consider low-voltage licensing, similar to Minnesota, in the near future. No action was taken at this time.

At 9:50 a.m., the Board recessed for a break.

At 10:10 a.m., the Board reconvened, and Joe Blurton entered the meeting.

Joe Blurton's Application for an Electrician's (Master) License was presented to the Board. Due to Mr. Blurton's felony conviction, Mr. Blurton was requested and did appear to present documentation concerning his felony conviction. Mr. Schmidt questioned Mr. Blurton of his intent for a Master license. Mr. Blurton responded that his intent is not to open a business or do private contracting work, but just to maintain the license as a goal in life. It was agreed by Mr. Blurton, and therefore motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Kyle Miller to allow Joe Blurton to take the Master license exam, and if he passed, Mr. Blurton would only be allowed to carry a non-contracting Master license. Motion carried.

At 10:35 a.m., Joe Blurton left the meeting.

Ben Koppelman distributed supporting documentation concerning proposed legislation for a licensure bond versus the current Undertaking Fund. The proposed bill would include a \$35,000 bond to be obtained and carried by contracting Master and Class B electricians. Mr. Koppelman indicated that his research found an average cost to a contractor for this type of surety bond would be approximately \$125.00 per year. Paula Glass questioned the qualifications for obtaining this type of bond. Mr. Koppelman responded that it can be a fairly simple process with reasonable rates and is based on your credit history. Attorney Porsborg provided the Board with a history of the law that involved a surety bond at one time and the transition to an undertaking fund. It was motioned by Rodney Mayer and seconded by Kyle Miller to authorize Ben Koppelman to send the bill draft to legislation. Motion carried. Further discussion took place concerning dissolving the funds currently in the Undertaking Fund if the legislative bill passes. Some suggestions included for educational purposes as required by the current law and the Board hiring contractors to clean-up corrections left behind by expired contractors. No action taken at this time.

Mr. Schmidt reported no further update or action to be taken at this time on Terry Packer/Allen Jenkins or Steven Will matters.

Mr. Schmidt reviewed with the Board that he met with City of Fargo (Ron Strand and Chad Lemar) on the City of Fargo pursuing an ordinance to be more stringent than North Dakota Wiring Standards §24-02-01-07(8) [with exception]. Attorney Porsborg indicated upon review of the Attorney General's opinion that final authority rests with the Board. Motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Karen Karls to have Attorney Porsborg send a letter to City of Fargo outlining the Board's final authority on §24-02-01-07(8) [with exception] while recognizing the City of Fargo's ability to create more stringent requirements, and indicating that correction reports need to be written not verbal. Motion carried.

Mr. Schmidt presented the Board with a request from an Electrical Inspector, Mitch Feininger, concerning his volunteer involvement on the NFPA Code Making Panel, and an upcoming meeting in which he requested to be paid regular wages, instead of taking annual leave. Motioned by Kyle Miller and seconded by Rodney Mayer to pay Mitch Feininger regular wages for the week of the meeting. Earl Scherer, Rodney Mayer, Kyle Miller and Karen Karls voted aye. Ben Koppelman voted nay. Motion carried. Further discussion took place which entailed future employee volunteer requests to participate on committees be approved before asking for monetary compensation, and to place a one-time limit per code cycle. Mr. Schmidt will provide a budget item for this type of activity.

At 12:40 p.m., Attorney Porsborg left the meeting, and the Board recessed for a break.

At 12:55 p.m., the Board reconvened, and Lyle Wergeland, Director of Inspections, entered the meeting.

Rodney Mayer inquired of Mr. Wergeland the well-being of inspectors, particularly when it comes to family and working away from home. It was reported that these situations are being handled to accommodate an employee's family matters on a per case basis as they arise.

Lyle Wergeland reviewed the district reports, and how it will help having two roaming inspectors to help out inspectors currently working out of their districts.

At 1:10 p.m., Lyle Wergeland left the meeting, and Scott Halle, Training and Compliance Administrator, entered the meeting.

Mr. Halle provided an update on the Board CEU classes and the good/positive responses we continue to receive on comment cards. Mr. Halle indicated he is also preparing for the Board's 2015 classes, as well as reviewing online course applications being submitted by providers.

Mr. Schmidt indicated that the present staff would be the reader of current and future special exam accommodations requests.

Due to conflicts with the March, 2015 Board meeting, the March, 2015 meeting was rescheduled from March 18, 2015 to March 9, 2015.

There being no further business, it was motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Rodney Mayer to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Date

Date

Earl Scherer, PRESIDENT

Karen Karls, SECRETARY