

IDAHO PLUMBING BOARD MEETING

Thursday – March 18, 2021 – 9:30 a.m. (MDT)

**Division of Building Safety
1090 East Watertower Street, Suite 150, Meridian
1250 Ironwood Drive, Suite 220, Coeur d’Alene
155 North Maple Street, Blackfoot**

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2021 MEETING

NOTE: The following report is not intended to be a verbatim transcript of the discussions at the meeting but to record the significant features of those discussions.

Chairman Matt Gardner called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. (MDT)

Board Members Present:

Matt Gardner, Chairman
Gilbert Pond, Vice-Chairman
John Kierce
Rick Garrett
Bob King

DBS Staff Members Present:

Ron Whitney, Administrator
Spencer Holm, Deputy Attorney General, Telecon.
John Nielsen, Plumbing Program Manager
Chuck Knapp, Regional Supervisor, Region 1
Josh Nyman, Regional Supervisor, Region 3
Renee Bryant, Administrative Assistant 2

◆ **Open Forum**

There were no new concerns to address under open forum.

City/County Concerns – There were no new city/county concerns to address under open forum.

◆ **Approval of the March 18, 2021 Agenda and January 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Action Agenda Item 02, *Administrative Appeal Hearing--R. L. Jacobs Plumbing, Inc., PLB2101-0010*, was resolved prior to the meeting.

MOTION: Gilbert Pond made a motion to approve the agenda as amended and meeting minutes as presented. John Kierce seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

◆ **Code Changes**

The following proposed changes to IDAPA 24.39.20.301 *Adoption and Incorporation by Reference of the Idaho State Plumbing Code (ISPC)* were provided: 1) Add--a. Section 204 *Definitions-Bathroom Group*, 2) Delete--12. Section 507.3 *Seismic Provisions*; and 3) Add--14. Section 507.26 *Accessibility for Service and Replacement*.

It was questioned why specific appliances were not included in Section 507.26 *Accessibility for Service and Replacement*. Although the language could be more specific, it was determined the new verbiage does not limit the type of appliances that should not be positioned in front of other installed equipment.

Chairman Matt Gardner and Plumbing Program Manager John Nielsen agreed this topic should be addressed at the May 2021 meeting as an informational item.

ACTION: The topic *Code Changes* will be added as an informational item on the May 20, 2021 board meeting agenda.

◆ **Specialty Pumps and Requirements**

Plumbing Program Manager Nielsen explained the requirements to hold a water pump specialty license. Until 2020, when Covid-19 occurred, the Idaho Groundwater Association held an annual convention, which the Division accepted as 12 hours continuing education units (CEUs).

Legrand Baker, Pump Service Idaho, and previous member on the Idaho Groundwater Association, has been fielding licensing and testing questions from the pump industry. When asked, there is only one CEU provider in Washington that provides a pump course. Mr. Baker stated he would like to see courses and tests more applicable to the trade.

The Chairman asked, and Mr. Baker agreed, to work on creating a specialty apprenticeship program for the pump industry; however, asked for cooperation by both the plumbing and electrical trades. It was suggested to meet with suppliers and manufacturers to get them involved in creating a curriculum. Also, contact the U.S. Department of Labor on its apprenticeship program to assist with grants and funding. Mr. Baker has spoken to the manufacturers and suppliers and they are on board. Board Member Gilbert Pond offered to provide assistance when available.

◆ **Practical Exam**

The Plumbing Program Manager sent an email and board packet to the schools regarding the Board's decision for them to provide the practical exam. Concerns arose that some schools do not have the proper equipment or facility. It was suggested using schools or JATC that currently offer a practical. The Chairman explained the background behind the Board's decision, which was not to burden the schools but rather for uniformity. For further clarification, Chairman Matt Gardner asked, and Administrator Ron Whitney agreed, for DBS to provide a letter to the plumbing, electrical and HVAC trade. In addition, the Chairman requested the Plumbing Program Manager provide him with a contact list of all the schools.

ACTION: The Division will send a letter to the plumbing, electrical and HVAC trades; clarifying the schools will need to provide the practical exam.

ACTION: The Plumbing Program Manager will provide a contact list of all the schools to the Chairman.

◆ **Permit Fees**

There seems to be confusion with the current fee schedule between inspectors, contractors and staff on how to calculate the cost of permits. The HVAC program has gone back to a

base permit fee and counting fixtures. For existing one- and two-family dwelling units, to include townhouses, the Plumbing Program Manager would like the Board to consider changing its fee schedule to a base fee and fixture count. All new dwelling types would stay at the square footage fees. When asked about apartment complexes, realistically they fall under the commercial fee structure; which would remain the same. City of Boise officials explained their permitting processes, and Chairman Gardner asked how the Electrical Board permits its apartment complexes.

Board Member Gilbert Pond stated residential repairs and/or additions need to be addressed, and square footage is great for new residential construction. In addition, Board Member Pond would like the Division to meet with other Idaho cities and review their permit processes for possible consistency throughout the state of Idaho.

Plumbing Program Manager Nielsen agreed to bring to the May 2021 meeting a revised fee schedule, as well as a comparison of the costs, base/fixture vs. commercial, for a multi-family dwelling.

ACTION: The Plumbing Program Manager will bring cost comparisons to the May 2021 board meeting.

ACTION: The topic *Permit Fees* will be added as an informational item on the May 20, 2021 board meeting agenda.

◆ **Program Manager Report**

NOV Activity Report – The Division’s Compliance Officer averages 20 to 40 license checks weekly, as well as investigates issues found online and brought forth by inspectors.

Journeyman First Exam Report – There were no issues with the report.

Permit Fees (Cont’d) – When asked earlier, electrical permits for apartment complexes are processed based on the multi-family dwelling section of the electrical permit application. Each building is issued a permit, with cross-referencing of all units within the building.

Senate Bills 1024, 1026 and 1056 (previously 1025) – The bills create the new Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses (DOPL); bringing boards from various agencies, as well as DBS, under one organization. Currently, each bill is at its third reading at the 2021 legislature.

House Bill 254 – Amends Section 39-4109 to provide technical corrections and to remove provisions regarding certain excluded codes, such as electrical codes, mechanical codes, and plumbing codes. This bill also amends Section 39-4116 to provide that local governments shall adopt certain codes to make technical corrections. The bill is still in general orders.

Senate Bill 1083 – Amends existing law to provide for a more streamlined licensure by endorsement process for military members, veterans, and spouses. In addition, maintains the ability to benefit from existing interstate compacts for licensure.

Senate Bill 1084 – Amends existing law regarding sunrise review to provide for the addition of sunset review. This responsibility will be incorporated into the duties of the existing Sunrise Review Committee.

USDOL Davis-Bacon Requirements – Any company with apprentices working on a Davis-Bacon job must pay Davis-Bacon wages. Information on *What is Apprenticeship Idaho* is available on the Division’s website.

Inspections – The following plumbing inspections have been performed in 2021: January--2,540; February--2,507; and March (through the 17th)--2,110.

◆ **Administrator Report**

Covid – There have been additional cases of Covid reported within the agency. The doors to the three DBS offices continue to be closed to the public, except for testers.

Permit Activity – Between 2019 and 2020, permits were up by ten percent. In January and February 2021, permits were up 18 percent over last year, for a total increase of 28% in activity from 2019.

DOPL – There are several Zoom meetings scheduled in March and April 2021 for employees to meet with DOPL Administrator Russ Barron to explain their positions and ask questions. It is estimated the move to the Chinden Campus will be February 2022.

Financial Report – Rather than quarterly, the Financial report will be provided to the Board monthly.

◆ **Adjournment**

MOTION: John Kierce made a motion to adjourn the meeting

Chairman Gardner adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m. (MDT)

MATT GARDNER, CHAIRMAN
IDAHO PLUMBING BOARD

RON WHITNEY, ADMINISTRATOR
DIVISION OF BUILDING SAFETY

DATE

DATE

05/05/2021rb