

NORTH DAKOTA STATE ELECTRICAL BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

The North Dakota State Electrical Board meeting was called to order at 8:33 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; and Paula Glass, Office Manager. Other attendees: Solomon Maendel and Mike Hofer.

President Scherer asked for further Agenda items to appear at this meeting. Mr. Schmidt indicated that he was contacted by Jesse Hemmingsen concerning waiving his exam waiting period; Steven Witt (under Item 4(c)), was unable to appear with his attorney, and if time permits, discuss employee wages. There being no further Agenda items, it was motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Kyle Miller that the Agenda, as amended, be approved. Motion carried.

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

Mr. Schmidt informed the Board that Wyoming was dropped from reciprocity with North Dakota due to non-response to a 2011 letter inquiring about verification and licensing requirements. Conversations have taken place between Bruce Trembath, Wyoming Chief Electrical Inspector, and James Schmidt about licensing and inspection processes in Wyoming. A concern was that there is no or minimal inspection in the oil fields in Wyoming. Further discussion took place on other states, such as Idaho and Alaska, who currently reciprocates licenses with North Dakota. Mr. Mayer authorized Mr. Schmidt to further pursue this matter with Wyoming, and to table this matter until the next Board meeting, if applicable.

Mr. Schmidt handed out a preliminary proposed 2014-2015 budget. A definite proposed budget will be handed out and discussed at the next Board meeting.

New evaluation forms and self-evaluation forms have been developed, and will be used for 2014 employee reviews. The evaluation forms were developed based on job descriptions. Kathy Ibach has also reviewed and provided input.

The North Central Electrical League will be held this year in Minneapolis on April 16-17, 2014. Lyle Wergeland will invite inspectors who didn't attend either in previous years or the Western Section IAEI meeting. Mr. Schmidt also indicated that there are some classes that would benefit inspectors.

Mr. Schmidt informed the Board that Jerry Brackin, as part of the Education Committee, is working on compiling class hours obtained from other members. Mr. Koppelman has been approached by building trade instructors on how to promote electricians and if the instructor should be a master electrician.

At 9:45 a.m., Scott Porsborg, Special Assistant Attorney General, entered the meeting.

A progress report on the office remodel was given by Mr. Schmidt. As a result, the May, 2014 Board meeting may have to be held elsewhere.

At 10:00 a.m., the Board recessed for a short break and took a tour of the construction zone.

At 10:20 a.m., the Board reconvened, and John Mongeon and Mindy Piatz of Brady Martz entered the meeting.

Mr. Mongeon and Ms. Piatz explained the financial and audit reports, and its findings. No fraud and/or mismanagement were found or reported. Mr. Schmidt indicated that in the past travel expenses of all employees were lumped together, and now we have categorized all items out to help manage and identify them more easily. Mr. Mayer requested an itemization of past management expenses for review, which will be presented at the next Board meeting.

At 10:35 a.m., Lyle Wergeland, Director of Inspections, entered the meeting.

Solomon Maendel of the Forest River Colony and Mike Hofer of the Sundale Colony testified as to qualifications of their members to become electricians. Mr. Maendel indicated that they are self-insured and follow all guidelines of the state when it comes to inspections. Mr. Mayer inquired as to whether any of them are Master electricians. Mr. Maendel stated no, but the main reason they are appearing before the Board is because their insurer is requiring them to have Journeyman electricians. Mr. Maendel further indicated that currently they only wire within their own colonies and on their own projects, which have been allowed through the self-wire process. They want to pursue going outside of the colony. Verification of experience is a concern because there are no Master electricians. Mr. Mayer inquired of them as to their education to keep up with the electrical industry, which has been very minimal. Mr. Maendel stated that they carry "special" licenses in many states, which North Dakota does not offer even though they have asked for it in the past and were denied.

Motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Karen Karls to enter into Executive Session. Motion carried. Solomon Maendel and Mike Hofer left the meeting.

At 11:25 a.m., the Board entered into Executive Session.

At 12:03 p.m., Ben Koppelman motioned and Kyle Miller seconded to end Executive Session. Motion carried. Solomon Maendel and Mike Hofer re-entered the meeting.

At 12:07 p.m., the Board recessed for a short break before continuing with this matter.

At 12:15 p.m., the Board reconvened.

Kyle Miller voiced that the Board would need more information. Information to be compiled by Mr. Maendel and Mr. Hofer on the qualifications submitted to the other states in which they hold licenses would need to be submitted to the Board for its review. Mr. Mayer also inquired as to whether or not it is their intent to do this for profit, which Mr. Maendel indicated, yes. It was also noted that in North Dakota, you need a Master electrician to issue a wiring certificate for electrical projects. Mr. Maendel indicated their insurer is only requiring that they be Journeyman electricians. If further information is submitted by Mr. Maendel and/or Mr. Hofer, the Board will review this matter again.

At 12:25 p.m., Soloman Maendel and Mike Hofer left the meeting, and Ashley Windhorst, Administrative Assistant, entered the meeting.

Discussion took place concerning an applicant's work experience. With the verification of experience being received from various individuals and that particular state's requirements, the current policy needs to be reviewed. North Dakota requires that the work be done in jurisdictions

regulating similar licensing and inspection processes. This needs to be more clearly defined. The staff was directed to gather and/or provide further information for a future Board meeting.

Due to attorney conflicts, Steven Witt will not appear at this Board meeting, but will be re-invited to the May, 2014 meeting. A brief explanation of Mr. Witt's reason for appearance was reviewed, which includes unfinished jobs, overdue corrections and inspection fees not paid. Attorney Porsborg relayed that the Board does not have the authority to pay for fixing corrections over and above the \$5,000 limit per the Undertaking fund.

Mr. Wergeland reviewed with the Board the status of the Allen Jenkins' matter. The owner of Triple B Construction agreed to hire other contractors to get the outstanding corrections done. With the \$5,000 limit per the Undertaking fund, Attorney Porsborg gave advice on what the Board could do to rectify the situation if matters fail. Mr. Wergeland will follow-up and provide an update on this matter at the next Board meeting.

An update on the City of Williston providing their own electrical inspections was given by Mr. Schmidt. We currently continue to have David Jaeger, NDSEB Electrical Inspector, inspecting in that area.

At 1:40 p.m., Scott Porsborg left the meeting.

The Board is pursuing a remodel/revamp of the current Report System. The Report System is outdated and not adequate or functional to meet current needs. Mr. Schmidt presented three (3) proposals from various vendors. He also indicated that tech support is a critical feature. Mr. Mayer suggested that we re-interview all three, and make a determination. Mr. Schmidt would like to see a proposed budgeted amount in order to start the process. Motioned by Ben Koppelman and seconded by Karen Karls to set the proposed budget at \$110,000 for a new Report System. If more is needed, further Board approval will be required. Motion carried.

At 2:20 p.m., Ben Koppelman left the meeting.

Lyle Wergeland reviewed the district reports. He explained how having fourteen (14) inspectors have brought down workloads for inspectors as well as numbers in certain districts by allowing some inspectors to roam/help in other districts.

Mr. Schmidt presented a conversation with Jesse Hemmingsen concerning waiving his exam waiting period. Mr. Hemmingsen currently has a one-year waiting period. Mr. Hemmingsen had a North Dakota Journeyman license, however, let it lapse beyond the three (3) years. Mr. Hemmingsen has obtained a signed Medical/Disability Accommodation form outlining medical conditions and accommodations requested. Motioned by Rodney Mayer and seconded by Kyle Miller to waive the waiting period and allow Mr. Hemmingsen to re-take the Journeyman exam due to medical reasons. Motion carried.

At 3:00 p.m., the Board recessed for a short break. Lyle Wergeland and Paula Glass left the meeting.

Mr. Schmidt presented the Board with proposed wage reviews for NDSEB employees.

At 3:15 p.m., James Schmidt left the meeting.

At 3:30 p.m., James Schmidt re-entered the meeting.

It was motioned by Karen Karls and seconded by Rodney Mayer to approve the wage increases. Motion carried.

There being no further business, it was motioned by Karen Karls and seconded by Rodney Mayer to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Date

Date

Earl Scherer, PRESIDENT

Karen Karls, SECRETARY