

MINUTES OF THE January 29, 2025 MEETING
NEW JERSEY WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION
NORTH JERSEY SECTION

CALL TO ORDER: President Lisa Oberreiter called the meeting to order at Vincenzo's Restaurante at 6:17 pm.

ROLL CALL: Lisa Oberreiter, Jennifer Marques, Natelie Pisarcik, Jason Chase, John Corkery, Chris Pabst, Cathy Pabst, Connor Pabst, Humbertt Mortola, Sean Sauder, Rick Stafford, Brian Vallier, Bob Fischer, Mike Henry, Frank Dykas, Stacey Fects-Bock, Jim Wancho, Bassem Mohamed, Mark Weden

RECOGNITION OF PAST PRESIDENTS:

John Corkery
Chris Pabst
Bob Fischer

STATE OFFICERS- Bob Fischer- Treasurer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: President Lisa Oberreiter noted that the minutes for the September 17, 2024 meeting were distributed and asked if anyone had any corrections or comments. Motion was then made by Chris Pabst to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Jim Wancho
No Discussion.
The motion was approved unanimously. Motion Carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

NORTH JERSEY SECTION EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS:

President's Report: : Lisa Oberreiter

I have participated in a few events since we last met, one of which is our Beef Steak which we will talk about in a little bit later in the agenda as well as the Mini Seminar on the State level and I gave a presentation for the members of the Central Sections some of which that are here today. We are feverishly moving through our Dinner Dance preparations for March 8, 2025, so mark your calendars and hopefully we will see you there.

Vice President's Report: Humbertt Mortola; No Report.

Secretary's Report: Natelie Pisarcik: No Report

Treasurer's Report: Jennifer Marques; No Report

SECTION STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Awards Committee: Chairman Robert DeBlock

Lisa - Robert couldn't be here today but the North Section Awards have been recommended, and they will be presented at our Dinner Dance in March so stay tuned for those who have received those awards.

Education & Meetings Committee: Sean Sauder:

Thank you President, we had a great tour today at Charter Machine Co. in Metuchen, we had about 12 people attend on the tour it went very quick, we probably could have made it a 3 hour tour. Good to see manufacturing in America and in New Jersey. If anyone has any future ideas, please feel free to reach out to Lisa or myself and we will coordinate accordingly.

Thank you.

Lisa-Great turnout so we will get something together for Scan to promote that as well.

Membership Committee: Chairman Rob Watkins

No Report

Rob and his wife are expecting any day now.

Lisa-We do have some new members here today, I appreciate you joining, good to meet you today.

Nominating Committee: Chris Pabst

Tonight, I have the second reading of the nominations from the nominations committee.

Jim Wancho's term is up. He has served two full terms and now we are looking for the new trustee to be Chuck Theodora.

We also have 10 North Section Delegates

North Section Delegates to the NJWEA Governing Council.

1 Year term commencing at the call to order of the NJWEA Governing Council Meeting scheduled for April 2025

1. Brian Bigler
2. Joseph Bonaccorso
3. Mario Bonaccorso
4. Gregory Burde
5. Frank Pestana
6. Joanne Mancuso
7. Humbertt Mortola
8. Jennifer Marques
9. James Wancho
10. Natalie Pisarcik

North Section Alternate Delegates to the NJWEA Governing Council.

1 year term commencing at the call to order of the NJWEA Governing Council Meeting scheduled for April 2025.

1. Daniel Carey
2. Jason Chase
3. William J. Cleary
4. Harry L. Ladisheff
5. Terrence McHugh
6. John McNamara
7. Richard Stafford
8. Charles P. Theodora
9. Ramon Vera
10. Steven Wendowski

Motion was then made by Frank Dykas and seconded by Jason Chase

No Discussion.

The motion was approved unanimously. Motion Carried.

Policy Advisory Committee: Chris Pabst: No Report

Scholarship Committee: Dan Carey:

Lisa- Dan Carey couldn't make it tonight but we have been working with him closely, we have been talking about the March Dinner Dance in which Dan is an interval part at getting those scholarships reviewed and approved so we will look to get more information from him at the next meeting.

SECTION SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Affiliates Night: Charles Theodora:

Lisa- Also not present but wanted to pass along that we had a very successful event at the Beef Steak some of which in this room attended so thank you all for those who participated and it was a lot a of good networking and discussions by all.

Dinner Dance Committee: Kellie Markert:

Lisa- We have been communicating every other week or so to coordinate that event and we are looking forward to seeing you all there. There is still time for sponsorship, looking at the ad book or even sign up to attend the event itself. Again, that is March 8, 2025 at The Fiesta in Woodridge, NJ.

Golf Outing Committee: Rick Stafford and Humbertt Mortola:

The Golf Outing is scheduled for Friday, June 6, 2025 at Beaver Brook Country Club. We will start getting sponsorships going in another couple months and look forward to everybody attending that.

Young Professionals: Brian Carey:

Lisa- They have had a few events that were well attended, and they are looking forward to getting another one on the books. No Report this time around.

NJWEA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT:

Executive Director/ Deputy Executive Director: Jim De Block

Bob Fischer Reporting- A couple weeks ago we had a budget meeting at the Bayshore Regional Sewerage Authority and I am happy to say that all the sections submitted their budgets so we have a complete drafted budget and at the February 14th meeting we will be presenting that budget to the NJWEA Executive Committee for approval for the first reading and if that passes it will be presented to the Governing Council in April and we will have our 2025-2026 Budget in place by the end of the Governing Council meeting. The budget is about \$100,000 more than it was last year, somewhere about \$1.4-1.5 million in revenue and expenses and I think the difference is mainly due to additional revenue coming in from conference in terms of exhibitors and registrations.

We also had a call with the DEP to review the results of the survey work that was done. If you recall we presented the results of the survey at the last NJWEA Conference and that's the survey to analyze the low passing rate of license operators and the results are somewhat enlightening and somewhat intuitive. Most of what we found is that the longer an employee is out of class the less likely it is they are going to pass their exam. So those who were taking a class and have been away from a class for more than 3 years that the passing grade drops down significantly. We also found that most of the states in the United States in WEF have basically the same passing grade within the 20-30 percent range and that the test that is used by WPI, their standard test is the most difficult. Then there is a test tailored to the individual state. It is a modified exam and that has a high passing rate and then the state test that does not use the WPI standards and using their own state exam has the highest passing rate. There may be 4 or 5 states that use their own exam, and their passing rate is about 60-65 percent. Another significant finding from that, one really interesting question that we asked was with all of those who failed their last exam we gave 5 choices as to why they failed their exam, two of them dealt with their preparation and three of them dealt with the exam itself and when we asked those who failed, why do you think you failed? 75-80 percent blamed it on the test" and only 25 % blamed it on the amount of preparation that they did. Then we asked the same people "what does it take to pass an exam? 70% said you have to study hard, and you have to have the right experience, and you have to use the right manuals. So, the same people that complained that it's the exam also know that it's their preparation method that's important. So, we presented that to the DEP who had 15 people on the call, 4 of them were attorneys. The others were Bureau Chiefs. They

really brought out everybody. We presented the results, and they found them very interesting, but my gut feeling is that they are going to use the results that best support the actions that they are going to take anyway. So, I think that either by the beginning of February or the beginning of March we are going to see a rule come out that is going to have operator regulations. We've got some work to do at the NJWEA and we are going to be looking to have a long range planning committee meeting at Tech Transfer. Where we talk about some of the suggestions that have been developed in response to that report.

Lisa-Thank you. I appreciate that. I was interested to know what the DEP was going to respond at and then I had also shared that for others in the room who might not have a license. The DEP put out their own survey which I don't feel was as technical and applicable as the one you guys did.

Bob-I saw that survey and it was kind of weak. I am not sure what they were going to gain out of that. I believe they are looking for a certain answer to back the decisions that they already decided they are going to make. I Could be wrong, but we will see when the rule comes out.

Federation Directors:

Other State Officers/Committee Members:

John Corkery-

A couple of things are going on WEF as a delegate. First, the WEF website has quite a bit of information on it so if you are not visiting the WEF site once a quarter you should probably do that. It's all disseminated by topics you will be able to learn quite a bit of what's going on. I am involved in a group in WEF called the Circular Water Economy and there is a whole bunch of information online. The Circular Water Economy, we have what we call the linear process. We pump water underground and we use it, we dump it in the oceans, we take minerals out of the ground, we use it and throw it away. So, this one-time use of plastics and all our minerals; it's just unsustainable. We are looking to discuss how we can reuse many things. We use water. We extract the nutrients from wastewater and make beneficial use of it. A lot of this has been done for many years on a small scale but it needs to get accelerated quite a bit. So, I am involved with a number of people discussing this project on a national basis. I thought it quite interesting and quite extensive so from our point of view here they are currently putting together the best examples we can find around the nation of what is being done with recycling and reusing, creating the Circular Water Economy. The municipalities, we can't do it all on our own. We have a product and someone else has to find a use for that product and create a demand for it. In turn they have to send it on to the next party and create that circle. They are reaching out to our industries, it's already underway. Some wonderful examples are showing up in Europe. Anyway, the goal is that they are going to have a report as part of the 2025-2028 Circular Water Economy report they are working on. I encourage you to just be aware of what that it for the minute because it is important to us. I mean we treat water; the cost of treating water and we pass it on the customers and the system is unsustainable, it's got to change. The other item I had Lisa was the YP's. I'm sure Brian Carey is aware, the water advocacy group is doing a fly into Washington later in the spring to voice our needs on water. There is a whole group of people from WEF attending that. As part of that they are encouraging YP's to be part of that. There is even some funding available somewhere to help that. So the YPs should at least read up what that is-the water advocacy-y and be aware of what they call the "Fly In".

Lastly, WEF provides 3 meetings a year that are called WEF Max. It's where member associations like us can get together with all the other member associations and have our own discussions in a hotel room for a couple of days. Share how you guys do this, how we do it and you do it. It's all the same kind of committee and same kind of people. Those meetings are throughout the country by design, but next spring is in Salem, Massachusetts and there is one in Oklahoma and one in California. I don't know how we can help get some people up to Salem, Massachusetts. I'm planning on going there but I did one last year and I found it extremely useful, learning about our industry and learning how other MA's get their work done. The volunteerism that is out there, you know we are all volunteers and every time we see another volunteer doing something better it's warming. I got that out of it at least. Any questions? That's my short report.

NJWEA, COMMITTEE REPORT:

Financial Report: Jennifer Marques

As of January 29, 2025

TD Bank-General Operating

\$53,474.56

Wells Fargo Scholarship CD's

\$25,203.00

Total

\$78,677.56

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report by Humbertt Mortola seconded by Natelie Pisarcik.
Motion approved unanimously. Motion Carried.
Discussion: None

January 29, 2025

9/17/24	Lumi's Restaurant	September Business Meeting	\$1,898.00
9/17/24	Sean Sauder	Deposit for September Business Meeting at Lumi's	\$143.94
11/7/2024	Charles Theodora	Beef Steak-Affiliates Night Prizes	\$185.23
11/7/24	The Fiesta	2024 Beef Steak Balance	\$12, 306.73
11/29/24	Cathy Pabst	Comptroller/Recording Secretary Hours	\$162.30

Motion to approve the bills by Chris Pabst seconded by Jason Chase
Motion approved unanimously. Motion Carried.
Discussion: None

Old Business: None to Report

New Business:
No Report

Good and Welfare:

Lisa-Marta Eustice had a fall recently so she had a broken hip that was fixed up last week so we are wishing her a speedy recovery.

Greg Cardena had back surgery Monday. We wish him the best. I talked to him yesterday and he said he is doing well.

Natalie-Fletcher Plad, a long-standing employee of Mott, unfortunately passed away in the beginning of the year. I don't really know what happened. He was in his 80's. He was the one who developed and built our wastewater treatment plant.

Benefactors:

Rich Stafford (ERS)-Bullet Bourbon

Jason Chase (Harper-Haines)-Jameson, Jack, First Call Bourbon

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm on a motion by Chris Pabst and seconded by Natalie Pisacik and was approved unanimously.