

`BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS, WETLAND PROFESSIONALS and
GEOLOGISTS MEETING MINUTES

The Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists met on May 14, 2025, at the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR), 9960 Mayland Drive, Richmond, Virginia.

Members present for all or part of the meeting:

Citizens

Steven Yob
Cayman Lowe

Geologists

Ernest Beasley
Shannon Lukens
Michael Lawless

Soil Scientists

Jay Conta
Larry Giannasi
Alexis Jones

Wetland Delineators

Justin Brown
Doug DeBerry

Members absent from the meeting with regrets:

Geologists

Matt Heller

Wetland Delineators

Nathan Kuhn

Staff present for all or part of the meeting were:

Jeb Wilkinson, Chief Deputy Director
Steve Kirschner, LRPD Director
Kate Nosbisch, Executive Director
Joe Haughwout, Regulatory Affairs Manager
Ecila Williams, Licensing Operations Administrator
Jhustyna McBride-Dunn, Regulatory Operations Administrator
Amy Goobic, Executive Assistant

Josh Laws, Assistant Attorney General, was present from the office of the Attorney General.

Brian P. Wolford, Director, was not present at the meeting with regrets.

Mr. Brown, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Call to Order

Mr. Brown and Ms. Nosbisch advised the Board of the emergency evacuation procedures.

**Emergency
Evacuation**

Ms. Jones moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. DeBerry seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

**Approval of
Agenda**

Ms. Lukens moved to approve the following minutes:

- PSSWPG Board Meeting, December 2, 2024
- PSSWPG Public Hearing, January 22, 2025
- PSSWPG Public Hearing, February 24, 2025

**Approval of
Minutes**

Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Eli Wright, Wetland Professional, was present to address the Board. Mr. Wright stated to the Board that there has been an increase in wetland professionals due to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Virginia State Waters Delineator Certification Program, which shows the importance of the program and the importance of being certified.

**Public Comment
Period**

Mr. Wright also expressed concerns with the Universal License Recognition (ULR) applications being reviewed administratively and not reviewed by the Board.

Robin Bedenbaugh, Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals Certification Committee Chair, was present to address the Board. Mr. Bedenbaugh expressed his concerns with the reduction of experience to become a wetland professional from four years to three years.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also expressed concerns with the ULR applications being reviewed administratively and want ULR applicants to sit for the exam.

Mr. Conta arrived at 10:10 am.

**Arrival of Board
Member**

Ms. Nosbisch provided an update on examinations for informational purposes

**Examinations
Update**

Ms. Nosbisch stated the Executive Director Report was provided for informational purposes only.

**Executive Director
Report**

Ms. McBride-Dunn provided an update on the General Review of the regulations for each profession and provided a handout of the proposed regulation changes.

Regulatory Update

Ms. McBride-Dunn reported the Governor's Office and ORM's review of the Soil Scientist regulations was completed on 1/9/2025, a public hearing was held on 2/24/2025, there were no public comments. The action was submitted to the

Registrar on 1/13/25 for publication in the Register for Volume 41, Issue 13. The publication date was 2/10/25, followed by a 60-day public comment period concluded 4/11/25, with one comment received. Board members were provided with a draft response to the public comment.

Mr. Yob moved to adopt the proposed regulations as presented. Mr. Lawless seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Board members reviewed the public comments and draft responses. Mr. Giannasi moved to approve the response. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Ms. McBride-Dunn reported a public hearing for the proposed Wetland Professionals regulations was held on 1/22/2025, there was no public comment. The action was submitted to the Registrar on 12/11/24 for publication in the Register for Volume 41, Issue 10, the publication date was 12/30/24. There was a 60-day public comment period concluded 2/28/25, 8 comments were received.

Discussion was held on the definition of "tidal wetland," and whether it should remain in the regulations. The Board agreed to retain the definition. The Board also discussed reestablishing a deadline for applicants to submit documents to Board staff, changing it from 90 days to 60 days.

Mr. DeBerry moved to adopt the proposed regulations as amended. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Board members reviewed the public comments and draft responses. Mr. Lawless moved to approve the Board response as amended with regards to maintaining the "tidal wetlands" definition in response to public comment. Mr. Yob seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Ms. McBride-Dunn reported a public hearing was held 1/22/2025, on the proposed Geology regulations, there were no public comments. The action was submitted to the Registrar on 12/19/24 for publication in the Register for Volume 41, Issue 11. The publication date was 1/13/25. There was a 60-day public comment period which concluded 2/28/25, 8 comments were received. Discussion was held on retaining the definition of "Related geological science degree" and whether we need to define equivalent

geological science courses. After discussion the Board agreed to retain the definition of "Related geological science degree" and to not define equivalent geological science courses.

Mr. Lawless moved to adopt the proposed regulations as amended. Ms. Lukens seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Board members reviewed the public comments and draft responses. Mr. Beasley moved to approve the responses. Mr. Lawless seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

Mr. Kirschner provided a presentation on fee adjustments. Board members were provided with a handout with the proposed fee structure. Mr. Giannasi moved to approve the proposed fee adjustments. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by members: Beasley, Brown, Conta, DeBerry, Jones, Lawless, Lowe, Lukens, Giannasi, and Yob.

**Fee Adjustment
Update**

Jen Sayegh, Policy & Legislative Affairs Manager, provided an update on the 2025 General Assembly Session. Ms. Sayegh informed the Board that the agency had nine bills, six of which passed. She also reported on HB 1835, which changes certification for geologists to licensure, effective July 1, 2025.

**General Assembly
Update**

Mr. DeBerry departed the meeting at 11:35 am.

**Departure of
Board Member**

Ms. Jones provided a brief update on Soil Scientists. Ms. Jones stated that members of the Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists (VAPSS) have expressed concerns over the difficulty, relevance, and question format of the exams that are administered to be licensed. Ms. Nosbisch stated that this will be put on the agenda for the September 16th meeting for further discussion.

**Soil Scientists
Update**

Mr. Brown shared with the Board that there was no new information to report at this time.

**Wetland
Professionals
Update**

Mr. Wilkinson departed the meeting at 11:39 am.

Departure of Staff

Ms. Nosbisch reported that the Association of State Board of Geology (ASBOG) meeting held on April 10-12 in Roanoke, VA was well attended. Mr. Heller, Mr. Lawless, and Ms. Lukens all attended the entire conference. Ms. Nosbisch was

Geologists Update

there for the first day to welcome all attendees to Roanoke and the Commonwealth. Ms. Lukens commented that attendees enjoyed the warm welcome by Ms. Nosbisch.

The licensee counts as of May 1, 2025: Soil Scientists – 84; Wetland Delineators – 146; Geologists – 948.

**Licensed and
Certified
Population**

Mr. Kirschner provided Board Member Training reviewing motions, Robert's Rules, and reasons for closed sessions.

**Board Member
Training**

Mr. Haughwout and Mr. Laws departed the meeting at 11:50 am

Departure of Staff

Mr. Giannasi inquired as to why the Board was not reviewing ULR applications. Mr. Kirschner explained that Board staff knows whether other states have similar scope for licensure or certification. There are only three other states that have specific education and experience requirements: Wisconsin, New Hampshire and Minnesota.

Other Business

Mr. Giannasi requested to have ULR requirements and discussion added to the September 16th agenda.

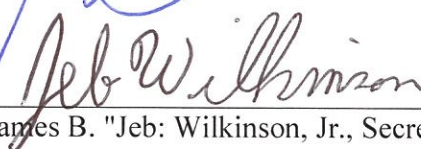
Conflict of Interest forms and travel vouchers were completed by all board members present.

**Conflict of Interest
Forms/Travel
Vouchers**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Adjourn


Justin T. Brown, Chair


James B. "Jeb" Wilkinson, Jr., Secretary

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Jay Conta
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025
5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Jay F. Conta
Signature

May 14, 2025
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Ernest Beasley
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025
5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

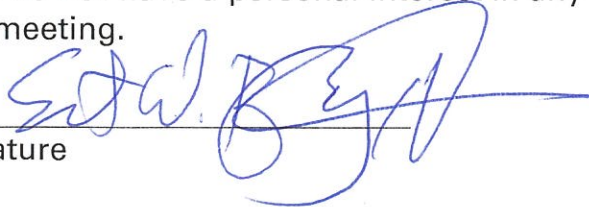
or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature

Date



5/14/25

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Justin T. Brown
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature

Date

5/14/2025

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Doug DeBerry
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting
5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

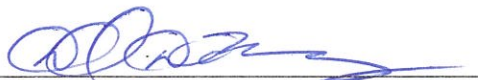
I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.



Signature

5-14-25

Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: Larry Giannasi
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

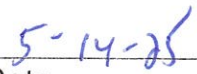
☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature



Date



**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Alexis E. Jones
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

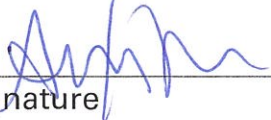
☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature



Date

5/14/2025

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Michael D. Lawless
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting
5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

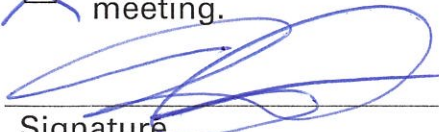
I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.



Signature

5/14/25

Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: Caymen Lowe
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

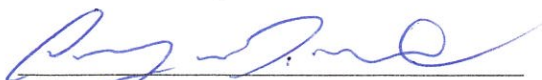
I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐ I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐ I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.


Signature

05/14/2025
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government

1. Name: Shannon Lukens
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025
5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

☐

I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

or

☐

I did not participate in the transaction.

6.

☒

I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting

Shannon Lukens
Signature

5/14/2025
Date

**STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CONFLICT OF INTERESTS ACT**

**TRANSACTIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
for Officers and Employees of State Government**

1. Name: Steven Yob
2. Title: Board Member
3. Agency: Board for Professional Soil Scientists, Wetland Professionals and Geologists
4. Meeting/IFF Date: Board Meeting May 14, 2025

5. I have a personal interest in the following transaction:

none

Nature of Personal Interest Affected by Transaction:

none

I declare that I am a member of the following business, profession, occupation or group, the members of which are affected by the transaction:

licensed Professional Engineer
" solid waste professional Class II

☐

I am able to participate in this transaction fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

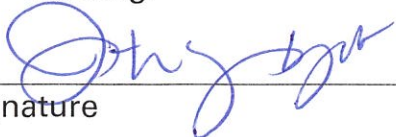
or

☐

I did not participate in the transaction.

6. ☒ I **do not** have a personal interest in any transactions taken at this meeting.

Signature



Date

May 14, 2025