

CITY OF BATAVIA PLUMBING BOARD

Minutes

June 17, 2015, 8:00 a.m.

**Public Works Conference Room
One Batavia City Centre, Batavia, NY**

Members present: *Douglas Diegelman, William Hayes, Al Rosemark, Matt Worth*

Members absent:

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rosemark called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll call of the members was conducted. Four members were present providing a quorum to conduct the meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes from February 18, 2015 Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Hayes moved to approve the minutes as written; the motion was seconded by Mr. Worth. All voted in favor.

Result: Approval of February 18, 2015 meeting minutes.

IV. Old Business: Plumbing exam for Robert Marvin

Mr. Worth reported that there has been a delay in the scheduling of the previous plumbing applicant's exam. He explained that the account manager for the agency that the City employs for the purpose of setting exams (Prometric) had been ill. When the account manager returned to work, he informed the City that the agency is no longer willing to come to Batavia to administer the test to a single candidate. Mr. Worth said that in the future, applicants will probably be required to take the exam at one of the agency's testing sites.

Mr. Hayes asked about the location of the testing site. Mr. Worth replied that the site will be located either in Rochester or Buffalo. He added that the applicants would probably be responsible for setting up their own exams and the scores would be sent to the City.

Mr. Hayes noted that the current applicant indicated that he would be taking the plumbing exam in Rochester. Mr. Worth clarified that the exam the applicant is referring to is for the City of Rochester, which is separate from the City of Batavia exam. Mr. Hayes asked if the City of Rochester administers their own test, and Mr. Worth responded that as far as he knows they do. Mr. Diegelman pointed out the City of Batavia Plumbing Board does as well. Mr. Worth acknowledged that the Plumbing Board is the administrator because it has the authority and power to create its own exam if it wishes, even though it has Prometric physically give the exam at the moment.

Mr. Diegelman asked if the reason for the change in exam procedures is because the City does not have more than one person taking the test at a time. Mr. Worth explained that in the past the procedure was for Prometric to send out two people to administer the exam. If there is only one applicant, then only one fee is being collected. If the applicant is sent to a testing site, it could be possible to accommodate a greater number of test takers with the potential for multiple tests to be given at the same time.

Mr. Diegelman asked about the nature of the test. Mr. Worth answered that the test is a state exam and not specific to the City of Batavia code. Mr. Rosemark wanted to know if the City of Rochester test is the same test given by the City of Batavia. Mr. Worth said that he could check with the City of Rochester to find out.

Mr. Diegelman said that there was a number at the bottom of his license which he thought might indicate which test he had taken. Mr. Worth explained, however, that the number corresponds to a competency certificate awarded upon passing the plumbing exam. The competency certificate indicates that the plumber has met the qualifications to obtain a license. It stays on file even if a plumber does not renew the license.

Mr. Rosemark asked if Mr. Scalia has visited the office. Mr. Worth told the board that Mr. Scalia has not reapplied for a plumbing license. Mr. Diegelman related that he is performing Mr. Scalia's plumbing work.

V. New Business

A. Review of Qualifications for Plumbing Board Exam (Justin Russell)

The board was presented with one applicant for the plumbing exam, Justin Russell. Mr. Rosemark asked if Mr. Russell meets the qualifications. Mr. Worth informed the board that he investigated Mr. Russell's application. Mr. Worth said that he spoke with Mr. Russell's father who said that Mr. Russell has been employed full-time at Russell Plumbing Services, the family-owned business, since 1997. The applicant corroborated this fact when Mr. Worth spoke with him. Mr. Worth explained to Mr. Russell that when an applicant works for a family-owned business, the Plumbing Board likes to see a couple of years- worth of W2 forms. Mr. Russell said that he would provide that information, but Mr. Worth stated that he has not done so.

Mr. Worth verified that Mr. Russell has been approved by the City of Rochester to take their plumbing exam in September. Mr. Worth noted that if Mr. Russell passes the City of Rochester exam, it will automatically make him eligible to take the City of Batavia exam.

Mr. Diegelman asked if the father is licensed. Mr. Worth said that the father is licensed in several towns but not in any cities. Mr. Rosemark pointed out that the regulation specifies cities but not towns and Mr. Worth agreed. Mr. Worth noted that if Mr. Russell passes the City of Rochester exam, it will automatically qualify him to take the City of Batavia exam, but he did not know if approval to take the City of Rochester exam was sufficient to qualify him to take the City of Batavia exam.

Mr. Worth checked and according to the regulations, approval for a certificate of competency requires the applicant to pass a master plumber exam given by another city; work years for a master plumber holding a certificate of competency; a combination of working two years for a master plumber holding a certificate of competency and successful completion of two semesters of an approved trade school; have the board waive the requirement if the applicant can demonstrate his training and experience are substantially equivalent; or, work in the plumbing trade for eight years with one year being equivalent to about 1,000 hours.

Mr. Worth said that according to these requirements, the applicant would have to submit records demonstrating eight years of employment for Russell Plumbing Services.

Mr. Rosemark noted that the father is not a master plumber and Mr. Worth indicated that eight years in the plumbing trade does not necessarily mean there must be a master plumber involved.

Mr. Hayes pointed out that the regulations say that the board is permitted to waive the requirement and not that the board is required to waive it. Mr. Hayes commented that if the applicant has worked primarily outside of the city, he may not know how to do some things. Mr. Hayes said that he thinks the board would need to know about the experience of the father, and Mr. Diegelman and Mr. Rosemark agreed.

Mr. Rosemark said that he would recommend waiting to see if Mr. Russell passes the City of Rochester plumbing exam. Mr. Hayes said that if he passes the test, then he could reapply. Mr. Rosemark noted that the applicant has not turned in the W-2 forms requested from him.

MOTION: Mr. Worth moved to deny the application; the motion was seconded by Mr. Diegelman. All voted in favor.

Votes in favor: 4 (*Douglas Diegelman, William Hayes, Al Rosemark, Matt Worth*)

Votes opposed: 0

Votes abstained: 0

Mr. Worth said that he will send a letter to the applicant informing him that his application was denied for failure to submit documentation. Mr. Worth will also let Mr. Russell know that he may reapply in the event that he passes the City of Rochester plumbing exam.

B. Polyethylene Pipes

According to Mr. Worth, polyethylene pipe is becoming more popular because it is so much less expensive than copper pipe. He noted that the outside diameter is the same as copper tubing so the same fittings are used for the polyethylene pipes as the copper ones. Mr. Worth explained that the Municipal Code requires a minimum of $\frac{3}{4}$ " service; however, a $\frac{3}{4}$ " polyethylene service is actually only about $\frac{5}{8}$ " in diameter. A 1" polyethylene service is about $\frac{13}{16}$ " in diameter, or about $\frac{1}{16}$ " over $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Mr. Worth asked the board if they wished to consider requiring the larger size in cases where polyethylene is being used and 1" is needed. He said that some contractors are automatically using 1" but some are using the smaller size despite not technically being the correct size.

Mr. Rosemark asked about water flow through polyethylene pipes versus copper pipes. Mr. Worth said that he did not know but that he would assume the flow to be similar since both materials are smooth on the inside. He said that he has been told that polyethylene pipes are more susceptible to freezing and Mr. Diegelman said he could see where that might be true because the polyethylene has more flexibility. He wanted to know about how to deal with frozen pipes since the polyethylene ones cannot be heated the way copper pipes can.

Mr. Hayes asked if the code identifies the size of the polyethylene pipe as $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Mr. Worth said that it does but the actual [flow cross section] is only between $\frac{1}{2}$ " and $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Mr. Rosemark said that he would like to see what the actual flow is at a given pressure in copper versus polyethylene pipes rather than what the physical size is. Mr. Diegelman said he thinks it will be smoother but Mr. Rosemark believes that the fittings will choke down the size. Mr. Rosemark noted that polyethylene pipes are approved for interior work. Mr. Worth said that their use is becoming more accepted for exterior work also. He related that the Summit Street project for next year will be done with polyethylene pipes resulting in a savings of \$60-70,000.

Mr. Rosemark asked how much more bedding has to be use and Mr. Worth replied that not much more is used but it must be done more carefully.

Mr. Diegelman asked how long the product has been on the market. Mr. Worth estimated about five years.

Mr. Worth stated that he would gather information on the polyethylene pipes and pass it on to the board so they could hold a discussion on the subject at the next meeting.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Rosemark moved to adjourn; Mr. Hayes seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 a.m.



Meg Chilano
Recording Secretary