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# NEW MEXICO WATER & WASTEWATER ASSOCIATION

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## MINUTES

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### NMWWA Executive Board Meeting

Las Cruces, NM - January 21, 2024

The Meeting of the NMWWA Executive Board was called to order on January 21, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. by President Lorenzo Sanchez.

Roll was called and attending the meeting were: Lorenzo Sanchez, Martin Lopez, Craig Byers, Cynthia Arnold, Victor Gonzales, Lyman Waller, Javier Gutierrez, Gene Salazar, Terry Mount, Eric Hall, Mark Teshima, Andrew Valadez, Jake Martinez, Caroline Sanchez and Rose Martinez.

A motion was made by Gene Salazar to accept the minutes of the last Executive Board meeting. Motion seconded by Craig Byers; motion carried.

**Transfer of meeting to new President:** Lorenzo Sanchez welcomed and transferred the meeting over to Martin Lopez as the new 2024 NMWWA President.

Martin Lopez thanked Lorenzo Sanchez for getting the Association through another year and also thanked those who have been on the Board and decided to stay on. Martin continued by stating that he called a closed session and will discuss it more on his President's report.

**2024 State Officers:** Caroline stated that a ballot had gone out and votes were tallied. The following are officers for 2024: Lorenzo Sanchez as Past President; Martin Lopez as new President; Lyman Waller as Director, Gene Salazar as Secretary-Treasurer, Craig Byers as President Elect, Cynthia Arnold as Vice President and Victor Gonzales as Director.

**Closed Session:** Martin Lopez called for a motion to convene in closed session pursuant to NMSA 1978 10-15-1 H.2 - limited personnel matters to discuss the position of the Executive Manager and motion to convene in closed session pursuant to NMSA 10-15-1 H.7 – threatened or pending litigation.

Roll was called to reconvene in closed session and all in favor were: Martin Lopez, Lorenzo Sanchez, Lyman Waller, Gene Salazar, Terry Mount, Craig Byers, Cynthia Arnold, Victor Gonzales and Eric Hall. Martin proceeded with asking for the recorder to be turned off and have Caroline and Rose step out from the meeting at this point.

Martin Lopez asked for Caroline and Rose to resume the meeting with requesting a motion to reconvene into open session. The Board were all in favor. Martin said the matter discussed in the closed session meeting was limited to only those specified in the motion for closure.

**Financial Report, Budget Summary, Audit Report:** (see attached) Financial report was given by Gene Salazar. A motion was made by Craig Byers to



## Page 2 Minutes

accept the financial report as presented. Motion seconded by Eric Hall; motion carried. Caroline mentioned that by looking at the budget summary, we might be able to transfer \$30,000 back into the Savings Reserve account this year. Martin proceeded with reading the Audit Report on behalf of David Salazar. All of the books are in order. Martin Lopez asked Caroline if they can get bank statements at each board meeting to show transparency; Caroline agreed. Gene asked how is the annual and sick leave deducted and balanced? Caroline responded by saying we keep track on an Excel spreadsheet. Rose has one as well as herself. Martin asked if we can get David Salazar to track the annual and sick leave for both Caroline and Rose or somebody else to look at the spreadsheets. Caroline suggested maybe even Gene as Secretary-Treasurer, look at them. Martin Lopez said what Gene is referring to is, if there was a paper trail of leave taken; Caroline confirmed yes, there has always been. Martin asked if Caroline can provide the annual and sick leave forms at the next Executive Board meeting. Caroline confirmed she can provide them as a separate attachment. Lyman Waller made a motion to accept the Audit report on behalf of David Salazar as presented. Motion seconded by Victor Gonzalez; motion carried.

*Executive Manager's Report:* Caroline said we currently have 160 people registered and expect around 10 more to register for the Annual Conference, she added we have 24 Exhibitors and 1 who is not exhibiting but, is donating \$1,500 toward coffee breaks. The class schedule is set with 30 instructors scheduled to teach. A brochure will be given to everyone describing the workshops and schedule, everyone will receive a banquet ticket along with their lanyards. Caroline said everyone receiving an award has already been contacted. The "meet and greet" will take place on Tuesday evening and the awards banquet on Wednesday. Caroline said the guest speaker will be Lilia Reid. Caroline proceeded with going over all the award recipients and who will be the presenters of each award. Jake questioned Caroline out of curiosity how much the banquet is costing the Association? Caroline responded \$5,000 for 100 people so about \$50 dollars a plate. Caroline proceeded to say that the Annual General Business Meeting will take place after registration on Monday which begins at 7:00 a.m. and reminded everyone that the school is now 30 credits so classes after the first day will be from 7:30 to 5:00 p.m. State & Section officers will be introduced so officers are encouraged to attend.

*2024 Annual School-schedule, awards, etc.:* Discussed above on the Executive Manager's Report.

*Financial Committee Update:* Craig Byers began with saying the financial committee has had one meeting to go over the finances and asked for ideas on how the Association can save and make money going forward. Martin said he's goal is to schedule another meeting before the next Executive Board meeting to touch on policies, job descriptions and streamline and make it more self-explanatory for anyone in the future that might replace us so we don't have to start from scratch every January, so that is his goal with the finance committee. Cynthia said initially the meetings were to be scheduled once a month, but lacked due to the Holidays in December. Caroline said she talked to Tanya Trujillo with NMED in regards to a possible contract with us and Tanya said she would need a proposal be drawn up by the President. requesting a proposal. Martin said we just need to explore because the revenue stream is not there. Gene said LANL foundation is giving \$5,000 dollars grants to non-profit organizations. Martin said that Caroline had mentioned that RCAC might be doing some training in the northern part of the State so he's requesting Caroline to look into more avenues for her to explore additional funding. Jake suggested asking the Vendors to donate paying for the awards. Caroline said they're already donating the "meet and greet" and door prizes which is included in their registration fees. Caroline said that at the last Financial Committee meeting, Terry had suggested for Caroline to go part time and was questioning if that is still in place. Martin said at



### Page 3 - Minutes

this point they are only looking at revenues and expenses in terms of what we can cut down and where we can generate revenue or additional funding. Caroline said she's willing to go part time and take off every Friday and every other Monday and use some of her leave, and it should be her decision when she will retire. Martin said this is something we'll hammer out on the finance committee meeting. Caroline said since she's been working for the Association, the Association has had these financial issues and we have always overcome them. We are fortunate the Association has succeeded with only membership dues & registration fees as our only means of revenue. Martin said before making the jump of Caroline going part time, they need to look at everything. Gene said he just wants to make sure that the Association will at least have \$24,000 a month. Caroline told Gene as of right now she has 240 hours of annual leave and 300 hours of sick leave, she stated she could start using her leave. Martin and Gene both said we're not doing anything irrational or making any decisions right now because it still needs to be discussed. Caroline said this is a unique business we have to work in order to get paid, she said if you are somewhere else it doesn't matter if you work or not you get paid. Rose & I work hard to make the schools successful & professional so we can get revenues needed to continue this great organization. Vendors need to be contacted and explained what the Association is all about. We currently have a database for Exhibitors that we can use. She said for example we have a Vendor who is not exhibiting but, donated \$1,500 in coffee breaks and they are going to put a sign up and at the Northern school a Vendor donated for the coffee breaks as well; she said we need the Board's help to contact the vendors too. Craig suggested to schedule a meeting since now. The Board agreed on having the financial committee meeting on February 16th from 10:00 to 11:00. Terry suggested having the committee draft something up before the meeting. Lyman Waller asked who's on the financial committee, Martin said it is everyone on the Board.

2023 Section Dues: Martin postponed this line item on the agenda and is to be discussed at the financial committee meeting.

#### Section President's Reports:

*NE:* Jake reported \$5,380.17 in the saving account and \$1,705.50 in the checking. Jake mentioned their trainings are going well he suggested for sections to know the facilities and section members because it is important. Jake said they've having issues logging credits on the SEP Portal. Eric said they are working getting that issue fixed.

*CT:* Craig reported \$200 in the checking account, \$8,072.02 in the saving account. Craig said the CT Section held their meeting last week on Webex and hosted the WC section at the same time with a breakout room where the CT and the WC section conducted their meetings at the same time, but in a separate room via Webex and then came together for the training at 12:00 noon and found out that it worked pretty well and is inviting any section to do the same, they can all benefit from the same training credits and have their own meeting separately. Craig added that he'll set it all up for you, set up the breakout sessions so that when people log on, they have the choice to click which one of their section's meetings they want to attend then after their meeting is over, they can all join the same training together. Craig said the technology is there, so it's up to the sections to want to offer their members free training because at the end of the day it's about the training credits.

*WC:* Mark Teshima reported \$606.83 in the savings account and \$3,284.72 in the checking account. Mark mentioned they held an election and elected himself as Section President and had another member from Gallup as Secretary Treasurer, but that didn't work out and was unable to accept the position so he's in the process of looking for another Secretary Treasurer. Mark said a lot of the



#### Page 4 - Minutes

managerial positions have had overturns so there's been a lot of hunting those people down and getting the list of past or recent members from the WC section and see if they'd be interested in serving. Mark said they've been doing well and started conducting section meetings again.

*SE:* Andrew Valadez said he does not have a financial report, but will email it tomorrow, he said they are having a section meeting this Wednesday in person in Carlsbad.

*SW:* Javier Gutierrez stated that Martin Torrez re-signed from the position as section President so himself and Mike Lopez took it over with himself being the new section President and Mike Lopez being the section Secretary Treasurer. Javier said he doesn't have financials yet, but he believes it could be at around \$10,000. He added he needs to get back into the string of things and start setting up section meetings. Javier said Martin Torrez secured the workshop venue last year for this year with Inn of the Mountain Gods in June so he and Mike are working acquiring Vendors and Instructors and hopefully it will be successful. Gene along with the Board thanked Javier for taking over the section. Javier mentioned he would be interested in conducting Webex training, but needs to get together with Rose to see how it works. Martin Lopez told Javier that Daniel Valdez, past section officer, has offered to help the section.

*NW:* No report, Caroline said Paul Smith is the new section President and Isaiah Garcia is the new section Secretary Treasurer.

*NMED:* Eric Hall stated testing is going well, they've worked out all the bugs at the testing centers, he said the passing rate on water is up to 45% and 37% in the wastewater and at or above the national average which is good. Eric added that there's been a lot of hard work put into getting these test scores up so he's happy about that. He said we hopes to have the new database up and running by June 1st, it's going to be a lot more operator friendly. You're going to be able to go in there and turn up your own certificates, they'll be able to also get their renewal notices. Eric said it's going to be a huge deal for operators. It's going to also save time for the NMED staff. The NMED is looking into hiring a training coordinator for our program. One of the items that he hopes is that the new team member is going to be working on is updating study guides. Eric added that there are three important things to pass along to operators and one is for operators to be aware of their certification expiration date. Eric said it's up to the operators to know when those certifications expire. All new renewal notices are being sent electronically to the individuals email record on file. Eric said to please make sure that the OCP has their current email address on file. The next thing to pass along to operators that operators are wanting to test after they attend school; they can, they just need to get their exam application in soon enough that they could set up, exam applications can be submitted up to six months in advance. Eric said another thing is if the operator is at an exam session and something goes wrong with the login; don't leave the exam site to call, go to the testing lobby and call from there because there's 90% chance, they can get it fixed. Gene asked Eric if there was a way emails not be sent to junk or spam mail, Eric said there's nothing they can do, but to tell the operators continuously to check their junk or spam mail. Craig said after you do it the first time and you go in and say this is not junk or spam; then it will go to your regular inbox. Cynthia suggested putting out an occasional broadcast to remind the operators for example "this is our email address add it to your contacts" or how to get ahold of your guys being that some people may not know the NMED general email has changed to env.nm.gov and getting that sort of information out there would be helpful. Lorenzo asked Eric if the new database is going to use the same username and password, Eric said it will remain the same.

**Page 5 - Minutes**

**DACC Water Technology Program:** Terry reported that enrollment is slightly up since last year, Spring semester is usually less than Fall. She said they had another failed search for a water Tech instructor, but, did have one person that she had been interested in, apply for the position previously out of Fargo and hired him and switched two of the didactic classes from face to face to online. Terry said that in March, she'll be doing a Saturday presentation with "Girls Can" It's geared towards 6th grade girls and its strictly professional women going in and working with girls for three sessions on Saturdays doing hands on type activities to try and get them to go into to STEM related courses as long as the City of Las Cruces do the water festival in April; she and her students will go out. Terry added that BRIDEL Facility (Eric Lopez) is going to give a \$250.00 scholarship for one of our students. Jake asked Terry how many students does she have in the program all together; Terry responded about 50 and the most we have had is between 150 to 200. Jake asked Terry if she could provide the Association with some brochures of her program that way, they can promote it as section meetings or even at the schools. On a different note, Gene asked Eric Hall how many new certified operators do they have in the system this past year? Eric responded he would have to look it up, but around 3000 certified total. Gene said he just trying to figure out where we are at with plus or minus because a lot of people have lost their certificates. Eric said, but they also have the equivalencies that's coming in this state around 170 new since last year, but said not to quote him because he wasn't too sure on that number.

**Other Business:** Caroline suggested adding to the agenda a report from an Advisory Board member for the next meeting. Eric Hall said he will report on behalf of the Advisory Board at the next meeting. Martin Lopez included adding on the agenda amending the fees for 2024 Membership Dues on the By-laws. Caroline stated that the By-Laws will be updated.

**Listed are the next meetings scheduled:**

- 1) NMWWA State and Section Officers meeting via Webex scheduled for February 8, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.
- 2) The Financial Committee meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2024 from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- 3) The NMWWA regular Executive Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 22, 2024 in Albuquerque at the Marriott Pyramid Hotel at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Lorenzo Sanchez to adjourn the NMWWA Executive Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Lyman Waller; motion carried. The NMWWA Executive Board meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.