

MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM

**OKALOOSA COUNTY ELECTRICAL COMPETENCY BOARD
MINUTES
February 7, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Okaloosa County Electrical Competency Board was held Thursday, February 7, 2019, 3:00 PM, at the Okaloosa County Administration Building, first floor BCC Chambers, 1250 Eglin Parkway N., Shalimar, Florida. Board members in attendance were Brent Smith, Jack Mott, Debra Ripley, Wayne Barlow, Kenneth King, Joel Richardson, Robert Garcia, and Linda Flowers.

Growth Management staff in attendance were Renée Lucas, Licensing Specialist; and Teresa Mullins, Administrative Assistant II. Assistant County Attorney Kerry Parsons attended the meeting by phone.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brent Smith called the meeting to order.

A. Roll Call

Ms. Teresa Mullins took roll call.

II. ACKNOWLEDGE GUESTS

Vice-Chairman Richardson welcomed and acknowledged the guest.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 3, 2019

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by Linda Flowers; second by Kenneth King; approved unanimously.

IV. OPEN TO PUBLIC (For any item not Quasi-Judicial on this Agenda)

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

VI. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Swearing in Applicants/ Speakers

Ms. Mullins swore in the applicants.

b. Candidates for Testing Approval:

1. Tai Castens – Master Electrical Contractor

Mr. Tai Castens introduced himself to the Board, stating that he has been doing electrical work for the past 10 years with a brief 4 year gap. Mr. Castens stated that he has worked in the electrical field since high school, working for his best friend's father and has worked on residential and commercial projects from installation to service work.

Chairman Smith asked staff if Mr. Castens' application meets the requirements of County Code.

Ms. Lucas stated that Mr. Castens meets code requirements.

Chairman Smith asked Mr. Castens if he had any experience in 3 phase work.

Mr. Castens stated that he did the work on the Alvin's Island project which was a 3 phase, 800 amp job.

A brief discussion ensued.

Motion that we approve him for testing made by Kenneth King; second by Wayne Barlow; approved unanimously.

2. Chad D. Earley – Residential Electrical Contractor

Mr. Chad D. Earley introduced himself to the Board, stating that he has worked the electrical field since 1998 in the Walton County area as well as working for the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Earley further stated that ran an electrical business with his brother but the company never grew, remaining a 3 / 4 man operation.

A brief discussion ensued.

Chairman Smith asked staff if Mr. Earley's application meets the requirements of County Code.

Ms. Lucas stated that Mr. Earley meets code requirements.

A brief discussion ensued.

Motion that we approve him for testing made by Kenneth King; second by Wayne Barlow; approved unanimously.

3. Robert Litzenberger – Electrical Sign Contractor

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that Mr. Litzenberger is before them seeking approval to test for his Electrical Sign contractor's license. Ms. Lucas further informed the Board that, on Mr. Litzenberger's appearance affidavit he stated that he had been charged with a felony in 2007 for battery in Volusia County, Florida. Ms. Lucas informed the Board, that in his written statement, Mr. Litzenberger stated that the charge was due to a fight that took place and resulted in a charge of battery; however, the charge is currently under appeal and is not finalized as yet. Ms. Lucas noted that Mr. Litzenberger provided a letter from this attorney to verify this information. Ms. Lucas read the letter into the record (see attached). Ms. Lucas reminded the Board that, per Okaloosa County Code of Ordinances,

Chapter 6, Article VIII, Division 3, Section 6-313 Eligibility, Licensure by Examination, (b):

The applicant shall have no outstanding judgments or have been convicted of a felony. This requirement may be waived by the board on a case-by-case basis with appropriate documentation.

Ms. Lucas stated that Mr. Litzenberger is present to answer questions from the Board.

Chairman Smith asked staff if Mr. Litzenberger's application otherwise meets the requirements of County Code.

Ms. Lucas stated that Mr. Litzenberger meets code requirements other than his felony conviction under appeal.

A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Robert Litzenberger introduced himself to the Board, stating that he is seeking their approval to take the exams to be an Electrical Sign Contractor. Mr. Litzenberger apologized for this issue from the past that has been brought up. Mr. Litzenberger stated that the reason he is seeking approval to test is due to the great need in the panhandle for the expertise that can be brought by someone of his qualifications growing his company in this new direction.

Chairman Smith asked Mr. Litzenberger to explain what he meant by growing his business.

Mr. Litzenberger stated that his business currently deals with unregulated work such as vinyl signage, banners & wraps, and begins with design work. Mr. Litzenberger further stated he has a great deal of experience and expertise in this field.

Chairman Smith asked Mr. Litzenberger to explain the situation surrounding his felony conviction under appeal.

Mr. Litzenberger stated that the charge resulted from a fight between 2 men, one of whom won while the other lost. Mr. Litzenberger stated that the fight involved a young, intoxicated spring breaker who was 3 times over the legal limit; the fight lasted 3 seconds and has caused him nothing but pain. Mr. Litzenberger stated that he was in the right and fully expects to be exonerated. Mr. Litzenberger stated that the issue that caused this issue to escalate to felony status was that the State said the young man had permanent damage to his teeth; however, it was recently discovered that there was no permanent damage done to his teeth and the evidence at the time was not reported correctly.

Chairman Smith cautioned Mr. Litzenberger, stating that even if this Board approves his request, this issue must be disclosed to the State when applying for licensure, and the State may require an appearance before the State Board as well.

A brief discussion ensued.

Motion that we approve him for testing made by Kenneth King; second by Jack Mott; approved unanimously.

A brief discussion ensued.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that at their recent meeting, the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners amended their policy for appointments and re-appointments of ancillary Board members to omit the requirement for background check and finger prints for currently sitting Board members who have agreed to continue to serve. Ms. Lucas noted that Board members who agree to serve an additional term will still have to fill out the application but that is all they will have to do. Ms. Lucas stated that an application, background check and fingerprinting will still be required of all new applicants seeking to fill a vacant ancillary Board seat.

A brief discussion ensued.

a. Chairman/Vice-Chairman Election:

Ms. Lucas reminded the Board of the motion made at the last meeting:

Motion that we delay these elections to the meeting on February 7, 2019 made by Wayne Barlow; second by Kenneth King; approved unanimously.

A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Lucas asked the Chairman to open nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Chairman Smith opened the nominations for Chairman.

Motion to nominate Brent Smith to continue as Chairman made by Wayne Barlow; Seconded by Joel Richardson.

Chairman Smith accepted the nomination and, there being no further nominations, Chairman Smith closed nominations for Chairman.

Brent Smith was approved as 2019 Chairman by unanimous vote.

A brief discussion ensued.

Chairman Smith opened nominations for Vice-Chairman.

Motion to nominate Wayne Barlow as Vice-Chairman made by Joel Richardson; Second by Jack Mott.

Mr. Barlow accepted the nomination and, there being no further nominations, Chairman Smith closed nominations for Vice-Chairman.

Wayne Barlow approved as 2019 Vice- Chairman by unanimous vote.

A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that, in the case of contractors signing off on applicant's affidavits, staff would like to include a line on the application providing space for the applicant to provide an email address for the licensed contractor who confirms his affidavits. Ms. Lucas stated that it is frequently easier for staff to contact those out of State contractors by email as opposed to trying to contact by phone.

The Board agreed that adding space for an email is a good idea.

A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that there must be at least 5 members present to constitute a quorum and attendance is very important, especially now with all of the contractors from Bay County seeking licensure. Ms. Lucas asked Chairman Smith if he would reconsider his decision to leave the Board.

Chairman Brent Smith stated that he would fill out the application to serve an additional 3 year term.

Ms. Linda Flowers applauded the Commissioner's decision but noted that she still has a decision to make.

Ms. Lucas noted that Mr. Cochran's retirement has opened a contractor's vacancy on the Board and asked the Board to send staff the names of anyone who they think would be willing and able to serve on this Board.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Kenneth King; second by Jack Mott; approved unanimously.

Prepared by:

Teresa A. Mullins
Teresa A. Mullins, Recording Secretary
2.28.2019