



State of Idaho
Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses
Idaho Electrical Board

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Draft Minutes of 01/29/2025

Board Members Jim Marchetti

Present:

Jim Swier

Casey Wilson

Chad Fields

Jeff Bradley

Board Members Rick Stark, Chair

Absent:

Josh Madsen

Alex Owens

Division Amy Lorenzo, Executive Officer

Staff: Gus Tate, Legal Counsel

Steve Greene, Electrical Program Mgr.

Jessica Spoja, Licensing Program Mgr.

Melissa Ferguson, Education Prog. Sup.

Andy Rose, Electrical Supervisor

Amy Kohler, Education Program Spc.

Erin Einarsson, Board Support Spc.

Due to the absence of Chairman Rick Stark, Board Member Jim Marchetti was selected as the Acting Chair. The Board meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM MT by Acting Chairman Jim Marchetti.

APPROVAL OF 11/07/2024 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the 11/07/2024 meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

DIVISION BUSINESS

Financial Report: Executive Officer (EO) Amy Lorenzo presented the Fiscal Year 2025; 2nd Quarter Financial Report. The yearly prepaid fee for the OASIS licensing system is the largest expenditure and EO Lorenzo noted that Electrical has the largest portion of the cost-sharing for OASIS. Although payments for this system will be paid quarterly, the entire sum is listed as a one-time expense in the financial report. At the next meeting, EO Lorenzo will provide the Board with detailed information on amortized costs, including the maintenance fees for OASIS.

EO Lorenzo noted that per Idaho Code § 67-2604(4)(b), the Journeyman Electrician Exam fee is statutorily limited to \$75. However, the cost to outsource the exam to the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) is approximately \$135. The additional expense is covered by the Board, which helps to ensure that the Board's cash balance remains at a reasonable amount. The current cash balance is at 130% of operating expenses. If the exam expense increases to a point where it is problematic, the Board can discuss making a statutory adjustment. Acting Chairman Marchetti asked if the exam fee has ever been adjusted. Legal Counsel Gus Tate confirmed that the exam fee has never been adjusted.

OASIS Update: Licensing Program Manager (LPM) Jessica Spoja presented the OASIS Update to the Board. Phase II of the OASIS Licensing System, which included Electrical, went live on November 1, 2024, and since that time DOPL has issued over 2,500 licenses and registrations. Within Electrical, there are a total of 21,500 licenses, with 18,664 active licenses. Since the Phase II launch, DOPL has received and issued the following licenses:

Type of Application	Received	Issued
Electrical Contractor	73	37
Electrical Journeyman	141	94
Electrical Master	36	16
Reciprocal	134	88

LPM Spoja explained that delays in issuing licenses can be due to a variety of factors such as applicants waiting to take the exam, finding a designee or locating items that are missing from their application. Acting Chairman Marchetti asked for the total number of apprentices and LPM Spoja responded that there are 7,286 active apprentices and 1,178 trainees for Limited Electrical.

Miles Whittington, Southwest Idaho Electrical Training Center (JATC), asked for clarification on how continuing education (CE) credits will be tracked in OASIS. Education Program Supervisor (EPS) Melissa Ferguson responded that licensees can upload their CE documents to OASIS, however, providers are currently unable to log into the system to report it. Until that feature is built within OASIS, the DOPL Education Team is personally contacting CE Broker to verify the uploaded credits and then approve renewals. The Education Team will notify licensees once provider approval functionality is activated in OASIS. Mr. Whittington asked if license renewals that are waiting for CE credit approval show as pending in OASIS, and EO Lorenzo confirmed that licensees can log into OASIS and view the status of their license.

Bobbi Kaufman, Clearwater County Building and Planning Department, shared that in the previous licensing system, the county could search for a permit by using an address or road name. However, in OASIS they are only able to search by a homeowner or a contractor's name, and the county does not always have that information. Ms. Kaufman added that in the previous system the electrical permits would include a line item at the top noting what the permit was issued for, while in OASIS they have to read through the inspection notes to determine the permit type. EO Lorenzo requested that Ms. Kaufman create a comprehensive list of their end-user challenges and send it to DOPL for review.

Jeff Fitzloff, Independent Electrical Contractors of Idaho (IEC), asked if local jurisdictions can view a licenses' status in OASIS. EO Lorenzo responded that a public search will not show a license status, but that the licensee can log in and show their status for verification purposes.

Mr. Whittington asked if a survey could be sent to users to provide feedback on OASIS to DOPL. EO Lorenzo agreed that the information would be helpful and will discuss the implementation with DOPL Administration.

NASCLA Testing Update: EPS Ferguson provided a progress report on the Journeyman and Master Electrician exams. Partnering with NASCLA and PSI has provided access to an exam created by subject matter experts (SMEs) that reflects industry practices and is routinely updated. PSI has multiple locations that can host a larger number of applicants, and there has been a significant increase in the number of tests taken.

EPS Ferguson acknowledged that while the NASCLA exam is fair, it is more difficult, and the Idaho pass rates have decreased. DOPL staff have been working with NASCLA and PSI to identify the factors that are contributing to the lower numbers. DOPL has updated PSI with the permitted reference materials for Idaho and removed outdated references from PSI's list. DOPL was notified that some schools are teaching the 2023 code. The current exam does not include 2023 and so there has been a discrepancy on what students are taught versus what they are tested on. DOPL has created a list of FAQs that will be posted to the website and sent to schools to provide further clarity on the NASCLA exam and expects to see an increase in pass rates as a result.

Brian Moritsch, NASCLA Psychometrician, added that when a new exam is introduced, pass rates tend to drop significantly. Mr. Moritsch noted that this is especially true when the previous exam had been in place for a long period of time and students are taught to that exam. Mr. Moritsch informed the Board that NASCLA is developing an updated exam, which will include 2020 and 2023 code, and they will be decreasing the number of references for the Journeyman exam from ten to seven and for the Master exam from fourteen to eight. Mr. Moritsch added that NASCLA reviews the statistics for exam questions and removes those questions with low pass rates.

Chairman Marchetti expressed concern with the low pass rates and requested that DOPL continue to follow up on this issue. Board Member Jeff Bradley asked NASCLA to review their cut rate for exam questions. Jacquie Wilberscheid, NASCLA, reviewed their exam development process with the Board which includes gathering SMEs from trade organizations and various state agencies to design and review test questions.

At the next meeting, EPS Ferguson will provide the Board with data on repeat test takers. EO Lorenzo confirmed that NASCLA Test Updates will continue to be a standing agenda item. EO Lorenzo will meet with NASCLA to examine their question review process, including identifying challenged questions and the results of those challenges and will present that information to the Board at the next meeting.

Electrical Contractor Training Update: DOPL created a training program to provide electrical contractors with education on the current code cycle. An invitation was sent to 2,200 electrical contractors to attend the two-day course at no charge while earning 16 hours of CE. The training courses were conducted in Salmon, Pocatello, Twin Falls, Moscow, Coeur d'Alene and Boise. DOPL plans to continue providing similar outreach programs to the electrical industry on a quarterly basis. EO Lorenzo will keep the Board updated on those developments.

BOARD BUSINESS

JATC – NASCLA Test: Mr. Whittington reached out to JATC programs and licensing boards of 28 states to gather information on testing for the electrical industry. Mr. Whittington noted that for many states, NASCLA is used only for the Electrical Contractor exam, but there are several states that use NASCLA for the Journeyman Electrician exam. States that accept NASCLA but provide their own alternative journeyman exam include Alabama, Washington, Oregon, California, Montana, Utah, Wyoming and Colorado. For most states, excluding resources for state specific laws, the allowed resources are limited to three; usually NEC, NEC and “uglies” and a keyword index. Highlighting the list of resources for the Idaho exam and the rate at which resources become obsolete, Mr. Whittington expressed concern that the estimated cost of \$1,000 to purchase these resources is a barrier for many applicants. Reviewing questions asked on the NASCLA Journeyman Exam, Mr. Whittington emphasized that many questions are related to advanced certifications and are outside the scope of work of a foundational journeyman. Mr. Whittington requested that the Board limit the questions on the NASCLA Journeyman Exam to code questions only.

Trades Licenses – Card Issuance Update: DOPL is waiting on a quote from PSI for printing and issuing plastic cards. EO Lorenzo will review with the Board at the next meeting.

IEC National Program Approval: Mr. Fitzloff provided the Board with the IEC National curriculum that is used by the IEC Idaho Apprentice Program. Mr. Fitzloff shared copies of the National Certificates used by IEC Idaho, stressing that the certificates are awarded to IEC students only by passing the National IEC Exams. A motion was made and seconded to approve the IEC National Program as an approved provider for the State of Idaho. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Kelly Lamp, National Electrical Contractor Association, expressed appreciation to EO Lorenzo for presenting the pending rules to the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee (SCHRC). Mr. Lamp shared that he has been reaching out to legislators expressing approval of the pending rules because they reflect the input received from stakeholders. EO Lorenzo clarified that she requested the SCHRC grant early implementation of the pending rules to reduce some of the barriers to industry created by the temporary rules. The SCHRC determined they will wait until the House Business Committee (HBC) reviews the rules. If approved by the HBC, EO Lorenzo will work with both Committees to advance the early implementation through the concurrent resolution process. Jeremy Redmond, IBEW 291, asked what the process would be if the pending rules are not approved. EO Lorenzo explained that the current temporary rules would be in effect until Sine Die and then new temporary rules would have to be drafted again this year. Gary Sonnen, Sonnen Electric, thanked DOPL for providing the Electrical Contractor Training and thanked the Board for conducting informative and succinct meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.