



**DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF EDUCATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT**

**BUILDING CODE TRAINING COUNCIL**

Tuesday, August 17, 2021  
10:00 A.M.  
Via Collaborate

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Council Vice-Chairman Thomas Manning called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**2. In Attendance**

- a. Members: Daniel Loos, Council Chairman; Thomas Manning, Council Vice-Chairman; Arnie DeLaRosa; Mayor Warren "Pete" Hess; Henry Miga; Michael Musco; and Raymond Steadward Jr.
- b. State: Darren Hobbs, Bonnie Becker, Douglas Schanne, Michael Fullerton, James Quish and William Lussier.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Hearing no changes to the March 9, 2017 minutes, Vice-Chairman Manning declared the minutes approved.

**4. Communications**

Bonnie Becker, Director of the Office of Education and Data Management (OEDM) reported no communications were received.

**Staff Reports**

**a. Office of Education and Data Management**

Bonnie reported that since 2017 OEDM has licensed 177 Building Code Enforcement Officials of varying licensure types. Ninety-five were students in the Prelicensure training program and eighty-two passed quarterly exams. She reported that 23,297 seats were filled in career development classes since 2017.

Under personnel, two fire trainers retired, Gary Thorstenson and Michael Gilbertie, and OEDM hired Douglas Zordan to replace them. He has since left OEDM to become the Fire Marshal in Newington, so OEDM is in the middle of the search process to hire a new fire trainer.

Bonnie reported that in the spring, OEDM will be looking for building trainers. She asked that if anyone knows of a candidate who would be a good addition to OEDM, to please let them know about the opening.

Douglas Schanne, OEDM Training Program Specialist, gave a brief overview of career development for the fall and the spring. Doug stressed that the fall sessions were 90-minutes each. In the spring, two live sessions for each class will hopefully be offered.



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Vice-Chairman Manning said he has been taking the webinars, and that they really worked out well.

**b. Office of State Building Inspector**

Darren Hobbs, Director of Regulatory Compliance, reported that Joe Cassidy retired as the State Building Inspector on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Brandon Clarke will be the new State Building Inspector effective August 27<sup>th</sup>. Joe Cassidy will stay to help with the Code adoption process and to help Brandon with the transition. Brandon has a solid background in architecture, design, and construction. OSBI is doing some internal adjustments on personnel to better align staff to better support local building officials.

**5. Old Business**

No old business was reported.

**6. New Business**

• **Modular Pre-Licensure Training Program and Testing**

Jim Quish, OEDM Building Trainer, gave a presentation on the changes to the prelicensure training program. Jim explained he and fellow building trainer Bill Lussier were breaking the content into smaller component parts from the 360-hours of classroom instruction. Jim said that because of Covid the class was taught online, but that experience taught the trainers a lot. The advantage to a modular program is that it is based on code books - one book would be a module. Each license type would need specific modules. Now, students such as electrical inspectors, go in and out of the program. With the modular program, students would come in in chunks of time, making it easier to focus and providing a break in between modules.

Jim explained that it would be easier to offer portions of the modules online, which is also in line with the current ICC, and allow OEDM to change the testing. Now, individuals sit 6.5 hours for a building official exam, the new plan would break testing into a modular format also. Jim added that students and management want online training, envisioning the prelicensure training program as a combination of 25% classroom, 25% synchronous online, 25% asynchronous online, and 25% individual study. The asynchronous training could also be used as career development offerings.

Jim reported that this fall is a 40-hour classroom administrative module program. The trainers have taken all the administrative portions from all the model Codes and will teach to all licensure types. The trainers plan to spend 7 hours, on C.G.S. 541 Parts I-IV; 14 hours on Chapter 1 of the IBC with Connecticut amendments; 7 hours on IBC Chapters 2 – Appendices. Next two days, split up the administrative portions IRC, IECC, IEBC, ANSI, IPC, IMC, Fuel Gas and NEC into 1.5-hour segments.

Jim explained that the students would be provided with a link to the state statutes that have not become part of the Code. These include administrative and ministerial duties, special dispensation and rules, and duties and powers of the building official (“shall”, “may”, “authorized”, “approved”).



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Jim went on to explain how the OEDM building trainers teach students how to read the statutes. They send the students into the statutes to read a particular section, then they review in class. This is followed by sending them to the same statute in a different way in homework, followed by reviewing the homework in class. Jim said they guide the students, then let them work on their own, then the trainers make sure the students understand.

Jim noted that September 20 – October 14, 2021 is the day program and that the night and Saturday program runs October 19 – November 9, 2021.

Jim estimated that after the 40 hours of training, there will be three distinct groups of graduates. Ten percent will be ready to take the challenge exam – design professionals, architects, trades people who know the Code, people in building departments who want an upgrade, people from other states. Eighty percent – predominantly trades people who want to become inspectors, will need and want to take more modules. Finally, ten percent will realize this is not the job for them.

The remaining modules will be taught in the fall of 2022. Jim reported that he is leaving in April of next year. The new format will make it easier for the new trainers to develop the modules.

Vice-Chairman Manning thanked Jim and told him it was a very good presentation, adding that a lot of work has gone into the precicensure changes by staff.

Mayor Hess said that from a municipal standpoint, this training sounds like a great step forward to get Building Officials who have knowledge of the statutes. A lot of issues end up on his desk that should be handled at a lower level. He suggested adding diplomacy training – how to talk to people – be added to the curriculum, adding that a lot of things could be resolved right on the spot with diplomacy skills.

Darren said that lack of communication skills at the local level is one of the biggest causes of telephone and email to OSBI, and that Mayor Hess made a great point. He added that issues don't need to escalate to this degree.

- **Members interested in Board of Control**

Bonnie reported that the Board of Control is a group of seven members who meet once a year to review and approve or deny the OEDM budget. She explained that effective July 1, 2021 the composition of the seven members changed as C.G.S. 29-251c was changed in the last legislative session. Now there is only one instead of three members from the Building Code Training Council. Raymond Steadward Jr and Arnie DeLaRosa expressed interest in being considered for the appointment from the minority leader of the Senate. Michael Musco volunteered to represent Codes and Standards on the Board of Control. Mike plans to bring the request for additional volunteers to the August 18<sup>th</sup> Codes and Standards meeting.



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- **Learning Management System**

Bonnie explained that a Learning Management System (LMS) is a web-based application that enables people to take online classes and has a registration system tied to it. It will provide a kind of one stop shopping for the Code officials. She reported that some of its features include credit lookup, class catalog, register for classes, submit outside credit applications, apply for credentialing programs and exams. The LMS is in support of the administrations initiative to go paperless. Bonnie explained that OEDM will no longer use ETC cards; attendance will be taken with a QR Code on cell phones. The system will allow OEDM trainers to do online training. OEDM hired Rebecca Schwartz, an instructional designer, to develop asynchronous training.

Bonnie reported that the downside to the LMS is that training transcripts can't be transferred from the old system, but the number of credits earned will be transferred. The LMS will be able to enforce the 50% rule – a building official can earn 50% credits from fire classes and vice versa.

Michael Fullerton, OEDM Training Program Coordinator, reported that the LMS also provides a framework for testing programs to replace antiquated testing software. It also will allow OEDM to work with third party vendors – remote proctoring services, third-party training modules that show on transcripts, and provide much more flexibility.

Vice-Chairman Manning thanked staff and said it looks like good progress is being made.

#### 7. For the Good of the Order

Ray Steadward said it was good to be a part of the group and explained the value of internships in the building code enforcement field. He offered OEDM his support in locating an internship for past or present students, possibly enlisting the assistance of CBOA.

Jim agreed that internship experience in the building department is invaluable and told Ray that the OEDM building trainers would be happy to pass the internship information on to members of the class.

Michael Musco requested that Bonnie send the roster to all members to effectuate communication.

#### 8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m. by Vice-Chairman Manning.

*Daniel J Loos*

Daniel J. Loos, Chairman  
Building Code Training Council