

MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM

**OKALOOSA COUNTY ELECTRICAL COMPETENCY BOARD
MINUTES
July 6, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Okaloosa County Electrical Competency Board was held Thursday, July 6, 2017, 3:00 PM, at the at the Okaloosa County Administration Building, first floor BCC Chambers, 1250 Eglin Parkway N., Shalimar, Florida. Board members in attendance were Brent Smith, Joel Richardson Debra Ripley, Edward Cochran, Jr. Wayne Barlow, Kenneth King, Robert Garcia and Linda Flowers. Debra Ripley was not in attendance.

Growth Management staff in attendance were Renée Lucas, License Specialist; Teresa Mullins, Administrative Assistant II; Tina Ward, Permitting and Licensing Manager; and Abra McGill, Grants Specialist. Assistant County Attorney Kerry Parsons was also in attendance.

Due to a recording failure, the minutes reflect the notes taken during the meeting by the Recording Secretary.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brent Smith called the meeting to order.

A. Roll Call

Ms. Teresa Mullins took roll call.

II. ACKNOWLEDGE GUESTS

Chairman Smith welcomed and acknowledged the guest.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 1, 2017

Motion to approve the minutes made by Bob Garcia; second by Wayne Barlow; approved unanimously.

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

Ms. Lucas stated that no one is present, other than staff, who is not on the agenda.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Renée Lucas introduced Ms. Tina Ward, Permitting and Licensing Manager, to the Board, stating that Ms. Ward will take over for the September meeting, should there be one, as she (Ms. Lucas) was not going to be available at that time.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Lucas stated that staff contacted the State Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Electrical Contractor's Licensing Board regarding the

discussion surrounding sub-contracting in the Electrical field. Ms. Lucas further stated that Ms. Ruthanne Christie, Executive Director of the State Electrical Contractor's Board responded via email, in answer to the question regarding a Residential Electrical Contractor working on a structure beyond the scope of his license, such as a 2 story house on pilings, wherein the permits are purchased by a Master Electrical Contractor. The Director stated that, in that case, the Residential Electrical Contractor would have to be the Master Electrical Contractor's W-2 employee, not as a sub-contractor, in order to be legal.

A brief discussion ensued.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that she also asked Director Christie if a State Registered or Certified Residential Contractor could perform low-voltage (limited energy) work and was directed to Rule 61G-7.001(4) (c) which states:

Limited Energy Systems Specialty, the scope of work of this license may also be performed by the following certified and registered contractors: Certified, Master, Residential, Alarm I & Alarm II.

Ms. Lucas further informed the Board that, in an email reply, Director Christie stated that she thinks that a Residential Electrical Contractor would only be able to work with low-voltage (limited energy) scope for 1, 2, 3 & 4 family dwellings. Mr. Lucas noted that Director Christie stated that a Declaratory Statement could be requested to see if the State Electrical Board interprets this differently, which is possible. Ms. Lucas noted that Director Christie stated in her email that this particular question has never come up before.

Mr. Joel Richardson asked if the rules are different for the other trades, Construction, Mechanical and Plumbing. Mr. Richardson noted that he is aware that there is a difference between a Division 1 and a Division 2 Contractor, but does not know specifically.

Ms. Lucas stated that Residential, Building and General Contractors are Division 1, while Roofing Contractors are Division 2. Ms. Lucas further stated that she would bring information regarding the Construction side to the next meeting.

Mr. Kenneth King reminded the Board about the old case wherein a Residential Electrical Contractor was able to pull a permit for work that exceeded the scope of work allowed under his license.

Chairman Smith asked if County Staff, such as the Building Inspectors, were going to monitor the situation when they go to inspect a jobsite, and shut down work if they find a contractor working above the scope of his/her license.

Ms. Lucas noted that while Building Inspectors could do so, it is unlikely that they will as they have their hands full with inspections. Ms. Lucas reminded the Board that staff had added the definition (with allowable scope of work) to every contractor's database file so that permitting staff can check to make sure that the permit they're selling is not above the level of work that the contractor/applicant is allowed to do.

Mr. King stated that Code Enforcement may be the ones who should handle this.

Mr. Wayne Barlow stated that County Code Enforcement does not have enough staff available to police jobsites/contractors in that way.

Chairman Smith, referring to the old case brought up by Mr. King, noted that it is also against the law to contract to do work that is beyond the scope of the license held.

A brief discussion ensued.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Swearing in Applicants/ Speakers

Ms. Mullins swore in the applicants.

b. Candidates for Testing Approval:

1. Ezekiel Levi Cotton – Alarm System II Contractor

Mr. Ezekiel Cotton introduced himself to the Board, stating that he is seeking the Board's approval to test for an Alarm System II Contractor.

Ms. Lucas noted that staff found that Mr. Cotton met the requirements of the Code.

The Board had no questions for Mr. Cotton.

Motion to approve made by Wayne Barlow; second by Kenneth King; approved unanimously.

2. Jonathan S. Henley – Alarm System II Contractor

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that Mr. Jonathan Henley had appeared before them a year ago and was present seeking permission to continue testing for another year as allowed by County Code.

The Board had no questions for Mr. Henley.

Motion to approve made by Wayne Barlow; second by Robert Garcia; approved unanimously.

3. Christopher Shimeld – Alarm System II Contractor

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that Mr. Shimeld is appearing before this Board seeking an Alarm System II license. Ms. Lucas stated that this license is defined in Okaloosa County Code, Chapter 6, Article VII, Division 1, Section 6-204 Definitions:

Alarm system contractor II means an alarm system contractor whose business includes all types of alarm systems, other than fire, for all purposes and who is registered with the department and may contract only in Okaloosa County.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that Okaloosa County does reciprocate with all Counties in the Panhandle of Florida; to include Escambia, Santa Rose, Walton and Bay Counties. Ms. Lucas stated that once Mr. Shimeld reciprocates and is licensed in all those Counties; he will have to submit an application to the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) in order to obtain endorsements for all the Counties in which he intends to do work. Ms. Lucas further stated that, Per the Electrical Contractor's Licensing Board, this license also allows the installation of low voltage (limited energy) such as cabling, central music and/or video, central vacuums, intercoms, electric locks and fiber optics. Ms. Lucas noted that Okaloosa County does not require permits for this type of work. Ms. Lucas stated that, with the approval of this Board, Mr. Shimeld will be required to take and pass the Burglar Alarm and Business & Law examinations. Ms. Lucas noted that Mr. Shimeld appeared before this Board at the last meeting seeking approval to test for a low voltage (limited energy) license, but was not aware until after the meeting that the low voltage license did not include burglar alarms.

Chairman Smith asked staff if Mr. Shimeld meets the requirements.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that Mr. Shimeld's file is in order and he has met all requirements.

Motion to approve made by Kenneth King; second by Eddie Cochran; approved unanimously.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. King asked staff when permitting fees were last raised.

Ms. Lucas stated that permit fees were last increased in 2010.

Mr. King stated that this recent increase seems to have impacted Commercial Electricians disproportionately and the forms are impossible to figure out. Mr. King further noted that neither Mechanical nor Plumbing permit fees seem to have increased much at all.

Chairman Smith asked staff to request that Mr. Kampert attend the next meeting.

Ms. Lucas stated that she would pass on the request to Mr. Kampert.

Mr. King stated that he feels the fees are too high for Okaloosa County and asked if staff copied the fees from Miami-Dade as they seem far too high for this area. Mr. King again addressed the permit application for Commercial Electrical stating that it is far too complex and very easy to make mistakes on.

Ms. Tina Ward informed the Board that the only change in the Electrical permitting fees are the cost for a Temporary Pole and the base permit fee.

A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Richardson stated that the increase in fax fees is "outrageous" and will cause contractors to bring all their applications into the office at one time instead of using the fax service. Mr. Richardson further stated that it will take much more of staff's time to issue the permits over the counter as opposed to doing them by fax.

Ms. Ward stated that fax fees were adjusted to help pay for online permitting, which staff has been working towards. Ms. Ward further stated that with online permitting, contractors will be able to enter all the information, pay for and print out their own permits and there will be no additional fee for online permitting. Ms. Ward informed the Board that, in addition that there is more work, and more people involved in the fax program than it appears, as mailed checks have to be recorded, the fax fees have to be compiled and billed and mailed out, with postage as an additional cost on top of the additional man hours.

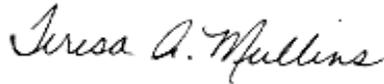
Mr. Barlow stated that there is no point in discussing this now as Mr. Kampert isn't present.

Ms. Lucas stated that she will inform Mr. Kampert that the Board has requested his presence at the next meeting.

A brief discussion ensued.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn and request Mr. Kampert to attend the next meeting made by Joel Richardson; second by Eddie Cochran; approved unanimously.



Prepared by: _____

Teresa A. Mullins, Recording Secretary
7.10.2017