

**MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM**

**MECHANICAL COMPETENCY BOARD  
MINUTES  
May 31, 2017**

A meeting of the Mechanical Competency Board was held May 31, 2017, 10:00 a.m., at the Okaloosa County Administrative Building, 1250 Eglin Parkway N., first floor Commissioner's Chambers, Shalimar, Florida. Board members in attendance were Roger Casey, Michael Johnson, David Gaillard, and Lee Bowen. Consumer representatives in attendance were Todd McGirr and Bill Byerley. James Walker, Jr. and Lee Jackson were not present.

Growth Management Staff in attendance were Renee Lucas, Licensing Specialist and Teresa Mullins, Administrative Assistant II. Assistant County Attorney Kerry Parsons was also present.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Roger Casey called the meeting to order.

**A. Roll Call**

Teresa Mullins conducted roll call.

**II. ACKNOWLEDGE GUESTS**

Chairman Casey welcomed those attending the meeting.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF: March 29, 2017**

There being no objection from the Board, Chairman Casey declared the minutes approved as written.

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

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

None

With no objection from the Board, Chairman Casey agreed to staffs request.

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Renée Lucas informed the Board that Mr. John Arzaga, who asked the Board to reinstate his purged license at the January meeting, has passed his Business & Law course and has paid all of his fines and back fees. Ms. Lucas stated that she is just waiting to receive Mr. Arzaga's business tax receipt and proof of insurance, which may be waiting in her email, to reinstate his Competency Card per the Board's motion.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Swearing in Applicants**

Ms. Mullins swore in the applicants.

**b. Candidates for Testing Approval:**

**1. James T. Luther – Class B Air Conditioning Contractor**

Mr. James Luther was present to answer questions from the Board.

Mr. Michael Johnson asked Mr. Luther if he was intending to move to the area or if he intended to remain in Memphis.

Mr. Luther stated that he has one daughter, living in Memphis, who is very ill, and another who lives locally, therefore he believes he will have a dual residency.

A brief discussion ensued.

Motion to approve him made by Michael Johnson; Second by David Galliard; approved unanimously.

**2. Jake E. Wade – Master Mechanical Contractor**

Ms. Lucas reminded the Board that Mr. Wade appeared before them in 2016 and his year has elapsed. Ms. Lucas stated that Mr. Wade has taken and passed the Plumbing, Residential Contracting and the Business & Law exams and now only needs to take and pass his Mechanical exam.

A brief discussion ensued.

The Board had no questions for Mr. Wade.

Motion to approve made by Lee Bowen; Second by Todd McGirr; approved unanimously.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that the mandatory blower door testing for residential homes will go into effect on July 1, 2017. Ms. Lucas stated that nothing submitted prior to or permitted prior to July 1 will not have to meet this requirement. Ms. Lucas further informed the Board about the 3 (three) ways that the testing certification can be done, stating that the testing can be certified by:

1. An energy auditor or energy rater, such as Gulf Power or Chelco.
2. A locally licensed or State certified Mechanical or Air Conditioning (Class A or B) contractor.
3. An approved 3<sup>rd</sup> party, as approved by the Building Official, who holds a valid certification through the Building Performance Institute (BPI) or the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) that demonstrates competency to perform blower door and duct leakage tests.

Ms. Lucas informed the Board that staff have been working with Mr. Alan Baggett, Executive Vice-President of the Okaloosa County Building Industry Association (BIA) and he has provided a list of those he knows of who already have certification:

Casey Electric  
Cool Breeze of NW Florida  
Mills Heating & Air

## Four Seasons Air Conditioning & Heating

Ms. Lucas asked the contractors on the Board to provide information to staff if they intend to either get certified or have a certified person on their payroll. Ms. Lucas stated that she is trying to be proactive so that a database of those who have certification can be created for the Building Official to use. Ms. Lucas further stated that those who are certified must provide staff with a copy of their certification as well as a current business tax receipt. Ms. Lucas stated that a mass email will be sent out to staff to all Residential, Building and General Contractors. Ms. Lucas further stated that she has received several calls from persons interested in pursuing certification.

Chairman Casey questioned whether the Class A & B Air Conditioning contractors are specifically included in the Statute as they were not included in the original language that he had seen.

Attorney Kerry Parsons stated that she looked up the exact wording in the Statute and it allows Class A & B and mechanical and only excludes class C.

Ms. Lucas stated that class C is not used anymore.

Mr. Bill Byerley asked why the certification was needed.

Chairman Casey stated that the reason for this testing is because houses are being built tighter and tighter due to better insulation, and when a house gets closed up too tight, then enough fresh air isn't getting in it causes a problem. Chairman Casey further stated that if a house isn't built tightly enough then the energy to cool and heat it isn't used efficiently. Chairman Casey stated that the distance in range between too tight and not tight enough is very narrow, too tight and a mechanical blower has to be added, not tight enough and more insulation needs to be used. Chairman Casey noted that in the houses he has worked on recently, they've had to add mechanical blowers to increase the fresh air in the house.

Mr. Johnson asked if this certification would be needed for remodels or if it was just for new homes.

Ms. Lucas stated that this requirement is only for new homes or in situations where damage is so severe that nothing is left but the slab; however, ultimately it will be the Building Official's decision.

A brief discussion ensued.

Chairman Casey stated that he had an issue he'd like to discuss, noting that, as all the contractor Board members are aware, there are not enough people willing to come in and work in this field. Chairman Casey stated that there are vocational (votech) schools in NW Florida that offer certification courses and contractors need to encourage their employees to attend, as well as getting more vocational programs in schools to offer courses as there is a projected deficit of 20,000 employees in this field by 2020. Chairman Casey stated that if any contractor were interested he could get them in contact with Locklin Tech, which offers both day and night time courses.

Ms. Lucas noted that the State allows testing at 18 for a State Certified license, while the County requires an applicant to be 22. Ms. Lucas discussed some of the differences in how the licensing process works for the State as opposed to the County.

Mr. Johnson asked Chairman Casey how much the technical classes cost.

Chairman Casey stated that, currently, the programs does not cost the students anything to attend other than the cost of their books as it is funded by the State. Chairman Casey noted that the books are similar to those used by our testing service. Chairman Casey stated that the electrical trade has a similar program at George Stone Tech, taught by licensed contractors which costs \$100.00 a year but is only open to those working for a contractor who is a member of their program.

Ms. Lucas asked Mr. Casey if he would send her the information from George Stone. Ms. Lucas stated that staff doesn't often get requests for the journeyman exams; however, staff does get calls regarding available education.

Mr. Lee Bowen asked Chairman Casey if he would provide him with information regarding the technical programs.

Chairman Casey stated that he would provide information to anyone who is interested.

A brief discussion ensued.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Bill Byerley; seconded by Lee Bowen; approved unanimously.

Prepared by:



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Teresa Mullins, Administrative Assistant II  
6.5.17