

Construction Licensing Board
Pinellas County
September 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board (PCCLB) met in regular session at 1:32 PM on this date in the Magnolia Room at the Pinellas County Extension Office, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, Florida.

Present

Alan Holderith, Jr., Chair, General Contractor
Mike Kelly, Vice-Chair, Pool Contractor
Dave Eldridge, Residential Contractor
Douglas Erwin, Electrical Contractor
Kevin Garriott, North County Building Official
Jason Holloway, Consumer Representative (late arrival)
Marina Kron, Class A HVAC Contractor
James Millican, Fire Official
Lawrence Schear, Consumer Representative
Don Tyre, South County Building Official
John Wear, Plumbing Contractor

Not Present

James "Arry" Housh, Roofing Contractor
William Palmer, Beach Community Building Official
Michael Sofarelli, Architect
Evelyn Spencer, Pinellas County Building Official

Others Present

Michelle Krickovic, Director, Contractor Licensing Department
Ashley Paulino, Senior Office Specialist – Governance, Contractor Licensing Department
Jude Reazin, Code Enforcement Division Manager
Katie Poviones, Board Reporter
Other interested individuals

All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been made a part of the record.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Holderith called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL

Chair Holderith led the Pledge of Allegiance; whereupon, Ms. Krickovic conducted a roll call of the members and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

INTRODUCTION OF CONTRACTOR LICENSING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT STAFF

Ms. Krickovic introduced staff members in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Chief Millican, seconded by Mr. Kelly and carried unanimously, the minutes of the July 19, 2021 meeting were approved.

Mr. Holloway arrived at 1:37 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Holderith indicated that supporting documentation for the following Consent Agenda items is included in the agenda packet:

- Special Magistrate Hearing Minutes: June 28, July 20, and August 2, 2021
- Examination Committee Reports: July – August 2021
- Board of Adjustment and Appeals for the Florida Building Code (Local Technical Amendment Hearing) Minutes: July 19, 2021
- Expired Permit Violations (none)

Mr. Kelly moved, seconded by Chief Millican and carried unanimously, that the Consent Agenda items be approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Board conducted informal administrative hearings in accordance with Section 120.57(2), Florida Statutes. The respondents elected an informal hearing, defaulted by not executing an Election of Rights, or failed to respond, and were therefore scheduled for an informal hearing by the Board to resolve the complaint. The actions taken are the Final Orders of the PCCLB.

Chair Holderith administered the Oath to the individuals planning to give testimony.

Informal Hearings

STACI ESQUINALDO

- Request for certification without examination

Chair Holderith referred to the agenda packet and provided background information regarding the request, indicating that Ms. Esquinaldo was a licensed swimming pool servicing contractor in the past and stayed active in the industry despite the expiration of her license; and that the Examination Committee reviewed her case and recommended that the Board exempt her from taking the examination and allow her to renew her certification through 14 hours of continuing education; whereupon, he offered Ms. Esquinaldo the opportunity to present her request.

Staci Esquinaldo, St. Petersburg, appeared, provided background information regarding the matter, and responded to queries by Mr. Kelly, indicating that she worked with a variety of companies and was very hands-on throughout the construction process; and that she is prepared to complete the continuing education courses. In response to a query by Mr. Tyre, Ms. Krickovic informed the Board that the swimming pool servicing contractor license is a state classification that can be reinstated locally; and that the Board has the authority to waive the examination requirement, as recommended by the Examination Committee.

Mr. Kelly moved, seconded by Chief Millican, that the Board accept the Committee's recommendation to allow Ms. Esquinaldo to complete 14 hours of continuing education in lieu of an examination to renew her swimming pool servicing contractor certification.

Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

JOSHUA GRIM

- Request for certification without examination

Ms. Krickovic referred to the agenda packet and provided background information regarding the request, relating that the Examination Committee has recommended that Mr. Grim be granted certification without examination because he tested for and was awarded his finish carpentry specialty contractor license by the state of West Virginia in July of this year; that the examination was administered through ProV, the same testing agency used by the PCCLB for the finish carpentry assessment; and that although Florida does not have out-of-state reciprocity agreements with other states, the Board may consider Mr. Grim as a candidate for certification without examination based on his

credentials; whereupon, she offered Mr. Grim the opportunity to present his expertise and qualifications to the Board.

Joshua Grim, Palm Harbor, appeared, provided background information regarding the matter, and responded to queries by Chair Holderith, elaborating on his professional experience, qualifications, and the recent examination.

Chief Millican moved, seconded by Mr. Eldridge and carried unanimously, that the Board accept the Examination Committee's recommendation to grant the finish carpentry certification to Mr. Grim without examination.

VINCE MANTEGNA

- Request to be heard before the Board

Ms. Krickovic referred to the agenda and provided background information regarding the request, indicating that Mr. Mantegna has mostly been compliant with regard to his carpentry specialty contractor license in the 11 years that he has been registered with the County; that his workers' compensation exemption expired on March 28, 2021 and was not reinstated until May 17, 2021, resulting in a reinstatement charge of \$125.00 that is due before license re-registration, per Rule 6.02 of the PCCLB Rules; and that he objects to the fine and thus, is requesting the Board to consider waiving the reinstatement penalty; whereupon, she offered Mr. Mantegna the opportunity to present his reasoning to the Board.

Vince Mantegna, Treasure Island, appeared, provided background information regarding the matter, and responded to queries by the members, relating that the State did not notify him that there was any issue with his workers' compensation exemption; and that he was not aware that there was a problem until five weeks after its expiration, and discussion ensued. Ms. Krickovic clarified that Mr. Mantegna's contractor license status was automatically set to "Pending" when he submitted the payment to renew his license, and will remain in that status until the \$125.00 reinstatement fine is paid.

Seeing no motion to grant Mr. Mantegna a waiver for the fine, Chair Holderith stated that the reinstatement penalty will stay in place.

REGULAR AGENDA

Board of Adjustment and Appeals (BOAA) and Examination Committee Vacancies

At the request of Chair Holderith, Ms. Krickovic detailed the following BOAA Examination Committee vacancies:

- The Mechanical, Plumbing, and Gas BOAA has vacancies for a plumbing contractor and a natural gas contractor.
- The Electrical BOAA has vacancies for an electrical engineer and a building industry representative.
- The Plumbing Examination Committee has a vacancy for a plumbing contractor.

Ms. Krickovic advised that the Board should consider at a future meeting how House Bill 735's elimination of some local specialty licensing will impact the composition of the BOAAs and committees.

BOAA and Examination Committee Appointments

Ms. Krickovic announced that John Wear has volunteered to join the Examination Committee for plumbing; and that it is the business of the Board to confirm his appointment; whereupon, Mr. Kelly moved, seconded by Chief Millican, to approve Mr. Wear's appointment to the Plumbing Examination Committee.

Upon call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Reports – Insurance Violation Fee Waivers & Collections Write-Down

Ms. Krickovic reported that there are no waivers of fees or collections write-downs for this period, as the Contractor Licensing Department has been focused on license renewals.

Director's Report

Ms. Krickovic provided an update on the passage of House Bill 735, indicating that the County Administrator's Office has directed the acceleration of the implementation of the legislation by ten months, with an effective date of October 1, 2022; that the bill abolishes the PCCLB's authority to establish local specialty licenses, eliminating 18 local classifications and impacting 1,400 contractors; and that the Contractor Licensing Department will continue to renew specialty licenses through September 30, 2022.

Responding to comments and queries by the members, Ms. Krickovic related that some specialty contractors will be eligible to become certified state contractors through grandfathering or other certification opportunities being offered by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation; and that while in some cases the bill provides for true deregulation benefitting contractors, the anticipated ramifications include potential increased unlicensed contracting and lending of license, as well as heightened risk to consumers as it becomes more difficult to differentiate between qualified and unqualified contractors. She indicated that any contractor who is certified or registered through the

State of Florida will still be required to register with the Board in order to work in the County as per the Special Act.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the Board's concerns about the bill's potential consequences, and the members arrived at a consensus to craft a statement as to the Board's position, requesting that the County make a recommendation to the local delegation to address the repercussions of the legislation. Ms. Krickovic noted that she could not draft the statement; that she has identified a communication strategy to inform various stakeholders about the expected changes, impacts, and timelines associated with the bill; and that she will convey the Board's concerns to the Assistant County Administrator Tom Almonte; whereupon, Mr. Holloway moved, seconded by Chief Millican and carried unanimously, to create an Ad Hoc Committee to draft a statement to the County Administrator voicing the Board's concerns as to the impacts of House Bill 735 on local specialty contractors. Chair Holderith noted that he anticipates that the committee will have a statement to present to the Board for consideration at the November meeting.

Ms. Krickovic briefly discussed the Contractor Licensing Department's recent activities, relating that the end of the license renewal period is nearing, and thus, the Department has been processing them and receiving a plethora of phone calls, mail, and customer walk-ins.

Management Report – Investigations

Mr. Reazin updated the Board on the following matters relating to the strategic alignment between the Contractor Licensing Department and the Code Enforcement Division:

- Standardization of PCCLB enforcement process and phone system
- Senate Bill 60
- Permitting enforcement process improvements
- Magistrate hearings
- Citation output update

Citizens to be Heard – None

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Mr. Holloway, seconded by Mr. Eldridge and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.