

# Washington State Board of Licensure for Landscape Architects meeting transcript

February 8, 2024

Curtis LaPierre (00:02):

Okay. I'm having some issues this morning for some reason. Okay, let's get going. It's exactly 10 o'clock now, 10:00 AM. Calling this regular board meeting of the Washington Board of Licensure for landscape architects to order. As a courtesy to reduce the background noise when others are speaking, we encourage participants to mute their mics or your phone if you called in when you are not speaking. One challenge, of course, is to remember to unmute yourself when you are speaking. Also for Board Members to help us with the minutes, capture that information correctly, please state your name when making comments. The Board will provide an opportunity for public comment during the meeting. We ask that you unmute yourself prior to the public comment to allow an opportunity for anyone who would like to speak. Thank you. Susan, item two, roll call. If you'd please ask the Board Members who's present.

Susan Nieves (01:17):

I'll start with you, Chair LaPierre.

Curtis LaPierre (01:20):

I'm present.

Susan Nieves (01:21):

Vice Chair Crabill.

Daren Crabill (01:23):

Here.

Susan Nieves (01:25):

Board Member Anderson. I see he's muted.

Jason Anderson (01:35):

Here.

Susan Nieves (01:36):

Wonderful. Board Member Robinson-Losey.

Sharon Robinson-Losey (01:39):

I'm here.

Susan Nieves (01:41):

And Board Member Solorio.

Lindsey Solorio (01:43):

Here.

Susan Nieves (01:45):

Great. Thank you.

Curtis LaPierre (01:51):

Item three, approval of the agenda. We'll need a motion for approval.

Daren Crabill (01:57):

This is Daren. I so move.

Curtis LaPierre (02:00):

Thank you. Second?

Susan Nieves (02:04):

I second the motion.

Curtis LaPierre (02:06):

Okay. Without objection, we'll have that approved and move on to the minutes. Item four, approval of minutes. Also need a motion for this, please.

Daren Crabill (02:21):

This is Daren. I move to approve the minutes as written.

Curtis LaPierre (02:24):

Thank you, Daren. Second?

Jason Anderson (02:29):

I'll second.

Curtis LaPierre (02:31):

Great. Without objection then, we'll approve the minutes and move on to item five, old business. We have outreach update. I think, Daren, you've had some communication with the WSU folks.

Sydney Muhle (02:55):

Mr. Chair, just for clarification. Because the meeting is recorded and transcribed, I know that you had done the without objection, we will approve, but if we could actually take a vote on both the agenda and the minutes for clarification in our transcript, that would be super helpful.

Curtis LaPierre (03:13):

Oh. Sorry about that.

Sydney Muhle (03:14):

That's okay.

Curtis LaPierre (03:15):

Yeah, I forget that those actually need a vote. It seems overly formal, but let's do that. Item three, approval of the agenda. All those in favor of approvals, please say aye.

Daren Crabill (03:28):

Aye.

Susan Nieves (03:29):

Aye.

Curtis LaPierre (03:31):

Aye? Any opposed? The agenda is approved. Same thing for minutes. All those in favor of approval of the minutes, please say aye.

Sydney Muhle (03:40):

Aye.

Susan Nieves (03:40):

Aye.

Curtis LaPierre (03:43):

Aye. Opposed? Hearing no opposition. The minutes are approved. Let's go ahead and go on to our 5.1 outreach update. And we did hear back from WSU, is that correct?

Daren Crabill (04:03):

Yeah. We haven't landed on a date. It looks like it won't be the professional practice class, but likely just similar to what we did last year, which was attend a student WASLA meeting. But since the semester has started, I haven't gotten an update from that student group president. So I will reach back out one more time to see if we can land on a date here this spring.

Curtis LaPierre (04:40):

Okay. Well, Deb and I did put together a PowerPoint and actually went in person to UW professional practice class last week. Seemed like it went well. There were a ton of questions. I didn't see anybody falling asleep, so that's a good thing to talk about licensure. So we have that PowerPoint available for anyone on the board that would like to give a talk on licensure. You're welcome to you change it in any way to make it yours, but there's a lot of good information there, especially on CLARB and the role of CLARB versus WASLA and the Board kind of helps sort that out for people.

Daren Crabill (05:36):

Hey, Curtis.

Curtis LaPierre (05:38):

Go ahead.

Jason Anderson (05:40):

Can I get a copy of that? This is Jason.

Curtis LaPierre (05:44):

Sure.

Jason Anderson (05:47):

And then Daren, if you need assistance, let me know. I'm heading to Pullman March 21st and 22nd for my board meeting commitments over there.

Daren Crabill (05:58):

Okay. I'll throw that out to them as an option. I'm just curious. Curtis, what kind of questions you got from students, provide a flavor?

Curtis LaPierre (06:19):

There was some questions about reciprocity related. People were wondering, "Oh, if you live in one state and you're licensed and you do work in another state, do you have to be licensed there?" So it's kind of funny. We don't really know the answer to that, but we cleared up that confusion. Lots of questions on the L.A.R.E. and strategies for when you should start taking it, and what should you take first, that sort of thing, which I don't know. I mean, that's really better directed to somebody that's just

been through it, which is what we suggested is to talk to people in their firms or in study groups. Other people might know that kind of strategy.

(07:17):

Yeah. Any other further discussion on outreach? Look forward to hearing what happens with the WSU students. Let's move on to reports. And Sydney, I think you have some reports to talk about.

Sydney Muhle (07:43):

I do. I get to take the lead on the bulk of these. So we're going to start with the WAC review committee report. Unfortunately, we don't have a whole lot to report since November with the holidays, with personnel changes that were happening within the division. Unfortunately, Julia and I were not able to get together and finalize the changes that were requested by our Assistant Attorney General Elizabeth Lagerberg, who I believe [inaudible 00:08:10].

(08:09):

Oh, I'm sorry. We're getting some feedback from somebody. I'm not sure sure where it's coming from. Excuse me. But anyway, Julia and I will be working on that over the next couple of months and we'll make sure it gets back to the committee in the next quarter. And then we're anticipating there won't be any major changes from that. So once the committee signs off on Julia and I making those final rearrangements, it was a lot of formatting and combining sections, it wasn't a whole lot of material change. So once we get that back out to the committee and they sign off, it will go to the full board for review. Our hope is that by the May meeting, it would be ready for the Board to potentially take action on and request any additional changes to or begin the request for changes to the WAC. And once that occurs, then the process shifts to more of an agency focus and we'll keep the Board posted on what that process will be at the main meeting. But that is if once you all receive that, there are no more major material changes.

(09:29):

If there are significant changes that are needed, then it'll continue to go through the back and forth process. And it'll be very similar to what we've been doing with the committee with some back and forth between staff, the full Board, the AG's office, and then continue working it until you are all happy with it. And then once you are all ready for it to move to a vote, then it'll happen. So the earliest we anticipate that is the main meeting, I will put an asterisk on that. I will just be coming back from an extended leave at the main meeting, and our Assistant Administrator Julia Manley may be traveling at the same time. So if we are not prepared and ready to go for the Board, then we'll put it out for another quarter because we want to make sure that we are able to get all of your questions answered and anything like that. So we will be playing it by ear. So we are putting the asterisks on it that the earliest at the main meeting, but could wait until August. Are there any questions on the WAC review?

Curtis LaPierre (10:41):

No.

Sydney Muhle (10:42):

Okay. Next up, we have our complaint status report, a whopping two, both of which have been closed. Our next one, our licensee count. As you can all see, we have 881 active licensees, 48 in expired status or in canceled status, excuse me. Nine in expired and eight inactive. And just a quick look at what our licensing trends have been over the last year. The next one, so this was an item that had come out of the last board meeting, a request for demographic information from CLARB on the age demographics for our examinees to see if our examinees are keeping pace with being able to match the retiree age entering licensees. So as you can see, the vast majority of our examinees are in the 30s age range, 14 in the 20s, 13 in their 40s, and then only three have been in their 50s. So I did reach back out to CLARB and ask for a timeframe of when this snapshot was, if this is the examinees over the last year, two years.

(12:19):

I know this isn't ever but I'm trying to get a clarification on the timeframe and they did not provide that. So we'll continue to do that and continue to reach back out to them and see if we can get some further clarification. If there are any other demographic statistics that the Board would like, please let us know and we will reach out to CLARB for those as well. One caveat I will put on this is, this is voluntary information. CLARB does not require that date of birth or that age information be provided. So this is just what has been provided on a voluntary basis.

Curtis LaPierre (12:57):

Pretty interesting.

Sydney Muhle (13:02):

All right. Are there any questions on this one?

Curtis LaPierre (13:08):

This is when people were starting to take the exam or when they passed the exam? Do you know?

Sydney Muhle (13:13):

I don't know.

Curtis LaPierre (13:18):

Probably when they applied to start taking.

Sydney Muhle (13:21):

I imagine it was when they filled out their application.

Curtis LaPierre (13:23):

Yeah. It's interesting to see how many people are in their 30s given the kinds of questions that we just had from presumably most people in their 20s in undergrad and graduate school. Yeah. Okay.

Sydney Muhle (13:44):

Any other questions on this one? Okay. Then we'll move to our next one. So this is going to be a staff update on House Bill 1301 as the board is aware, the agency... Let me back up. The legislature last session passed House Bill 1301 that is requiring a regulatory review of all programs in the Department of Licensing. We currently have about 39 programs, I believe. And so, it requires a 10% review per year of all of our programs. We have to take a 10% chunk of all programs every year for 10 years. And then at the end of that 10 years, cycle starts over and we take a new 10%. So we do have our management analyst who is in charge of this program who can provide a little bit more of an update. This is going to be a very high level verbal update just because there really isn't anything hard to provide at this stage of their review. But I will turn it over to Management Analyst Austin Koller.

Austin (14:51):

Thank you, Sydney. Mainly, we just wanted to give an update on the listening sessions that we had last week. For landscape architects, we had a total of 42 attendees that were non DOL employees, which was by far our largest attendance for any of our listening sessions, so that was great. We had representatives from CLARB, ASLA. We want to give a special thank you to Board Members, LaPierre, and Solorio who also spoke. During the session, had a few good recommendations. We had a couple of people speak out in favor of adopting the updated uniform licensure standards, CLARB passed a couple of years ago.

(15:46):

We got some good context about how the profession is changing primarily from Chairman LaPierre, just how dynamic the profession is. One was about potentially lowering the fee structure for sole proprietors or smaller firms. Something that we're trying to look at is what percentage or how many of the firms that are out there are sole proprietors or smaller firms versus larger firms. We had some discussion around reducing continued education requirements either as you get more experience, maybe 5, 10, 20 years of experience, perhaps requiring fewer education, continuing education hours. So we still are at the beginning of our discussions around what recommendations we're going to be looking to go forward with. That'll probably happen over the next couple of weeks. We are looking to be pretty open in that process. So once we know what we're going to be potentially recommending or looking to recommend, we'll definitely be reaching out for comment. So yeah, that's all I really had on that. Happy to answer any questions if people have any?

(17:31):

Oh, looks like you're muted.

Curtis LaPierre (17:35):

I have a question, Austin. It's Curtis. Are there written comments that you've been receiving available for public viewings? Are those kept in a place where the public can view those?

Austin (17:53):

We don't have the comments kept in a public space right now. I can talk to Lauren because we have been capturing them all. A majority of them were reiterations of what people said during the meeting. I think we only had maybe one or two that were unique and weren't just a restatement of what they said

during the meeting. But we have been gathering all those. So if people want to see those, we can get that together.

Curtis LaPierre (18:26):

I definitely would.

Austin (18:28):

Sure. I'll make a note of that.

Sydney Muhle (18:39):

And we had also reached out to Austin and his team lead Lauren with a question that Chair LaPierre had presented to board staff about having some frequently asked questions document that could be a quick reference on House Bill 1301 and what the bill is versus what isn't, what the actual requirements are. Because this was when it went through the legislature billed as a sunset bill, but when it came through and what was approved is not what we would typically think of with a sunset bill. And the requirements are very, very different. So it's not necessarily aiming to end the programs, it is requiring a full review by DOL of our program. So very, very different from what we would traditionally think of. So we did send that question over to Lauren Gilmore who works with Austin on this program and unfortunately she couldn't make it today.

(19:39):

She wears multiple hats for the agency, one of which is heading up a lot of our legislative work, and being that we are in session, that is where her focus is at this particular moment. So, she couldn't make it to the meeting today. But I did put that question out to Lauren. She said, "Actually, we've been getting different questions like that and trying to look for a way to solve it. That is a great place for us to focus." So they have put together a draft document. They're going through working on finalizing that, but once it has been finalized, they will be ready to share that out. So thank you Chair LaPierre for giving us that question and therefore a suggestion on how to solve that problem for them. So it worked out really well.

Curtis LaPierre (20:22):

That's good to know. When people hear that phrase, sunset review, they get pretty concerned.

Sydney Muhle (20:31):

And had lots of conversations with Lauren and Austin about the impact of that term, particularly to this industry and the different regulatory reform pushes that have happened for this industry around the country. And so I have really had a lot of in-depth discussions about how it looks a little bit different for landscape architects than for some of the other programs that are also being reviewed at the same time. So they're very well aware of that and being very cognizant of it as they work through.

Austin (21:02):



Yeah. We've definitely been working on our communication strategy a little bit for next time to hopefully alleviate some of those fears. We do have some programs on the books that we have no licensees for, so those are probably going to be terminated, but that's not the purpose of this to... Yeah.

Sydney Muhle (21:23):

Right. Were there any other questions for myself or Austin on House Bill 1301? And this will be a standing report as we move forward. Austin and or Lauren will be bringing any information updates to the Board as we move along.

Lindsey Solorio (21:49):

I do have a question. This is Lindsey Solorio. There was a suggestion during that listening session to have a second listening session or public feedback meeting. Will that be happening at some point after there has been some analysis of the landscape architecture license?

Austin (22:11):

We don't have anything planned right now. We hadn't planned to, but in our court reporter session as well, we had that suggestion. So I think once we have more solid recommendations or have an idea of what direction we're going to be going, I think we will be doing that.

Lindsey Solorio (22:32):

Thank you.

Curtis LaPierre (22:35):

Also, Austin, Curtis LaPierre, you may have covered this, and I think that's in August when your final report goes to the legislature. Is that correct?

Austin (22:49):

August 31st is the deadline.

Curtis LaPierre (22:50):

Okay. Is there a draft report that's published or available for review prior to that?

Austin (23:02):

There's no draft review that's going to be published. We plan on having a draft more or less done mid-spring like April, May, sometime in that frame. But I don't think we plan on publicly sharing that, but we will be at least sharing our recommendations and trying to elicit more discussion around what we're looking at recommending.

Curtis LaPierre (23:40):

Okay, great.

Sydney Muhle (23:40):

Great. If there are no other questions, then I will hand it over to Susan to go over our master action item list.

Susan Nieves (23:47):

So on the master action item list, we have the charter update that is awaiting legal staff. We gave an update on the WAC review today. Hopefully, we'll have something at the next meeting to potentially take action on outreach with UW and WSU that was reported on today, the age demographic data from CLARB that was reported on today, and the outreach regarding House Bill 1301 that was reported today also.

Curtis LaPierre (24:36):

Okay, thank you. Any questions on that material, the action list? Hearing none. Let's move on to number seven, public comments. The public may address the Board on matters within the Board's jurisdiction, either verbally during the meeting or by submitting written comments in advance. And I don't think we've gotten any. Verbal comments are limited to one, three minute comment. Written comments are limited to no more than 500 words. They must be emailed to DOLBoards@dol.wa.gov no less than two business days prior to the meeting with the subject line public comment landscape architect board. In response to all public comments, the Board is limited to requesting that the matter be added to a future agenda for discussion or directing staff to study the matter further. Inflammatory comments and language will not be permitted.

(25:51):

Are there any members of the public would like to comment at this time? Hearing none. And I don't think I see anyone that looks like they're unmuted that is ready to speak. We can move on to item eight, our conclusion. I don't have any announcements, but are there any announcements from the Board that you would like to share? Hearing none. How about requests for future agenda items? Would anybody on the Board like to request an agenda item coming up for... What is it, Sydney? May is our next meeting?

Sydney Muhle (27:12):

Yes, sir.

Curtis LaPierre (27:14):

Yeah. I don't have any now, but I always think of something later. Okay. Let's go ahead and review the action items then. Susan, if you would please.

Susan Nieves (27:36):

Sure. We don't have much, just what we talked about earlier was the WAC review. So that will be something that would hopefully take action on in May. If not, we'll give an update in regards to the status of it. And then the standing report on House Bill 1301. And I made a special note in regards to

written public comments and the most frequently asked questions document. So when those items become available, they'll be part of that report out.

Curtis LaPierre (28:10):

That's great. And wasn't there going to be like a one page or something of frequently asked questions about HB 301?

Susan Nieves (28:23):

I believe Sydney said that they are currently working on that.

Sydney Muhle (28:28):

Yeah, they're working on that. As soon as they have it finalized, it'll be ready to send out and we'll share that with everyone.

Curtis LaPierre (28:34):

Okay. Yeah, I think that's especially important to get to WASLA so those folks can share that in their newsletter.

Sydney Muhle (28:45):

Yeah, absolutely. And we'll make a note.

Curtis LaPierre (28:48):

Great. If that's it, it is now 10:29 AM Thursday, February 8th, 2024. The meeting is now adjourned. Thank you very much.

Susan Nieves (29:09):

Thank you everybody.

Lindsey Solorio (29:10):

Thank you.

Sydney Muhle (29:10):

Thank you everyone.