

City of Auburn Plumbing Board

Wednesday, Dec 1 at 4:00 PM, Memorial City Hall

Present: Seth Jensen, Joe Donofrio, Scott DeJoy, Greg Gallinger, Joe Sliwka

Seth Jensen: Calling this meeting to order, is there are any edits to the minutes of Wednesday October 27, 2021? There being none, the minutes are accepted and approved.

Seth Jensen: Moving on to Old Business, I know we were talking about reviewing Mr. Lovett's supplication. He is here tonight so Joe can you give an update?

Joe Sliwka: We made sure Mr. Lovett had the 5 years of being an apprentice as long with his Journeymen's information. We all agreed upon that and it is a go for him to take the test. I just wanted him to show up today just in case any board members have any questions.

Mr. Lovett: I am a mechanical contractor since 1998. From 1998 to 2010 I worked for Erie Mechanical Contractors out of Syracuse NY. From 2010 to current I run my own business. I have licenses in Onondaga County, City Fulton, City Rome, City Ithaca, and City Binghamton and there is one more as well. I also hold the Underground National Grid piping certificate. Small company there is only 10 of us. We do a majority of hospital renovations. Probably 85% of my work is prevailing rage.

Seth: That sounds good. We will get you scheduled for the Master Plumber Exam.

Mr. Lovett: How long is the test?

Joe Donofrio: 3 hours closed book

Joe S: December 30<sup>th</sup> will work for the exam at 8am

Seth: Alright let's talk about New Business

Joe S: I will like to start with sump pumps throughout the city where people have them pumping out to the middle of the streets. I will like to get a hand on who has them who doesn't have them. Are they tied in illegally or tied into a storm sewer? We been having heavy rains so we want to make sure the water is going into the proper places. This is something we want to discuss into adding into our permit fees in the Codes Office. As of right now no one is pulling permits for sump pumps.

Seth: Sometimes there isn't a storm sewer available for anyone to tie into. Sanitary is not an option. In that they have been directed in the past to dig a dry wall, pit, filled with stone and pump it into that. One of our bigger concerns is when someone decides to pump it into the road then the water freezes and it becomes very dangerous. Some of those areas have been identified to get this handled correctly.

Geno Franczek: Lets talk about permit fees. Joe and I were talking about the original installation for sump pumps charges a certain dollar amount. We all know they can last a week or a few years. Is it fair to the contractor or homeowner to charge a fee every time or should we charge them an initial fee and then do we charge them again if they need to replace their sump pump?

Scott DeJoy: If you are going to do a PR campaign just do a roll out and don't charge them anything for the first year. Then let them know there will eventually be a permit fee.

Seth: Were you able to find what other City's do for sump pumps?

Geno: Rochester's additional base fee for a plumbing is \$80 and for the residential sump pump it is \$15. So it will cost you \$95 for the first shot.

Joe S: Towanda has sump pump fee as \$70 and a correction to an existing sump pump is no fee.

Joe D: I think you would get charged to go out on a replacement call.

Joe S: Those are the only two Cities' that I found that charge sump pump fees. Just trying to clean up the city a little bit and get a better inventory of how many homes have a sump pump. Are they getting discharged properly? Are they going into the sanitary sewer, going into the Storm or is the water running on the sidewalk in the winter.

Joe D.: What do you think Geno as Codes will have to enforce it?

Geno: You would think an inspection of a replacement of a sump pump is probably unfortunately 9 times out of 10 will be sent in with a photo because it will probably be an emergency or happening on a weekend. I don't think we need to hammer people with a second inspection as we are already getting them on the first inspection. It is just the matter of disconnecting and putting the new one in.

Greg Gallinger: I feel like more homeowners put their own sump pumps in these days, we don't get huge business in sump pumps. We never have.

Scott: If your goal is for people to get a permit. I don't think you want to charge to get a permit when you are putting a replacement pump.

Seth: Well for a residential plumbing permit is \$25 so maybe we call a sump pump a fixture then for a residential permit will be \$30.

Joe D. Do you want to do a fee for the replacement?

Geno: I will require a permit, that way we can still go in there and inspect it. I would say no fee.

Scott and Greg: I agree

Joe D: I agree, \$30 for the permit, it has to be installed by a license plumber or license drain layer if you are going to put a line in. Then we can hold them accountable.

Scott: If it goes through the permitting process and they go to Codes and asks if they can tie in to a city drain then you would send them to Engineering. That right there will bring in another permit fee.

Seth: Joe S. can you work with Engineering on developing a couple of standard detail drawings?

Joe S: That is on my list

Seth: As for the permit fee process goes it's not something we can necessary set but we can recommend a \$30 permit fee from the board for next year's budget process. We can send out a memo to all license plumbers and drain layers stating that sump pumps are considered a fixture, and permits are required.

Joe S.: Next on the list, I have been having some illegal issues going on in the city. I have some photos that have been taken that shows illegal work done in a bathroom. One of the issues is there is a S trap underneath the bathroom sink. I ran into another gentleman that has been doing illegal furnace work in the city for 40 years. I am new to this so I just want to get an understanding on what we can do.

Seth: Have you put this guy on notice?

Joe S.: No I have not

Joe D.: I think the most professional way to do it is to send him a warning letter so when you do catch him in the act we can say we sent you a letter and now you will be fined \$1000.

Seth: When you send these letters out about notifying them what you have seen or heard, can you keep the Board in the loop?

Joe S.: Yes

Scott: You have a guy in the trade of plumbing; you send him a letter which you explain to him what he needs to do. He first needs to get a plumbing license. Then tell him what he needs to do to do plumbing in the City of Auburn and if he won't meet these criteria's you are subject to \$1000 fine. Basically this is to let him know we are on his radar.

Seth: Joe S. take a look at that letter and we will circle back on it.

Joe S.: Ok

Joe S.: I was just curious if there is any specific proof to check ownerships of a license plumber?

Joe D.: There is not anything in our Bi Laws that states about percentages about ownerships. You can go to the NYS secretary's website and look it up.

Joe S.: Last item on the list is we have the Homeowners Exam all set as well as the Master's Exam 1. The Drain layers test is almost done. We will be working on the Journeyman Test.

Joe D.: We should have all the tests ready for review on Jan 1, 2022.

**Motion to adjourn made by Seth, seconded by Joe. All in favor. None Opposed. Motion Carried**

Recorded by Crystal Nevidomsky