



State of Nevada
Board of Environmental Health Specialists

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MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

January 15, 2026

Members Present: Brian Northam, Amber English, James Barnes, Drew Skeen, Teresa Hayes
Staff Present: Loretta Ponton, Executive Director
Public Present: Stephanie Itkin-Doodman, Deputy Attorney General
Public Present: Alyssa Ross, EHST, James English, REHS, Enrique Llamas, EHST, Alexis Barajas, REHS

Brian Northam, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. A roll call confirmed a quorum was present.

Public Comment - Chair Northam opened the meeting for public comments. There were no comments.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair - Brian Northam made the motion, seconded by James Barnes to make no changes to the Chair and Vice Chair elections; Brian Northam will remain as Chair and Amber English will remain as Vice-Chair. The motion passed.

Approval of the Minutes - Chair Northam asked if there were any corrections or revisions to the minutes of July 17, 2025, and September 11, 2025. Hearing no comments, called for a motion.

Amber English made the motion, seconded by Teresa Hayes to approve the minutes of July 17, 2025, and September 11, 2025. The motion passed.

Ratification of Registrations Issued by Staff – Chair Northam called for a motion.

Teresa Hayes made the motion, seconded by Brian Northam to approve the registrations as listed. The motion passed.

Request for Extension of EHST Registration - Chair Northam asked if members had any questions on the request for extension for Alyssa Ross EHST registration. Members had no questions. Chair Northam called upon Alyssa Ross and Alexis Barajas, REHS.

Ms. Ross stated she is confident she will pass the exam on her next attempt.

Ms. Barajas stated she was Ms. Ross's supervisor, and that she supports the request for an extension.

Chair Northam stated he would abstain from voting on this item as Ms. Ross is employed by the Southern Nevada Health District.

Chair Northam called for a motion.

Teresa Hayes made the motion, seconded by Drew Skeen to approve the request for an extension of EHST registration for Alyssa Ross, registration #733. The motion passed.

Request for approval of prior work experience - Chair Northam asked if there were any questions on the request for credit for prior work experience by Enrique Llamas, EHST.

Chair Northam called upon Enrique Llamas, EHST and James English, REHS. Mr. Llamas thanked the Board for their consideration of his request.

James English stated he has full confidence in Mr. Llamas and supports the request.

Amber English stated she would abstain from voting on this item as Mr. Llamas is employed by Northern Nevada Public Health.

Chair Northam called for a motion.

Teresa Hayes made the motion, seconded by Brian Northam, to approve the request for credit for prior experience of Enrique Llamas. The motion passed.

Office of Boards Commissions and Council Standards - Chair Northam called upon Loretta Ponton.

Ms. Ponton provided an update on proposed regulation R074-25P stating an initial workshop was scheduled October 17th; however, it was subsequently rescheduled for November 25, 2025. The proposed regulation intent is to establish requirements for oversight of Boards by the Office.

Ms. Nikki Haag, Deputy Director of the Office stated that a second workshop would be held after the regulation has been revised after consideration of public comments and to incorporate pertinent comments.

Ms. Ponton reported the regulation would increase the Boards' administrative burden by requiring additional administrative requirements for reporting to the Office, duplicating, and expanding already established legislative requirements contained in various statutes applicable to Boards. Boards with limited staff may incur additional costs to meet the additional requirements.

Ms. Ponton stated she did submit written comments and that all public comments are posted to the Office website; a link to the website is in the Board packet. Ms. Ponton stated she will keep the Board updated as the regulation moves through the administrative process.

Board members discussed the potential administrative impact and questioned the need for duplication of existing requirements for financial reporting, board member tracking and other administrative reports.

Training Program Requirements - Chair Northam called upon Loretta Ponton.

Ms. Ponton provided an overview of the changes at the State: environmental health programs have been split between the newly created Nevada Health Authority and the Nevada Department of Agriculture effectively eliminating the environmental health programs previously housed under the Division of Public and Behavioral Health.

By regulation, the Board must approve training programs with exceptions for specific public agencies. The Nevada Health Authority is not a listed entity; and the Department of Agriculture has expanded responsibilities under environmental health.

All environmental health trainees are employed by public entities; there have been no training programs submitted for approval from the private sector. To advance to full REHS, a trainee must take a pass the national REHS examination which is very rigorous and covers five elements of environmental health; the Nevada pass/fail rate over 3.5 years is 66 percent. Ms. Ponton stated that Teresa Hayes can provide information on the impact of the restructuring.

Teresa Hayes explained that all “food” related programs were transferred to the Department of Agriculture; retail food, manufactured food, bottled water, shellfish, supplements, etc. and all “non-food” related programs were transferred to the Nevada Health Authority; which includes pools, septic permits, hotels, hospitals and tattoo parlors.

Ms. Hayes explained that previously under DPBH, all twenty (20) environmental health programs were available for cross-training. Under the new structure, cross-training is not available, and as a new agency, NHA does not have an approved training program.

Ms. Hayes discussed concerns with the supervision of trainees and the responsibility for signing the Affidavit of Training Completion. Further discussion ensued on the evolution of specialists versus generalists in environmental health; and how cross-training options can be provided. Brian Northam and Amber English both express that the health districts would be open to assisting with cross-training of state environmental health trainees.

Revisions to NAC 625A – Chair Northam called upon Loretta Ponton.

Ms. Ponton presented a draft of proposed revision to NAC 625A adding a new section to authorize students and interns to practice under direct supervision.

Brian Northam and Amber English stated their health districts hire interns on a regular basis and questioned whether there was a need to add to the Board’s regulations. Stephanie Itkin-Goodman, DAG advised that regulatory authority would be appropriate.

The Board reviewed the proposed language and requested the addition of a prohibition on signing records and reports and to remove the reference to number of weeks or hours an intern may participate to allow flexibility.

Ms. Ponton presented a proposed revision to NAC 625A.032. The proposed language would remove from paragraph 2., which lists training programs not required to be approved by the Board, the Department of Health and Human Services, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services and the State Department of Agriculture and replace with “A department or division of the State of Nevada which regulates an environmental health program.”

In Paragraph 3., it was proposed to add language to list the elements of a training program consistent with the NEHA examination sections.

After discussion, the Board agreed with the revision to paragraph 2. only.

Ms. Ponton stated NAC 625A.0134 was provided for review, with no recommendations for revision. After review, the Board determined no changes were needed.

Ms. Ponton stated the requested revisions would be made and proposed regulations would be submitted to the Legislative Council Bureau for drafting. A workshop would be scheduled for the April 16, 2026, meeting date.

Executive Director's Report – Chair Northam called upon Ms. Ponton.

Ms. Ponton directed the members to the written report and financial statements included in the Board materials. Ms. Ponton reported on registration statistics, summarized the FY 2025 Balance Sheet report, first and second quarter financial reports and reported on Board office activities including training, legislative activities, state reporting, and audits of continuing education.

Chair Northam asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, called for a motion.

Drew Skeen made the motion, seconded by Brian Northam, to approve the executive director's report including the financial reports. The motion passed.

Report from Legal Counsel – No report.

Reports from Chair and Board Members – Chair Northam stated he had no report. The meeting schedule for Calendar 2026 was reviewed. Ms. Ponton asked if members would prefer an 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. start time. James Barnes stated he preferred 2:00 p.m., the remaining members had no preference. Ms. Ponton stated the October meeting date is the 4th Thursday due to a conflict with the third week.

Public Comment – Chair Northam open the meeting for public comments. There were no public comments.

Adjournment - Chair Northam adjourned the meeting at 3:21 p.m.