

**Meeting Minutes
Construction Trades Board
Caroline County, Maryland**

DATE: Wednesday February 7, 2018

PLACE: Health & Public Services Building
403 S. 7th Street, 2nd Floor, Room 206
Denton, Maryland 21629

BOARD MEMBERS: Earl R. Kitchen, Jr., Chairman
Mike Mann, Vice-Chair
Levi Hayman
Scott Holden
Glenn Orme
Curtis Short
Eric Smith
Scott Veil

OTHERS PRESENT: Seth Hampton, Codes Enforcement Officer
Melanie Smith, Administrative Assistant to Boards
Rob Smith, First State Inspection Agency

CALL TO ORDER

At 2:00 p.m., Chairman Kitchen called the meeting of the Caroline County Construction Trades Board to order.

APPROVALS

TRADES BOARD MINUTES

Everyone having read the June 14, 2017 minutes proceeded to vote.

Motion: Mr. Eric Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as written.
Second: Mr. Short seconded the motion.
Action taken: All members approved the motion unanimously (8:0).

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: Mr. Mann moved to reelect E.R. Kitchen as the Chairman of the Board.
Second: Mr. Orme seconded the motion.
Action taken: All members approved the motion unanimously (8:0).

- Motion:** Mr. Eric Smith moved to reelect Mike Mann as the Vice-Chairman of the Board.
- Second:** Mr. Orme seconded the motion.
- Action taken:** All members approved the motion unanimously (8:0).

DISCUSSION

POTENTIAL ADOPTION OF THE 2017 NEC CODE

Ms. Smith reminded the Board that at their meeting in June 2017 the Board voted to recommend to the County Commissioners that they adopt the 2017 NEC Code as written. The benefits of the new code can be seen in its uniformity across the state for both the contractors and inspectors. It makes a contractor/inspector's job particularly difficult to be cognizant of the various versions of codes that are adopted at any given time among the numerous jurisdictions that they work. They require keeping a library of thick code books of every version of each code from 2008 on to know what work is necessary in any given jurisdiction. The Board agreed that being uniform with the State is advantageous for accurate and safe work and inspection practices.

Furthermore, the code is nationally approved. The extensive research that goes into a code revision should be heeded and because it responds to issues that are current and prevalent, it makes sense to adopt the most current version.

Mr. Orme (member at large) who speaks on behalf of the citizens asked why the NEC Code can be adopted at different stages among municipalities and other jurisdictions. No one had a reasonable explanation for him.

Inspector Rob Smith noted that besides the reasons already mentioned, the 2017 code's more outstanding improvements include:

- enhanced life safety by requiring Arc Fault and GFCI protection;
- reduced cost to citizens installing pools and improved efficiency because the 2017 NEC requires one less pedestal;
- receptacles are required to have tamper resistant features. Before, plastic inserts were used to prevent children from being shocked by sticking objects into receptacles. The tamper resistant feature automatically has this safety feature and is required not only in homes but in waiting rooms, pediatric wings, elementary schools and daycares under the 2017 NEC.

REVIEW OF PROPOSED STATEWIDE LEGISLATION

HB 1368 entitled the Maryland Electricians Act – Revision is being reviewed at Legislation this year. The Board is familiar with the bill and discussed its impact on the County if it is passed.

Chairman Kitchen explained that the bill will create uniform electrical licensing throughout the state. Journeyman, Apprentices, and Master electricians would all be required to have some type of license. He stated that there are some counties that already have this rule in place.

Inspector Rob Smith understands the bill to say the State will take the authority to issue electrical licenses from the County and they will be strictly issued by the State. Mr. Rob Smith read through the bill and saw nice features included. One benefit was the continuing education will be unified across the state. As it is now each jurisdiction can have their own requirement for continued education that forces an electrician to take costly and time-consuming classes above and beyond what is normally expected. Another benefit he saw was that the date for renewal will be the same throughout the State. As it is now each County renews their licenses at a different time and they are approved for various years.

Chairman Kitchen noted that the County will still have the power to require electricians to register with the Planning & Codes Department to be permitted to work in Caroline County. If there is any problem with a registered electrician, the registration can be pulled and permission to work in Caroline denied. His only concern with the bill is that those apprentices that have worked under a Master Electrician to build their experience to receive a license be grandfathered in, so their time will not be wasted.

Mr. Eric Smith prefers the idea of a State level license. He explained that it would simplify things for his business by only requiring one license. The licenses are supposed to be listed on their vehicles and this becomes difficult with requiring a volume of licenses as it is now.

CODE INTERPRETATION OF FOOTERS FOR ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Inspector Rob Smith asked to include a discussion at the next meeting's agenda regarding the wording for the footer/tie-down requirement for accessory buildings in Caroline County. The code can be interpreted two ways and he is interested in cleaning up the language to be more definitive.

HVAC INSPECTIONS

The Board is very interested in requiring HVAC inspections in Caroline County. Those licensed to do HVAC work see citizens taken advantage of without any recourse. This has been discussed for some time and they want to request the County Commissioners pass an ordinance to require HVAC inspections.

Vice-Chair Mann suggested that they wait to approach the Commissioners after the election this year. He believes they will be more receptive to a discussion about this once their campaign is done. The Board has already documented their reasons for the request and they asked Ms. Smith to include it for possible signature at the fall Trades Board meeting.

MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Eric Smith's term is up in the fall and he expressed interested in being reappointed. The Board approved of his reappointment.

MANUAL J

Mr. Hayman asked to have a discussion added to the next meeting agenda about the Manual J requirement in Caroline County. The members have witnessed problems with the Manual J being an appropriate measurement. Mr. Hayman followed the Manual J on a job in Talbot County and it was 1 ton low and he had to put in a new system. Chairman Kitchen has heard this from other contractors also. Mr. Hayman would like the Board to consider requiring a Manual J on existing homes as well as new.

Chairman Kitchen asked if there were any other issues requiring the Board's attention. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Mr. Eric Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:40 p.m.
Second: Mr. Orme seconded the motion.
Action taken: All members approved the motion unanimously (8:0).

CONSTRUCTION TRADES BOARD

Earl R. Kitchen, Jr, Chairman



Minutes prepared by:

Melanie Smith, Boards Administrative Assistant