



TEXAS Board of
Architectural Examiners
Architects • Landscape Architects • Registered Interior Designers

LICENSING NEWS

ARCHITECTURE • INTERIOR DESIGN • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

FEBRUARY 2016

CHAIR'S COLUMN

The next chapter for your licensing board

Eighty years ago, this agency was born as a result of a tragedy in East Texas.

In the small but prosperous Rusk County town of New London, a gas leak caused a devastating explosion in a school house. Almost 300 people, including a heartbreaking number of children, lost their lives that day.

At the time of the tragedy, the Texas Legislature was convened in Austin and quickly crafted legislation to create the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners (TBAE) and its sister agency, the Texas Board of Professional Engineers. The goal was to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Texas living and working in the built environment. And that mission remains to this day.

My name is Debra Dockery, and recently I was honored to be appointed Chair of the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners.

Later in this issue of *Licensing News*, you can read about my background and experience both on the Board and in the profession. But here, in my first column as Chair, I'd like to focus on how I view my role in regulating the three professions, and where I see the agency going.

I believe in planning, and that's the first thing on my TBAE schedule. (Read more about strategic planning from Executive Director Julie Hildebrand below.) By looking forward and being proactive, this agency can best perform its mission to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the people who live,

work, and play in the built environment of Texas. In particular, my focus tends toward issues like ensuring high professional standards, transparency, and customer service. Those are some of the areas the Board will discuss during strategic planning, and of course on an ongoing basis.

One other area of focus for me is maintaining Texas' strong voice at the national level, in front of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards, and Council for Interior Design Qualifications. The councils are a critical component of the regulatory system overseeing the public health and safety, and the Board will keep them in mind at all times.

As I serve my term as Chair of your licensing board, I am certain many challenges will arise. But with thoughtful, talented colleagues alongside me on the Board and a highly capable group of professionals on staff, we can overcome any obstacle.

After the New London explosion in 1937, the state of Texas put its trust in TBAE to protect its citizens. That trust is what motivates me as Chair of your board. Now let's get to work.



Debra Dockery, AIA
Chair

Listening and making a plan

As you may know, TBAE is one of a handful of agencies which operate a little bit differently than most state agencies. In most cases, an agency receives its funding from the state's budget via appropriations made by the Texas Legislature. Every odd-numbered year those agencies come before the budget-writing committees of the House and Senate to make their case for continued funding. Not so with TBAE and other agencies operating under a different model called the Self-Directed, Semi-Independent program, or SDSI. Rather than seek state funding, these agencies are charged with operating as a business. SDSI agencies set fees according to their operational needs, control costs according to their resources, and make sure they are accountable to their stakeholders.

Every executive branch agency in Texas state government, from the biggest to the smallest, is required to prepare and submit a strategic plan every even-numbered year. Following instructions from the Governor's office, each agency outlines its plans for the future and publishes some of its methodology for measuring success.

This time, with the support of the Board and stakeholders like you, TBAE will be taking its strategic planning process a few steps further. In fact, the process is unfolding as we speak, having already released our customer service survey in 2015. Simultaneous with the customer service survey, we also sent a strategic planning-focused questionnaire to dozens of stakeholders, such as professional groups representing the three design professions, accredited university programs, student

groups, building officials, and more. Those are steps one and two of the process, and we thank all of you immensely for your contributions, ideas, and suggestions.

The next few steps in the strategic planning process are new, and include an in-depth strategic planning workshop with our full Board. During that facilitated session, the goal will be to look ahead at the top challenges we expect to face as a Board and as an agency, and develop strategies to best manage those challenges.

Following that effort, we will crystallize those decisions—along with data from the customer service survey and environmental scan—into a format developed by the Governor, and report that information and much more in the official Strategic Plan for the next five years. This process is not particularly new, but the manner in which this agency carries it out reflects our new emphasis on stakeholder input and making use of that feedback. Management of this agency can only be more nimble, effective, and efficient the more data we have on hand—and the better we use that data. With the help of the Board and stakeholders like you, we can get there.



Julie Hildebrand
Executive Director

Recent trends and statistics from the agency and its regulated professions

Reporting requirements are a fact of life for any state agency, and for years TBAE has met its obligations accordingly. But this year, we have gone the extra mile to produce a simple at-a-glance look at some key measures and useful metrics for anyone's review.

Want to know how new licensee numbers are trending lately? Curious about how quickly we resolve enforcement cases over the past few years? [Have a look at our user-friendly report on agency trends](#), and we hope you enjoy some new insights into how the agency and its three regulated professions are faring.

Spotlight on your new Chair: Debra Dockery, AIA

In January, Governor Greg Abbott selected Debra Dockery, AIA to lead the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners as its Chair. Having served as Vice-Chair since 2014 and as a Board Member since 2011, Ms. Dockery brings a great deal of experience to bear in her new role.

Ms. Dockery is President of the architectural firm of Debra J. Dockery, Architect, PC headquartered in San Antonio, Texas. Ms. Dockery received her professional degree from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Environmental Design in 1975 and a Master of Architecture in 1977. A sixth generation South Texan, she graduated from Southwest High School in San Antonio after attending primary and secondary schools in the Harlandale and San Antonio Independent School Districts.

Upon receiving her Master's Degree in Architecture, Ms. Dockery began her professional career with an architectural firm in Corpus Christi, then moved to Seattle, Washington in 1980 where she worked for two architectural firms before returning to her native San Antonio in 1985. She was employed with Reyna Carragone Architects in San Antonio until opening her own firm in 1989. The firm has been in continuous operation since that time. She has been registered to practice architecture in Texas since 1987, and in Washington State since 1982.

Ms. Dockery has been President of the San Antonio Chapter American Institute of Architects, Vice President

of the Texas Society of Architects (TxA) and was recently chair of the Government Affairs Steering Committee for TxA. She has served on the Board of Habitat for Humanity San Antonio, on the advisory committee for Healy Murphy Center and as the business representative on the District Educational Improvement Council for Southside ISD.

Ms. Dockery's commitment to young people interested in a career in architecture, and to emerging young professionals in architecture, are demonstrated by her many speaking engagements and mentoring efforts. She has served as keynote speaker for a gathering of women architects in Monterrey, Mexico; presented programs at the Pace Summer Camp for At-Risk Students; participated in the Heritage Education Program; volunteered as an instructor in preparation seminars for the architectural registration exams; and spoken on opportunities for minorities and women in architecture at numerous high school career orientations. In 2015, Ms. Dockery was honored by the Texas Society of Architects with their Mentorship Award for her firm's exemplary mentorship program and her personal commitment to advancing emerging professionals.

Debra and her husband, Paul Kniestedt, have lived for the past 26 years in southeast Bexar County. We on staff at TBAE welcome Ms. Dockery wholeheartedly, and look forward to working with her for years to come.

For the latest news and updates, visit:

www.tbae.state.tx.us

TBAE welcomes new Board Members

Serving as a Board Member of TBAE (or most other boards across the state) is sometimes considered a thankless job. Board service is a volunteer endeavor, always unpaid and often demanding. So it is with true gratitude that we say goodbye and thank you to three Board Members whose terms of service have ended. Alfred Vidaurri, Jr., FAIA, Bert Mijares, AIA, and Davey Edwards all have made valuable contributions during their service, and will be missed.

At the same time, we welcome two new Board Members and look forward to their efforts. Read on for an introduction to TBAE's newest Board Members.



Jennifer Walker, AIA of Lampasas will serve as an Architect member. Mrs. Walker is the President of JNW Architects, LLC, a family-owned firm founded in 2012. Mrs. Walker was first registered in 2012, and holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Texas A&M University. Mrs. Walker is active on the Library Foundation of Lampasas and the Lampasas Association for the Arts, as well

as professional societies such as the AIA, TxA, and U.S. Green Building Council.



Bob Wetmore, AIA of Austin also will serve as an Architect member. Mr. Wetmore is a principal of Cornerstone Architects LLP, of which he was a founder in 1989. Mr. Wetmore earned his architecture degree from Texas Tech University, and first became registered in 1987. Mr. Wetmore has been active locally in such organizations as CASA of Travis County, Leadership Austin, the Home Builders of Austin Executive Council, Austin Boys Choir, and the Chancellor's Council of Texas Tech University. Mr. Wetmore is a member of the AIA nationally and locally, TxA, and the Home Builders of Austin.

Finally, we are happy to announce that Public Member Chase Bearden of Austin will continue his service to the Board for an additional term. Mr. Bearden serves as Director of Advocacy for the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, and is a Board Member of Access Empowerment. Mr. Bearden has served on the Board since 2009.

ARE 5.0 (and the transition from ARE 4.0) are coming

In the last issue of *Licensing News*, we informed candidates for architectural registration of a recent change to streamline the intern development program. Now, we'd like to share some related news, also from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB).

NCARB will be launching a new version of the [Architect Registration Examination \(ARE\)](#). First announced in June 2013, [the new version \(ARE 5.0\)](#) is scheduled to launch in late 2016. NCARB will publish more specifics on the ARE 5.0 launch date soon, according to their Web site. ARE 5.0 will be offered concurrently with ARE 4.0 through June 30, 2018, when the current iteration will be retired.

ARE 5.0 will consist of six divisions and be structured, per NCARB, to align with the more commonly defined professional architect activities of practice management, project management, and project

design. ARE 5.0 will also replace the graphic vignettes with incorporated graphics, performance items, and case studies. NCARB's stated goal in launching ARE 5.0 is to better integrate the examination while improving the assessment of a candidate's knowledge, skills, and ability to practice architecture independently.

In 2015, NCARB announced that fees for ARE 5.0 divisions will be the same as ARE 4.0 divisions (\$210) until June 30, 2018, at which point the cost will increase to \$235 per division. The overall cost of ARE 5.0 (\$1,460) will be slightly lower than ARE 4.0 (\$1,470).

Candidates are encouraged to stay informed on the upcoming changes to the ARE. Candidates should consider signing up to receive ARE updates directly from NCARB and to periodically visit the NCARB Web site. Especially helpful is [an FAQ about ARE 5.0](#), and [a graphic representation of the changes to the test divisions](#).

Streamlining registration for military service members, veterans, and spouses

To better serve our service members and their families, the Texas Legislature has passed bills to streamline the registration requirements for military service members, veterans, and military spouses. Read on to learn more about these special accommodations available to those who serve, and to their spouses.

Accommodations for military service members (active duty)

Currently, Texas law provides for special accommodations available to military service members (current full-time military service in U.S. armed forces or state military forces; see below for full definition of “active duty”). A military service member who is a TBAE licensee is allowed two years of additional time to complete TBAE continuing education requirements.

Additionally, a military service member who is a registrant in good standing or was in good standing at the time the Registrant entered into military service is exempt from the payment of all fees during active duty service. This exemption continues through the remainder of the fiscal year during which the registrant’s active duty status expires.

Accommodations for military service members and military veterans

If an applicant is a military service member or veteran, two considerations apply. First, any service, training, or education relevant to the regulated profession and earned during military service will be credited toward licensing requirements. And secondly, license application fees may be waived if military service, training, or education substantially meets all requirements of licensure.

Accommodations for military service members, military veterans, and military spouses

There are several special accommodations available not just to military service members and veterans, but to spouses as well. Those expanded opportunities include:

- Eligibility for registration and waiver of application fees if the applicant holds an active license or registration in a jurisdiction with requirements substantially equivalent to those in Texas
- Eligibility for registration if the applicant has held a Texas registration within the preceding five years
- Expedited handling and issuance of license.

If you are a military service member, military veteran, or military spouse and any of the circumstances described above apply to you, simply give us a call at 512-305-9000 and we will walk you through the process.

Resources, notes, definitions

[Senate Bill 807](#) (2015)

[Senate Bill 1307](#) (2015), including helpful definitions

Phone number for questions or assistance: 512-305-9000

Email address for questions or assistance: CustomerService@TBAE.state.tx.us

For the latest information about fingerprinting, visit:
www.TBAE.state.tx.us/PRINTS



Tony Whitt
Continuing Education Coordinator

Getting the most bang for your continuing education buck

There are a handful of common questions asked of me every week, as I help people through the continuing education (CE) audit process or simply act as a resource for callers. I'd like to focus on one of those issues in this column. The question is this: Where can I find low-cost or even free continuing education courses that TBAE will accept? Or in other words, how can I find the best bang for my continuing education buck?

I'll state right off that this is a somewhat touchy question for us at TBAE, since we do not perform any kind of "pre-certification" of classes to guarantee that we'll accept them in response to an audit. By giving out a specific provider name, Web site, or other course identifier, it could be (innocently but wrongly) interpreted as some kind of preference on our part. I assure anyone reading this that we have no preference among the many, many high quality providers out there. If the class is pertinent to your profession and addresses the health, safety, or welfare of the public, it's acceptable to us regardless of who teaches it.

So without giving any specific provider names, what I'd suggest is doing the same thing I do when I'm out of ideas: search the Internet for help. Search terms like, "continuing education for architects" (or landscape architects or registered interior designers, of course) are likely

to be more helpful than you might expect. There's quite a bit of online content out there, and if the course offers you a course completion certificate at the end, it will count for structured (classroom) credit.

As a side note, I'll set aside my own policy of not naming specific courses just once. A few years ago we here at TBAE [produced our own one-hour online CE course](#) for registrants. The idea was to address precisely the topic of this column: helping registrants find low-cost CE at a moment's notice. The course counts for classroom credit, offers a course completion certificate, and costs only \$34. None of the cost goes to TBAE; rather, the fee is retained by the online provider.

There are a couple of things to remember, too, in terms of saving time and money to complete your CE. First, don't forget that up to four of your total 12 hours each year can be accomplished by self-study. Simply reading professional journals about health, safety, and welfare topics suffices for self-study, as would reading agency rules or the statutes governing your profession. Simply print out what you read, date it, sign it, and state how many hours you spent reading it. Then file it away in a folder.

Next, remember that you can complete both your sustainable design credit and your barrier-free credit (one hour per year of each) via self-study. So there's no need for panic if you realize you're still short your accessibility credit; simply reading the Texas Accessibility Standards for an hour will do the trick.

Contact Tony Whitt directly about continuing education issues!

PHONE: **512-305-8528** • EMAIL: ce@tbae.state.tx.us

For the latest news and updates, visit:

www.tbae.state.tx.us

Disciplinary Action

The following cases were decided during the TBAE Board meeting in October, 2015. Each case is based on the applicable rule in effect at the time of the violation, and was considered by Enforcement staff and the Board in light of its unique facts. Individual rules may have changed between the time a violation occurs and the time the case is publicized.

In order to ensure compliance with continuing education responsibilities, TBAE staff audits 10 percent of its registrants each year through a random selection process. All of the continuing education enforcement cases brought to the Board at the meetings stem from the random audit program. The cases reflect the most common violations: (1) failing to complete adequate continuing education hours during a program year, (2) failing to maintain continuing education records and verification of participation in CE activities for a period of five years, (3) falsely certifying, at the time of renewal, compliance with continuing education responsibilities, and/or (4) failing to respond to a request for information within 30 days. Each continuing education infraction is subject to a standard administrative penalty.

Registrant Cases

Luhn, Graham B. **\$2,000.00**
Houston, TX

Mr. Luhn is a registered Texas architect. After taking over a design project from another architect who was no longer working on the project, Mr. Luhn failed to take reasonable steps to notify the original architect of his intent to modify the already-sealed plans. Mr. Luhn also failed to identify the extent of the modifications made to the original plans. Mr. Luhn was apologetic and cooperative during the course of the investigation.

Long, Phillip Barry **\$2,000.00**
Beaumont, TX

Mr. Long is a registered Texas architect. In 2015, TBAE received a referral from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation stating that Mr. Long had failed to timely submit plans for accessibility review. Previously Mr. Long had agreed to a Board order regarding a similar accessibility review violation, and been issued a warning letter regarding a violation of the Professional Services Procurement Act.

Powell, Donald Rex **\$1,000.00**
Dallas, TX

In 2015, TBAE received a referral from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation stating that Mr. Powell had failed to timely submit plans for accessibility review. Previously Mr. Powell had agreed to a Board order regarding a similar accessibility review violation.

Continuing Education Cases

Ahearne, Patrick M. **\$700.00**
Allen, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Blaney, Forrest A. **\$700.00**
Richardson, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Costigan, Kimberly Mawson **\$700.00**
Richardson, TX

Failure to maintain a detailed record of his continuing education for 5 years

Dobrowski, Daniel Lee **\$1,200.00**
San Marcos, TX

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year
Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Hau, Chi-Sing Kenneth **\$700.00**
Hong Kong, HK

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Hsieh, Jiahuar **\$700.00**
Houston, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Moebes, John **\$700.00**
Chicago, IL

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Negrete, Jose Alfredo **\$700.00**
San Antonio, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Nelson, Clayton **\$700.00**
Cypress, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities in order to renew registration

Percival, Carla A. **\$500.00**
Dallas, TX

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year

Continued on next page

Speegle, John James

San Antonio, TX

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities
in order to renew registration**\$700.00****Sumrall, Darren**

Murphy, TX

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year

\$500.00**Waters, Hillary Merritt**

Houston, TX

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year

\$500.00**Williams, Gary Dale**

Las Cruces, NM

Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities
in order to renew registration**\$700.00****Wright, Richard Wilson**

Dallas, TX

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year

\$500.00**Yang, Kristy Kay**

Port Washington, WI

Failure to timely complete CE requirements within the program year
Falsely reporting completion of CE responsibilities
in order to renew registration**\$1,200.00**

For the latest news and updates, visit:

www.tbae.state.tx.us



TEXAS Board of Architectural Examiners

Architects ■ Landscape Architects ■ Registered Interior Designers

333 Guadalupe, Suite 2-350, Austin, TX 78701 • P.O. Box 12337, Austin, TX 78711

Telephone: (512) 305-9000 • Fax: (512) 305-8900 • www.tbae.state.tx.us

Registrants, please encourage your interns to sign up for the TBAE list serve for important news and updates.

Change of Address

Please make sure that we have your current mailing and email address so we may send your renewal notice to you in a timely fashion. You may update your own record by logging in to your online account on our Web site, www.tbae.state.tx.us. You can also mail or fax **512.305.8900** the address change along with your signature. We will send renewal reminders to registrants at the e-mail address on file with TBAE, so be sure to keep your valid and unique email address updated.

Upcoming Board Meetings

- February 25, 2016
- May 26, 2016
- August 17, 2016
- October 27, 2016

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julie Hildebrand

BOARD MEMBERS

Debra Dockery, AIA

Chair, Architect Member; Term ends 1/31/17

Paula Ann Miller

Secretary-Treasurer, Public Member; Term ends 1/31/17

Chuck Anastos, AIA – Architect Member; Term ends 1/31/19

Corbett “Chase” Bearden – Public Member; Term ends 1/31/21

Chad Davis, RLA – Landscape Architect Member; Term ends 1/31/19

Sonya B. Odell, FASID, AAHID, RID – Registered Interior Designer Member;
Term ends 1/31/17

Jennifer Walker, AIA – Architect Member; Term ends 1/31/21

Bob Wetmore, AIA – Architect Member; Term ends 1/31/21

The mission of the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the regulation of the practice of the professions of architecture, landscape architecture, and interior design.

www.tbae.state.tx.us