

4-14-2021 5:30 p.m.

Clint Noble
Kim Arnold
Bill Aley
Joey McKinnon
Natalie Kato
Troy Bernier



Clint introduced Natalie Kato, FAPG lobbyist, and gave her the floor.

Natalie said there were no “threats” at the moment regarding licensure. “Sunset” bills SB 344 and HB 471 will not be passed. She suggested the group discuss the language in the senate bill that called for a review of regulated professions without a sunset provision.

A discussion, led by Clint, ensued regarding how PGs are not considered “professionals” by the FDEP because there is no longer a Geology Business license. The group discussed whether it might be time to on the “offensive” to regain ground lost previously. Natalie said we could do a call with the DBPR regarding the Geology Business license issue. The regulations should be revised to address this issue. Legislative changes may be required. Bill recommended making FS 492 current with the national standards for geology licensure. The “reviser” bill introduced in prior sessions was tabled primarily due to lack of communication regarding its value/purpose.

Troy suggested looking at how OSHA regulations address PGs and approach the issue from a federal perspective. The OSHA regulations are currently undergoing update due to COVID. In other industries, it is standard practice for federal law to carry weight. Natalie said many regulations only mention engineers and/or landscape architects specifically, but not geologists. Those regulations need to be reviewed to have PGs included. The licensing review may re-emerge next year so FAPG needs to work on messaging over the summer.

Petroleum tank clean-up freeze: There is now \$100 million in the proposed House budget and \$60 million in the senate budget for cleanup activities. Other lobbyists with allied groups have been meeting with legislators to ask for increased funding.

Natalie suggested looking at giving legislator awards to recognize those that have helped the geology profession. Such awards would be low cost but foster a lot of good will.

Clint asked about corporate donations. Natalie advised on the proper protocol for political fundraising under the current FAPG structure. She suggested incorporating a separate political action committee that would provide greater latitude in soliciting donations directly. Such a PAC should be up and running by June to solicit donations by the fall. The PAC would have a separate bank account.

Joey agreed that these items need to be discussed soon and proposed moving the annual meeting to June. The group ultimately agreed to tentatively schedule June 26th for the annual meeting.

Joey suggested making a statement on the Piney Point situation. Natalie could inform legislators that selected FAPG members could be knowledgeable resources for lawmakers on such issues. This would make FAPG more visible. Messaging could include the importance of having the right professionals on a job to minimize the risk of such situations.

Clint brought up the AIPG scholarship for University of Florida students. This would be a good opportunity to promote FAPG, run a newsletter article, etc. Bill will work on getting a list of PGs from the DBPR as well as an FAPG membership list in order to improve communications. Clint said that Rick Morrison with the DBPR will include Clint on meetings regarding bills affecting PGs.

Clint will check with Christina on the status of the organization's tax return.

Adjourned 6:15 p.m.