



Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts

Board of Directors' Meeting – MINUTES

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

5:00pm – 7:00pm

Arrowwood Resort

Alexandria, MN

Board Members present:

Ruth Schaefer, President, Middle Fork Crow River WD
Mary Texer, Secretary, Capitol Region WD
Sherry Davis White, Treasurer, Minnehaha Creek WD
Jackie Anderson, Comfort Lake - Forest Lake WD
Tim Dritz, Yellow Medicine River WD
Linda Vavra, Bois de Sioux WD
Gene Tiedemann, Red Lake WD
Peter Fjestad, Buffalo Red River WD

Board Members absent:

None

Staff Present:

Emily Javens, Executive Director

Others Present

Maddy Bohn, MB Consulting
Ray Bohn, Media and Government Affairs
Angie Becker Kudelka, BWSR
Tom Gile, BWSR
John Waller, Rice Creek WD

General Housekeeping

President Schaefer called the meeting to order at 5:07pm.

Two items were added to the agenda.

- Caucus meetings
- Levy resolution for watershed districts

Texer moved and Fjestad seconded approval of the agenda. Motion carried.

Two corrections were made to the minutes from the 10/25 meeting.

- Linda Vavra attended the meeting in person
- Maddy's company is MB Consulting not Contracting

Texer moved and Dritz seconded approval of the minutes for the June 26, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Davis White has a new email address for MAWD business. Please switch to sherrywhite@mediacombb.net

Davis White reported year end balances for both the checking and savings accounts:

Checking --	\$168,46.83
Savings --	\$194,662.30
Total --	\$363,159.13

RedPath completed the annual review of financial procedures. One exception was found and has been corrected in the revenue and expense analysis. "In comparing employee benefit expense to budget, it was noted that \$5,212 of

employee benefits related to FY19 had not been accrued for at year end.” Dritz moved and Fjestad seconded approval of the Treasurer’s report. Motion carried.

As MAWD does have physical assets such as projectors and Javens’s laptop, Davis White will develop an asset inventory.

Per the direction of the Board and consulting with the MAWD accountant, Davis White developed the following Credit Card Policy:

- The Board of Directors will approve the issuance of all MAWD credit cards.
- Credit cards will be issued in the name of the employee or board officer.
- Credit card holder will sign a written acknowledgement of receipt of the credit card and statement of policy.
- The credit card will have a credit limit of \$1,000.00.
- The card may be used only for the purchase of goods and services for official business of MAWD.
- All purchases will be within current budget line item accounts.
- The person issued the card is responsible for its protection and custody and shall immediately notify the credit card company and board president if it is lost or stolen.
- The person issued the card must immediately surrender the card to the board president or vice president when affiliation with MAWD has ended.
- The person using the credit card for purchases that cannot be substantiated as a necessary purchase for official business will be subject to disciplinary action and will be held personally liable for the cost of such purchases.
- Credit card statements, along with receipts for all items to be paid by MAWD will be reconciled on a monthly basis by the treasurer. Receipts must show the dates, identity of the item purchased and the name of the vendor. The employee will provide the written receipts, assigned budget line item and any other requested information to the treasurer.
- The board will annually review the integrity of the credit card statements.

The policy will be signed by the board President, Secretary and the employee. Balances will be paid in full monthly; the accountant will watch this. The credit card will be obtained from Bremer Bank.

Dritz moved and Fjestad seconded approval of the Credit Card Policy and to procure a credit card. Motion carried.

Reports and New Business

President’s Report

President Schaefer reminded everyone that this was her last meeting as Board President and thanked everyone for their work on the board. She may remain on the board pending the Regional caucuses.

Executive Director’s Report

Javens and Ray Bohn will meet with Mark Lambert next week (Dec. 9-13). They met with the DNR last week. Javens wrote a letter to the BWSR board chair on behalf of President Schaefer expressing our concern/disapproval of metro annual SWCD work plans being eligible plan documents for the watershed-based implementation fund grant program. It should be noted that MAWD wants to see SWCDs to continue to be eligible for funding, but their plans should not be considered equal to WD comprehensive watershed management plans.

The legislative briefing/day at the Capitol will be held March 18-19. The briefing will be held at the St. Paul Double Tree; the breakfast will be held in the Vault Room at the Capitol. The session starts on February 11.

The summer tour will be held June 24-26 and will be coordinated by the Minnehaha Creek WD.

The WD and WMO administrators are telling their managers to talk to the MAWD board members to make suggestions and recommendations on the 2020 legislative platform and any other ideas they may have for a productive organization. Javens worked with the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) to promote the Drainage Workshop. There are many county commissioners in attendance. The result is the highest number of attendees at the Drainage Workshop.

Events – Maddy Bohn

2019 Annual Meeting

Current attendance totals for this year’s annual meeting and pre-conference workshops are as follows:

Basic Manager Training (New Manager Training)	28
Drainage Workshop	121
Mindfulness	23
Conference Only	356
Conference and Pre-Conference Attendees	528
Conference, Pre-Conference and Vendors	592

A total of over 600 people is anticipated.

The vendor show included:

5 Platinum Sponsors

3 Bronze Sponsors

26 Regular Booths including 2 free booths for MECA and NALMS. Show revenue was \$43,120.00

Legislative Briefing and Reception

The Legislative Reception will be held March 18-19 at the DoubleTree. This is the same hotel as last year; the hotel issued MAWD a credit due to the snow last year. A Legislative Briefing will be held at the hotel the evening of the 18th for MAWD and MAWA members. A Legislative Breakfast will be held March 19 from 8:00 – 10:00 in the Vault Room at the Capitol. Legislators will be invited to this event.

The MAWA and MAWD Boards will meet on Wednesday the 18th, exact times TBD.

Annual Meeting and Caucus Preparation

Maddy will print lists of delegates per region. These will be given to Vavra, Fritz and Anderson respectively. A complete list of delegates will be given to Schaefer and Fjestad. Fjestad will serve as Sergeant-at-Arms for the Annual Meeting.

Last year we had:

212 All Access Registrations

158 Pre-conference workshop attendees

75 Exhibitors

Lobbying – Ray Bohn

Much of our efforts this year will be on left over items and current projects. This includes increasing the general levy; the strategy that will be used is to prioritize districts and submit a bill for each watershed district. The onus is on the watershed district to get local support. The thought is that the members will want to deal with one bill instead of a lot of individual bills so they would be combined and passed for all.

The Legislative Water Commission lost its authority due to a sunset provision and is reconstituting itself as the Water Commission, a subcommittee of the Legislative Coordinating Commission. We will watch their list of activities and initiatives before supporting.

The bill being proposed through the Rice Creek WD specifying that 90% of the tax dollars collected within a county must be spent in that county. We will work AGAINST this bill as it goes against the soul of Watershed Districts.

Chloride – last year this effort was led by the Landscape Association and we were on the sidelines. This year they want someone else to take the lead and we do not know why. MAWD should not take the lead due to its current focus on liability. Someone from 9-Mile Creek is interested in leading.

Lambert Developers Bill – Ray and Emily are meeting with them on Monday; we believe the key is listening to them and working to address their concerns. Some of the effort is educating them and ourselves on each other's issues.

Bois de Sioux WD held a meeting with contractors to review the watershed district's rules and to hear and address their concerns. The meeting went very well. The district plans on holding such a meeting every five years.

Flood Hazard Mitigation – The Red Board wants to bond for \$20 million. Watershed districts should let Ray know of their bonding needs so he can aggregate the requests and the districts can get as much money as possible. The DNR has a list of who is really ready and what the needs are.

Clean Water Fund – SWCD funding is the big issue with no answers. Some want to move SWCD funding to the general fund; some think this is not a good idea. Generally, the Governor supports local levy authority.

Public Water Drainage Issue – Ray drafted legislation to deal with our issues and has authors lined up. The DNR says to go through the Drainage Workgroup which we have done with no results.

Red River Valley Potential 2020 Flooding – it is going to be a bad winter/spring given that everything is full and freezing. Ray will let Linda Vavra know of any activity in the legislature address this and Linda will bring people down to the Capitol.

Ray announced that he plans to continue lobbying/working through this and the next biennium.

BWSR – Angie Becker Kudelka and Tom Gile

- CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) – there is 16.5 million left in bonding capacity
- Wetland mitigation – there are currently 0 credits; dollars are needed. They are working with the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) on this
- The Governor announced a climate and environment sub cabinet as he believes this is a crisis.
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act deals with wetlands; the goal is to streamline permitting with one permit instead of one for the Feds and one for the State. MAWD will be at the table for this in January; a proposal will go to the Legislature in one year (2021)
- One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) – 51% of the state has at least started developing their plan; 9 or 10 have been approved
- Funding for 1W1P implementation – Funds granted for implementation are distributed by 90% based on how much private land is in the watershed with 10% based on public water;
- BWSR would like to help tell success stories to support renewing of the Clean Water Fund; they are looking for narrative, pictures and to interview landowners
- Angie Becker Kudelka-BWSR stated that BSWR wanted to start featuring stories about the good work done by watershed districts. The Board suggested that BWSR start with the 2019 Project and Program of the Year winners. A writer and photographer will create these stories.

Caucuses

The agenda for the Regional Caucuses is electing managers to the MAWD Board. Regions 1 and 3 have one person to elect; Region 2 has two people to elect. The following will convene their regions' caucus:

- Region 1 – Linda Vavra
- Region 2 – Tim Dritz
- Region 3 – Mary Texer

The conveners will also encourage managers to get involved on MAWD committees which will be announced after the Board's January meeting.

Levy

We will be submitting one resolution for each district to raise the \$250K levy limit to \$500K. Any district that wants for their WD should submit a letter to the Board by the January meeting sending details and the story they want to tell. To date we have received resolutions from

- Heron Lake
- Shell Rock River
- Pelican River
- Middle Fork Crow River

Davis White moved and Anderson seconded that Davis White announce this at the annual meeting. Motion carried. Watersheds will have to lobby locally for their individual resolution.

Contracts

MB Consulting, Maddy Bohn –MB Consulting proposed a contract to cover the Legislative Breakfast, registration for the Summer Tour, and the Annual Meeting, Trade Show and pre-conference workshops for a total of \$30,000. Texer moved and Dritz seconded approval of this contract. Motion Carried.

Executive Director Employment Agreement –

The board reviewed the updated agreement including benefits. Texer moved and Davis White seconded amending the Financial Impact chart by:

- Removing the phrase (or HRA) from the Health Insurance line
- Removing the 3.75% from the Health Saving Contribution and updating the amount to \$3,350 which is the current federal limit.

Motion carried.

Javens will update the contract per decisions from the October 25th board meeting and get language from Louis Smith regarding separation pay. Texer moved and Vavra seconded acceptance of the agreement. Motion carried.

Lease Agreement with Capitol Region Watershed District

Anderson moved and Tiedeman seconded accepting the Lease Agreement with the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD). Motion carried.

Dritz moved and Anderson seconded adjourning the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted.

Mary Texer
Secretary