



Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts

Board of Directors' Meeting – MINUTES

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

11:15 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Double Tree by Hilton

411 Minnesota Street, St. Paul

Board Members present:

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

Staff Present:

Emily Javens, Executive Director
Maddy Bohn, Program Manager
Ray Bohn, Lobbyist

Others Present

Doug Thomas, BWSR
John Waller, Rice Creek WD
Jill Crafton, Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek WD

[General Housekeeping](#)

President Schaefer called the meeting to order at 11:15.

Dritz moved and Davis White seconded approval of the agenda. Motion carried.

Texer moved and Fjestad seconded approval of the minutes for the January 7, 2019 meeting. Motion carried.

Davis White reported that there was \$111,839.35 in the checking account and \$176,063.35 in the savings account. Dues received as of February 19 are \$171,018. Texer moved and Fjestad seconded acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Motion carried. Davis White also reported that MAWD's accountant, Angie Fischer, has received her CPA.

[Reports and New Business](#)

[President's Report](#)

Committees

- Javens will be sending out a call for committee members yet this week as well as at the Legislative Briefing today.
- Administrator representatives are all identified; we particularly need Manager representatives from Region 1.
- Schaefer will work with the committee chairs to fill out their rosters.

Personnel Committee

Last year the Board completed a survey for input into Javens' 6-month review and to provide feedback and insight to Javens. For Javens' annual review Shaefer will review/rework the questions and Texer will create a survey using the CRWD Survey Monkey subscription. This survey will be distributed to the MAWD Board and key partners such as State Agencies, Lisa Frenette, Ray Bohn, etc.

In future years the Executive Director's performance survey will be done between the first of the year and the Legislative Briefing.

Tax Reporting

There is a "debate" on how to report WD Manager per diems – via 1099 or via W2. Davis White will ask the MAWD accountant, Angie Fischer, to consult with the IRS to get a final ruling so that WDs can be consistent across the state. Davis White will also ask our accountant to get documentation for Javens and the MAWD Board.

Program Manager's Report

2019 Legislative Briefing

65 people registered

83 people attending including speakers and Legislators

This is the snowiest briefing on record and there are many competing events vying for people's attendance.

Two people asked for refund today as the weather is preventing them from attending. After a brief discussion we agreed to adhere to our policy that there are no refunds issued within 3 days of an event.

Javens will mail a Legislative Briefing Packet to each Administrator and include a personal note asking them to share the information with their boards.

Summer Tour

Dates for the Summer Tour are June 26-28, 2019 and will be held in the Red River Valley/Fargo Moorhead area. Rob Sip from the Red Board will take the lead for this event. Roles, responsibilities and operating rules will be established via conference call this coming week.

2019 Annual Meeting

Arrowwood has been reserved for December 5-7, 2019. The same general format used at the 2018 Annual Meeting will be followed for 2019.

2020 Legislative Briefing

M. Bohn has reserved the Vault Room at the Capitol for the 2020 Legislative Briefing. The room is in the basement of the Capitol and is a great room for this type of event. The Board prefers to have this event on February 27th. The date and reservation will be verified. R. Bohn suggested also reserving the room for a date in late March to allow for options based on the currently unknown legislative schedule. M. Bohn will take care of this.

Social Media

M. Bohn reviewed MAWD's social media presence including Likes, Tweets, Posts, Followers and Shares. Given that MAWD does not pay for ads on Facebook and Twitter, MAWD is doing very well. Please remember to include hashtags in tweets so people will more readily see the tweet. This includes #mawd and #mnwatershed.

M. Bohn and Javens have a shared Google Calendar where M. Bohn shows what, where and when things will be posted.

Schaefer suggested a social media in-service on what works and what doesn't regarding social media. This could also be a session/workshop at the Annual Meeting.

Executive Director Report

Communication

Several methods of communication were discussed including:

- Javens is considering doing quick conference calls with the Legislative Committee and the Board to provide legislative updates
- R. Bohn creating quick video updates.

Shaefer directed R. Bohn to do the videos and publish them for MAWD members only. The key is that communication provides regular (weekly) updates.

Javens will communicate bill numbers to enhance communications with legislators. Additionally, a white paper is being developed.

WMO Updates

An invitation has gone out to all 19 WMOs. Three have joined. One asked for someone to come speak to their board. The thought is that an administrator may be willing to go. Other possible speakers were not identified at this time.

Workshop

A Governance 101 workshop for managers and staff will be held in St. Cloud in September in conjunction with the SWCDs and will use their materials. The curriculum will include basic training plus leadership topics. This workshop will be priced to cover costs. Anderson moved and Dritz seconded that MAWD promote this workshop. Motion carried.

Sponsorships

MAWD received a request to become a sponsor of Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District's Waterfest to be held June 1 at Lake Phalen. At this time MAWD has no policy on such sponsorships. Davis White and the Finance Committee were tasked to develop such a policy. Dritz moved and Texer seconded tabling this request until the Finance Committee develops and MAWD adopts said policy. Motion carried.

Legislative Update

R. Bohn reported that the Governor, Senate Majority Leader and the Speaker of the House have agreed to the following deadlines:

- The first deadline is March 15, 2019
- The second deadline is March 29, 2019
- The third deadline is April 12, 2019

In order to provide an orderly and timely conclusion to the 2019 budget session, the following objectives will be met:

- All major finance bills will be passed off their respective floors and leadership will appoint conference committees by May 1
- The Governor, Senate Majority Leader and the Speaker of the House will provide fiscal targets to the chairs of the conference committees on major finance bills by May 6
- Conference committee chairs shall provide completed conference committee reports to the house of origin by May 13

The Governor introduced his budget February 19; this still needs to be reviewed.

R. Bohn then reviewed the materials included in the Legislative Briefing Packet including MAWD's 2019 Legislative Platform and 2019 Legislative Talking Points.

Partner Organizations

BWSR

Doug Thomas reported the following:

- The Governor recommended
 - a small increase (\$175,000) to BWSR to address data issues
 - to follow the recommendation of the Clean Water Council (there may be 4-5 million available outside of the Clean Water Fund)
 - Buffer tax credits at \$166.00 per acre which would come out of the tax bill
- The members of the Legislative Water Commission have introduced 12 bills
- There is a policy bill that has been introduced for the State to follow the Federal Regulations for assuming jurisdiction of wetlands.
- Watershed based funding is coming; BWSR have completed their Metro listening sessions; the Advisory Committee is now meeting; the final recommendations will be presented to the BWSR Board at their August 2019 meeting.
- The farm bill:
 - Directs the EPA and USDA to work together to deal with agricultural waste
 - Includes small watershed protection PL 566 Projects
 - Funds the Reg Conservation Partnership as a stand alone at \$350 million; they are currently going through rule making; Watershed Districts are perfect for proposing projects.
- Farm Service Agency
 - No CRP applications will be taken until November 2019 which hurts CREP
 - They are looking for alternatives to initiate CREP sign up NOW
- The revolving loan program is funded through the Department of Agriculture.
 - There are dollars for producers for increasing water quality
 - \$20 million is available for lending

PCA and MAWA

No reports given.

Miscellaneous

Texer moved and Dritz seconded that MAWD cover Javens' expenses to attend the 3-day Red River Conference in March. Motion Carried.

Anderson moved and Willenbring seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Texer, Secretary