

# Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Board Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2000

St. Paul, Minnesota

Attending: President Owen Knutson, Vice President Richard Zupp, Secretary/Treasurer & Area IV Director Scott Hoese, Area I Director Carol Berg, Area II Co-Director Paul Krabbenhoft, Area III Director Bob Hoefert, Area V Director Arland Moger, Area V Co-Director Steve Sunderland, Area VI Director Curt Russell, Area VII Director Clarence Anderson, LeAnn Buck (MASWCD Staff), Sheila Vanney (MASWCD Staff); Advisors: Al Kean (BWSR), Roger Mussetter (NRCS), Wayne Edgerton (DNR); Others: Steve Hobbs (District Manager, Hennepin Conservation District), and Jo-Ann Wegman (Olmsted SWCD Supervisor and MASWCD Affiliate Member).

Absent: Curtis Borchert (MACDE)

1. **Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance** - President Knutson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and led the group in the Pledge Of Allegiance. Knutson explained the new seating of Board Members. As a result of the Olmsted SWCD decision to withhold dues payment to MASWCD, according to MASWCD Bylaws, Wegman, an Olmsted SWCD Supervisor, is no longer able to sit on the MASWCD Board of Directors for Area VII. Clarence Anderson, Rice SWCD, who had previously been the Co-Director for Area VII, will now take the position of Area Director.
2. **Approval of Agenda** - Russell moved to approve agenda. Hoefert seconded. Agenda was amended to include: 3)e. Report on Olmsted, and 3)f. Legislative Committee Chair. Motion carried with changes. The Board reviewed the minutes from the last three meetings (November 9, December 4, and December 7). Hoefert moved to approve minutes. Moger seconded. Motion carried.
3. **President's Report** - Owen Knutson
  - a. Knutson explained that the MASWCD appointment to the Feedlot Advisory Committee needed to be filled, as Danny Potter, Redwood SWCD Supervisor, was stepping down from that position. Scott Hoese, Carver SWCD Supervisor, Area IV Director and MASWCD Secretary/Treasurer will be the new appointment to the committee. Knutson then opened the floor to the other Board members for comment. The rest of the Board members were content with Knutson's appointment.
  - b. Knutson reported on the NACD North Central Region Meeting that was held January 5-6, 2000 in Chicago. There was strong representation from Minnesota at the meeting. Two resolutions were supported and sent forward to the NACD Convention for vote. Resolution #21 Prescribed Burning, Grazing and/or Haying CRP Acres, and Resolution #22 Filter Strips for CRP. Resolution #20 Raising Conservation Reserve Program Acreage Cap did not receive endorsement due to the fact that it is already NACD policy. Other items discussed at the conference included TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Loads), the 2002 Farm Bill, and the potential for hiring a North Central Region employee. Last year the grant submitted for this position was declined. Another grant is being submitted this year. Another issue discussed was the National Association of Conservation District Employees (NACDE) and the role they play with the conservation partners. NACDE is seeking to become a full partner within the "conservation partnership": Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), and (National Association of State Conservation Agencies). Knutson indicated his support for the inclusion of the employees in the partnership, as they are very key to the success of

conservation efforts. The summer NACD North Central Meeting is scheduled for July 9-12, 2000 in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

- c. Knutson informed the board of the benefits the Workload Analysis will play when he and Zupp lobby Minnesota Congressmen in March.
- d. The Board discussed the need to donate an auction item for the NACD conference in Colorado Springs, January 29 - February 2, 2000. Moger moved to purchase a peace-pipe from the National Monument in Pipestone, MN, not to exceed \$50.00. Russell seconded. Zupp will purchase one from the Pipestone National Monument.
- e. Knutson briefed the Board on the history behind the current conflict with Olmsted SWCD. Olmsted sent out a letter to all 455 Supervisors, indicating that they would not be paying their dues this year. Most Board members have not perceived any problems in their Areas because of this, as Supervisors in their Areas do not feel it is any of their business, nor do they feel it was appropriate for Olmsted to approach this issue by sending their letter to all of the Supervisors in the state without first communicating their concerns to Knutson or MASWCD. Hoefert moved to invite Olmsted SWCD Supervisors to the next MASWCD Board meeting, and to send a letter under Knutson's signature to the 91 SWCD offices to address the current situation. Moger seconded. Motion passed.
- f. Knutson informed the Board that, according to MASWCD Bylaws, Wegman will no longer be able to serve as the MASWCD Legislative Committee Chair, as she is a member of a non-dues paying district. He has approached Rick Hansen, Dakota SWCD Supervisor about taking the chairmanship of that committee. If Hansen is unable to serve, Marilyn Bernhardson, Redwood SWCD will serve as chair. Both individuals are current members of the Legislative Committee and have a strong background with working with legislators.

#### **4. Vice President's Report - Richard Zupp**

Zupp reported on the first draft of the Board Member Handbook. A copy was made available for each Area Director. Board members were asked to review the draft and submit comments to either himself or Sheila Vanney.

#### **5. Executive Director's Report - LeAnn Buck**

- a. Buck updated the Board on correspondence received by Brown SWCD regarding the Resolution Committee Response on resolutions that are up for vote at the annual convention. Buck will respond with the history on how this became Board policy and update the Resolutions Process information sheet.
- b. Buck discussed Nonpoint Engineering - Joint Powers Boards. She will be meeting with BWSR staff to determine how to move forward with addressing funding and governance concerns relative to JPBs.
- c. Buck explained LCMR Funding for Local Water Planning Initiatives. BWSR will be submitting another proposal this year to accelerate accomplishing the goals laid out in local water plans. She asked the Board if they wanted to write a letter of support to LCMR. It was agreed that the benefit of such a letter would be minimal, as LCMR does not often react to letters of support.
- d. Buck relayed an invitation from East Otter Tail SWCD to host a MASWCD Board meeting some time later in the year. The Board accepted the invitation.

#### **6. Review of 1999 Resolutions & Assessment**

The Board members had been asked prior to the meeting to individually rank the 1999 Resolutions that passed according to their priorities. These were tallied. Resolution #19 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and Resolution #30 Remove or Revise County Levy Limit were the two resolutions

that received the most votes. This information will be forwarded to the Legislative Committee for consideration.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m. At that time, Hoese entered the meeting.

**7. Finance Report (Action Item) - Scott Hoese**

Hoese presented the finance report and offered it for approval subject to audit. Hoefert seconded. Motion passed. Hoese also brought the Board's attention to a change in the IRS mileage rate from \$.31 to \$.325 per mile. This rate will be in affect for the year 2000.

**8. Legacy Initiative - Steve Hobbs, District Manager, Hennepin Conservation District**

Hobbs reported to the Board on a legislative proposal that includes Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The Legacy Initiative consists of programs and projects from a diverse group of organizations which represent conservation, wildlife and sportsmen interests and agricultural interests. Components of the Initiative which should be of interest to Soil and Water Conservation Districts include Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Reinvest in Minnesota, Shoreland and Lakeshore Buffer Improvement Pilot Program, Ag Lands Legacy Program, Metro Greenways, and the Red River Initiative.

**9. Legislative Day at the Capitol - Sheila Vanney**

Vanney reported that the Legislative Briefing and Day at the Capitol was set for March 6-7, 2000. This was the soonest that the Kelly Inn was available, and these dates will still allow for proper timing within the legislative session. Vanney has contacted Joe Bagnoli, Office of Governor Ventura, requesting his attendance, but has not heard back from him. Information will be sent to the districts in the next week.

**10. Living Snow Fence Meetings with Townships - Sheila Vanney**

Vanney updated the Board on work she has been doing with BWSR and MnDOT staff to arrange for a presentation on Living Snow Fences to be made at this year's annual Township Short Courses. It was felt that it was important to educate these local officials on the need and importance of living snow fences, as they have direct knowledge of snow removal costs and problems. In addition to making the township officials aware of the importance of living snow fences, the presentation is also intended to serve as a way of introducing the township officials to their local Soil and Water Conservation District. This can open up possibilities for some very important partnerships. Vanney expressed the need for Board members, along with all Soil and Water Conservation staff and Supervisors to attend the Township Short Courses nearest them.

**11. 1999 Convention Review and other Convention Items - Sheila Vanney**

Vanney provided the Board with a summary of convention attendance, by Area, along with other summary information for the convention. She then went over some "invitations for site inspection" offered by several facilities which will be submitting proposals to host the MASWCD convention.

**12. Area Director's Reports**

- Area I** Berg commented that she did not have much to report as she is "the new kid on the block." The next Area meeting has not yet been determined.
- Area II** Krabbenhoft said he was glad to be back representing Area II while Annalora is in Florida. The next Area meeting is March 16. Annalora will be back in April.
- Area III** Hoefert reported that the next Area meeting will be June 2, 2000 - Resolutions Meeting.

- Area IV** Hoese reported that the next Area meeting will be March 13, 2000 at the Rockford Town Hall.
- Area V** Moger gave the annual schedule for the Area meetings: February 17, June 15, September 27, and November 16.
- Area VI** Russell said that his Area officers would be having an organizational meeting later this week.
- Area VII** Anderson indicated that he was disappointed to take on the Directorship of the Area under these circumstances. He said that has a lot of respect for Wegman and hopes that this situation is temporary. The executive committee for the Area will be meeting soon to do some strategic planning.

### **13. Partnership Reports**

- BWSR** Al Kean reported on bonding and the Governor's budget. CREP and RIM are up from the previous draft of the Governor's budget. Public hearings on the feedlot rule will start taking place next week.
- NRCS** Roger Musseter said the 20<sup>th</sup> CRP sign-up has begun. The NRCS budget came out last week. It was not as good as they had hoped. There were no NRCS retirements at the end of the year here in Minnesota, which is unusual. Wetland issues on the western border are still pending in South Dakota.
- DNR** The Fish and Wildlife fee package that will be going to the legislature has the support of the Governor this year. 360,000 acres of Con-Con lands still remain undesignated. DNR is developing a package for the legislature to address this. They have also been working on a Wolf Bill. It almost passed last year. This year's proposal will further address concerns held by some interests.

**14. Adjourn -** Hoese moved to hold the next Board meeting on February 25, 2000 at the MASWCD office in St. Paul, and that the invitation to Olmsted SWCD be for 1:00 p.m. that day. Moger seconded. Krabbenhoft moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 p.m. Hoese seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.