

Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Board Meeting Minutes

November 2, 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 Director Carl Annalora, Area III Director Bob Hoefert, Area V Director Arland Moger, Area VI Director Curt Russell, Area VII Director Clarence Anderson, LeAnn Buck (MASWCD Staff), Sheila Vanney (MASWCD Staff); Advisors: Jim Birkholz, BWSR; Wayne Edgerton, DNR; Tim Gieseke, MACDE. Others in attendance: Doug Thomas, BWSR; Greg Roiger, Brown SWCD Supervisor; Roger Reinert, University of Minnesota; Joe Newberg, Hennepin CD Supervisor.

Absent: NRCS.

1. **Call to Order** – President Knutson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and led introductions.
2. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes** – Hoese moved to approve the agenda. Berg seconded. Motion passed. Hoefert moved to approve September meeting minutes. Knutson noted some additions to the agenda. Hoese seconded. Motion passed with additions.
3. **President's Report – Owen Knutson**
 - a. Knutson noted that this would be his last regular board meeting as president of MASWCD. He provided some editorial comments regarding the importance of our relationships with our agency partners.
 - b. Knutson reviewed the conservation tillage campaign/Monsanto partnership update submitted by Jay Michels.
 - c. The Board discussed the BWSR Board Position opening. No action was taken. The issue will be addressed at the December 2, 2000 meeting.
 - d. NACD has signed a contract with the Radisson Hotel South in Bloomington to hold the 2001 Summer North Central NACD meeting. The meeting will be held July 14-17, 2001. MASWCD and our partners will have a role in the planning of this conference but we are waiting to hear from NACD as to when planning will begin.
 - e. Knutson reminded board members to bring a couple of auction items to the NACD auction. There will be two auctions at the NACD annual convention: a president's association silent auction and a live legislative auction.
4. **Vice President's Report – Richard Zupp**

As Chair of the MASWCD Resolutions Committee, Zupp presented three emergency resolutions for the board's consideration. An emergency resolution is deemed as something that will need to be addressed prior to the next resolution process. Watonwan SWCD submitted an emergency resolution further clarifying an already submitted resolution. Zupp moved for its adoption. Russell seconded. The board discussed and voted unanimously to reject the resolution as an emergency resolution. Blue Earth submitted an emergency resolution relative to the increased wetland workload that has precipitated from recent changes in the wetland laws. The resolution also addressed a proposed wetland certification program. Zupp moved for its adoption. Russell seconded. The board discussed and voted unanimously to approve the emergency resolution. Nobles SWCD submitted an emergency resolution addressing trespass issues relative to land enrolled in conservation programs. Zupp moved for its adoption. Moger seconded. The board discussed and approved the emergency resolution with one dissenting vote. Approved emergency resolutions will be brought before the floor of the convention for vote by the membership.

5. Finance Report (Action Item) – Scott Hoese

- a. Hoese reviewed the finance report and moved to approve subject to audit. Annalora seconded. Motion passed.
- b. Hoese presented an update on the MCIT Office relocation. He and Buck will be meeting with Robyn Sykes in the near future.
- c. 32 districts submitted a total of \$2,125 for the NACD legislative fund. The MASWCD board's goal was \$2500. Hoese recommended that MASWCD pay the difference of \$375 to NACD for use in legislative efforts. Anderson seconded. Motion passed.

6. Great Lakes Committee Update – Joe Newberg, MASWCD Representative to NACD Great Lakes Committee

Newberg reviewed the history of the committee and current activity of the committee. He presented a resolution that the committee would like the states in the North Central Region of NACD to carry to the NACD National Convention. The resolution addresses Great Lakes Sewage Overflow. There was a motion by Zupp, second from Hoefert to accept the resolution as an MASWCD emergency resolution. After further discussion, Berg moved to table and Hoefert seconded. Motion to table passed.

Recessed for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

7. Executive Director's Report – LeAnn Buck

- a. Buck reported that NACD sent out a request to state associations for suggestions for people to sit on a committee to take a look at the USDA Information Technology Initiative. MASWCD staff submitted Dennis Fuchs, district manager of the Stearns SWCD.
- b. NRCS will be holding Field Operations Training sessions and has requested that someone from MASWCD be in attendance to go over SWCD law. Buck indicated that with the convention coming up, it would be difficult to devote staff time to this effort. Birkholz offered to commit BWSR staff to the effort.
- c. Buck briefed the board on some details concerning the MASWCD Legislator of the Year Award and discussed the history of the executive director selecting the winner.
- d. The board meeting prior to the convention will take place Saturday, December 2, 2000 at 3:00 p.m. Buck is still working on finding a parliamentarian. Moger requested that the carbon sequestration mini-session be video-taped.
- e. Buck encouraged Area Directors to solicit presentations on the legislative agenda from district staff and supervisors in their Areas who sit on the committee.
- f. Buck discussed the possibility of holding a joint meeting of the legislative committee and the policy committee.

8. Web Based & GIS Land Use & Conservation Reporting – Doug Thomas, BWSR

Thomas briefed the board on the analysis BWSR and others have been doing with regard to reporting strategies. He presented some advantages to further exploring the possibility of a web-based reporting system. BWSR will be working with the Canadian company Linnet on a "fit analysis" that will research the feasibility and cost of such a system. BWSR will convene a Blue Ribbon Task Force early in 2001 to take a look at the big picture: where do we want to be in 5 years? The task force will work at building consensus on the technological needs of conservation reporting. Annalora moved to support BWSR's feasibility study and endorse MASWCD's participation in the Blue Ribbon Task Force. Hoese seconded. Motion passed.

9. MASWCD Washington DC Leadership Institute – Greg Roiger, Brown SWCD Supervisor and Roger Reinert, Outreach Coordinator, University of Minnesota

Roiger briefed the board on his experience with the MASWCD Washington Leadership Institute. He considered his participation in the MASWCD leadership program to be one of the highlights of his life. He reflected on how the program has benefited him as a SWCD supervisor and as a person. Reinert commented on how he, as an

instructor, saw the individuals out in Washington DC grow and mature over the course of the trip and how the strength of this leadership will benefit Minnesota.

10. New and Improved District Evaluation – Jim Birkholz, BWSR

Birkholz briefed the board on a pilot “self assessment” tool for SWCDs. More information can be obtained at BWSR’s booth at the MASWCD convention.

11. Partnership Reports

MPCA – was absent but submitted written report that was provided to board members.

DNR – Edgerton reported that he will be working more on CREP in the future. DNR is committed to the success of this program. Nineteen staff have been hired in the field to assist SWCDs with CREP. Edgerton went over the trespass issue. This revolves around the definition of ag land. DNR will try to add grassland and hayland to the definition of ag land. Edgerton updated the board on the Con Con lands. They are down to the last 102,000 acres. DNR’s recommendation is to classify this land as wildlife areas.

MACDE – Gieseke reported that the MN Milk Producers Association is pursuing an LCMR grant. They are working on getting decent prices while reaching environmental standards. Gieseke commented on the advantages of a web-based reporting system. It would alleviate duplicative reporting. It would be a great grant writing tool. The web-based aspect would bring all districts to a level playing field at a minimal cost.

BWSR – Birkholz reported that BWSR is going through the budget process. Governor Ventura utilized what is known as a “challenge-pool” this year. Any departments interested in getting an increase to their budget first had to put 2.5% of their budget into the challenge-pool and compete for the pool of dollars. The BWSR Board decided not to participate in the challenge pool. Birkholz reported that December 1 is the deadline for Board of Innovation grant applications.

NRCS – was absent but called Buck earlier with the following comments: Overall, the national budget decreased from last year. Initial allocations to Minnesota have been given, but not analyzed yet. There will be no “X” amount, or spillover allocations to SWCDs.

12. Area Director’s Reports –

Area I – Berg reported that Maggie Leach and Tanya Hansen gave a super presentation on the MASWCD Washington Leadership Institute at the last Area I meeting. An update on feedlots was presented by a county extension agent and Birkholz went over the Board of Innovation grants.

Area II – The next Area II meeting will take place November 16th. Helen McLennan, Morrison SWCD will host a panel discussion of legislators. Before that, Buck will talk about where we were, where we are, where we’re going.

Area III – The MASWCD Forestry Committee will meet November 17th in St. Cloud. Living Snow Fences will be on the agenda. Hoefert thanked Knutson and Buck for taking initiative and submitting a letter to Governor Ventura outlining our needs and objectives.

Area IV – The next Area IV meeting will be November 13th. Two legislators have been invited.

Area V – Moger reported that the next Area V meeting will be November 16th in Marshall. Moger has visited with legislators in the Area, doing relationship building.

Area VI – Russell reported that the next Area VI meeting will be November 21st in Renville. There will be a tour and Area elections will take place.

Area VII – The last Area VII meeting was in September. There was good representation by legislators Gutknecht and Kuisle.

13. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next board meeting will take place at 3:00 p.m., December 2, 2000 at the Radisson Hotel South, Bloomington, Minnesota.