

Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Board Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2002

Holiday Inn St. Paul East, St. Paul, MN

Attending: President Richard Zupp, Vice President Scott Hoese, Secretary/Treasurer & Area I Director Carol Berg, Area II Director Mary Ann Scharf, Area III Director Ted Lovdahl, Area III Co-Director Roland Cleveland, Area IV Director Jim Main, Area V Director Steve Sunderland, Area V Co-Director Clark Lingbeek, Area VI Director Greg Roiger, Area VI Co-Director Loyal Fischer, Area VII Director Clarence Anderson, Area VII Co-Director John Jaeger, LeAnn Buck (MASWCD Staff), Sheila Vanney (MASWCD Staff). Others in attendance: Jim Birkholz, BWSR; Doug Thomas, BWSR; Kyle Krier Pipestone SWCD & MACDE; Ian Cunningham, Pipestone SWCD; Vic Ormsby, Winona SWCD.

1. **Call to Order** – President Zupp called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance.
2. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes** – Motion by Lovdahl, seconded by Sunderland to approve the agenda with amendments.. Motion carried. Motion by Roiger, seconded by Anderson, to approve the January 16, 2002 meeting minutes. Motion carried. President Zupp noted that during the course of the business meeting each Area has one vote, except during the prioritization of the resolutions, where the co-directors may also offer their input because it is an informal process.
3. **President's Report - Richard Zupp**
 - a. Zupp updated the board on Minnesota resolutions which were submitted to the national level.
 - b. Zupp reported on the NACD North Central Region staff position currently held by Bill Horvath and other news from the NACD annual convention in Reno, Nevada. Owen Knutson was sworn as the North Central Region's representative to the NACD Executive Board. Tim Gieseke was elected as the North Central Region's representative to the National Association of Conservation District Employees Executive Board. Third party vendors and an increase in conservation in the Farm Bill were discussion topics during the convention.
4. **Decision on Office Move - Chad Sturm & LeAnn Buck**

Buck introduced Chad Sturm, Park Midwest Commercial Real Estate. Sturm has been working with the representatives of the properties under consideration. He provided the board with a handout outlining the cost-comparisons of the three properties currently under consideration. The board took no action at this time and requested that Sturm continue to work with MCIT to try to negotiate a five year lease, which the other two properties offered, instead of a three year lease, along with other negotiating items.
5. **Personnel Report - Scott Hoese, Committee Chair**

Hoese reported that the Personnel Committee conducted a conference call to address personnel issues. He presented a revised position description and title change for Vanney. Hoese moved for the adoption of these changes. Lovdahl seconded. Motion carried. Vanney's new title is Assistant Director. The committee will be working on updating the personnel handbook.
6. **Executive Director's Report - LeAnn Buck**

- a. Buck reported that a landowner in Hennepin County has filed a petition for discontinuance of the district, with the 25 “land occupier” signatures required by current law,. The next step would be for BWSR to conduct a referendum in Hennepin County with this as a ballot item. However there are some questions as to whether the statutory language regarding discontinuance of a district is constitutional.
- b. MASWCD has conducted meetings with Congressmen Peterson, Gutknecht and Kennedy, all of whom serve on the House Agriculture Committee. The House version of the Farm Bill does not currently include the provisions for the Conservation Security Act. MASWCD leadership will be meeting with the entire Minnesota Congressional delegation when they attend the NACD Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. this March.
- c. Buck noted that the summary notes from the retreat held last month were sent to all board members. The board will need to address the goals portion and other “next steps” at the March meeting.
- d. Buck presented to the board a request from Aaron Meyer of the Stearns SWCD. Meyer is requesting financial support for the Lakes and Rivers Conference. Motion by Lovdahl, seconded by Main to send a letter indicating that we have not budgeted for such a sponsorship and cannot afford it at this time.
- e. Vanney reported on the Living Snow Fence Partnership Agreement between FSA, MnDOT, NRCS and MASWCD. The memorandum of understanding is being signed by the lead representative of each agency. There will be an official signing ceremony some time in the coming months, after which there will be a symposium for the potential implementors of the program to learn more of the details.

7. Legislative Report - LeAnn Buck and Judy Erickson

Erickson and Buck went through the updates that will be presented to the participants of this evenings legislative briefing.

8. Area Directors Reports

Area VII - there will be no winter meeting; RIM & CREP development are big items right now, of which Congressman Gutknecht is supportive.

Area VI - held meeting on Feb. 9, Speaker of the House, Steve Sviggum was in attendance; CREP is done from the application standpoint.

Area V - held meeting Feb. 21, Roger Mussetter of NRCS spoke about third party vendors and the potential impact on districts.

Area IV - an agenda of the next Area IV meeting, March 4, was handed out to the board.

Area III - several soil and water conservation districts got together to form a forestry committee; several subcommittees were also developed; their next meeting will be March 21.

Area II - next meeting will be April 13.

Area I - Berg was absent for this part of the meeting.

Board recessed for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

9. District Capacity Committee Update - Jim Main and Jim Birkholz

Main and Birkholz updated the board on the committee’s efforts. Workshops will be conducted in Mankato and Bemidji to further engage those who responded on their surveys that they wanted to be contacted.

10. Prioritization of MASWCD 2001 Resolutions - Jim Birkholz, Facilitator

Zupp provided introductory comments and stated the resolution process rightfully instills in the membership an expectation that we will carry forward and accomplish action on passed resolutions. Because of limited resources, however, we need to evaluate and prioritize the resolutions, and give staff direction on how to address them. The board then proceeded to go through this exercise.

11. Finance Report - Carol Berg

- a. Motion by Berg, seconded by Main, to accept the finance report subject to audit and allowing Buck to clarify the accounts receivable. Motion carried.
- b. Motion by Lovdahl, seconded by Main, to send Kanabec's request for hardship designation to the MASWCD Finance Committee for review. Motion carried. Motion by Main, seconded by Lovdahl, to approve Hennepin's request to pay their dues in quarterly installments, due to the extenuating circumstances surrounding their current funding situation. Motion carried. The board will review this issue quarterly.
- c. Berg provided her Area report, since she was absent earlier in the meeting due to weather: Area I will be holding a meeting on April 4 in Norman County.

12. MACDE Report - Kyle Krier, MACDE President

Krier reported on activities of the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees. They held a board retreat earlier in the year and established a workplan and goals for the year. The MACDE annual conference will be held June 26-28, 2002 at the Radisson Arrowwood in Alexandria.

13. MOU with NRCS and Dept. of Ag. For Organic BMPs - Vic Ormsby

Ormsby briefed the board on some of the history of organic BMPs and the current status of the MOU. He requested MASWCD support. Motion by Roiger, seconded by Anderson, to support the MOU by directing MASWCD staff to contact Mary Hanks of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Motion passed.

14. Next Meeting - The next meeting will be held on March 27 at the Hyatt Regency in Minneapolis, Motion by Lovdahl, seconded by Berg, to hold the April meeting on April 24. Motion carried.

15. Adjourn - Lovdahl commented that he would like to commend Vanney on her prompt responses to requests for information. Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.