

Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Board Meeting Minutes

March 22, 2005

Best Western Kelly Inn, St. Cloud, MN

Attending: President Carol Berg, Vice President Loyal Fisher, Area I Director Ken Pederson, Area II Director Mary Ann Scharf, Area III Director Bill Saumer, Area IV Director Mary Wetter, Area V Director Clark Lingbeek, Area VI Director and MASWCD Secretary/Treasurer Greg Roiger, Area VII Director Ralph Breuer; Area VIII Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck and Sheila Vanney.

1. **Call to Order** – President Berg called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance.
2. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes** – Motion by Scharf, seconded by Schulz, to approve the agenda. Motion carried. Berg noted that action on the February minutes would take place later in the meeting after board members have had a chance to review.
3. **President's Report – Carol Berg**
 - a. Berg requested input on how to move forward with the issue of fund development. Motion by Roiger, seconded by Wetter, to establish a Fund Development Task Force. Motion carried.
 - b. Berg presented her recommendations for committee appointments. Motion by Pederson, seconded by Breuer, to ratify the recommendations with a decision pending on an Area 3 representative for the Resolutions Committee. Motion carried.
 - c. Berg welcomed the new Area 3 Director, Bill Saumer from Pine SWCD.
 - d. Berg reported on activities of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The NACD Spring Legislative Conference will be held April 3-5 in Washington DC. The MASWCD Executive Committee held a conference call and determined that the MASWCD President, Vice President and staff would not be attending this year. Instead, MASWCD is working on a Washington DC Leadership Institute for later in the year. Berg noted that the NACD North Central Region Directors will be holding a retreat on April 11-12 to work on goals for the region. They will also meet with the NACD Executive Board. Berg, as NACD board member, will attend on behalf of MASWCD. Berg also commented that the new chair for the NACD Great Lakes Committee is Tom Middleton from Michigan.
 - e. Motion by Scharf, seconded by Lingbeek to ratify the MASWCD policy on conference participation. Motion carried.
 - f. Berg led a discussion on BWSR Board Appointments. No news has come out yet as to the Governor's final decision on appointments to the three board vacancies. The vacancies include an SWCD representative, a citizen member and a county commissioner. Lingbeek noted that he received a message from the Governor's office that they would like him to submit an updated application. Vic Ormsby from Winona SWCD and Steve Sunderland from Chippewa SWCD have both had telephone interviews for the position.
4. **Finance Committee – Greg Roiger**
 - a. Roiger presented the monthly financial report and Berg accepted it subject to annual review.
 - b. Roiger updated the board on the status of dues payments.
5. **Area Director Reports**

Area Directors reported on meetings and other activities taking place in the eight MASWCD Areas.

6. Executive Director's Report – LeAnn Buck

- a. Buck highlighted some SWCDs in the media and presented a legislative update on the Clean Water Legacy act, tax levy option for SWCD and CREP. Schulz noted that Senator Dallas Sams is in recovery after surgery to remove a brain tumor. Schulz suggested MASWCD send him something to show our support.
- b. Vanney updated the board on planning for a celebration of the 70th Anniversary of NRCS and Soil and Water Conservation in Minnesota. NRCS will be holding an open house on April 27 at their office in St. Paul. Board members are invited to attend. There will also be an event that week with the Governor and the media to celebrate the soil and water conservation partnership.
- c. Buck briefed the board on grants being administered by MASWCD from NRCS. One grant relates to educational opportunities for the Conservation Security Program. Seven workshops were held across the state to update SWCDs on the CSP. Over 30 SWCDs are included in the watersheds in Minnesota that are eligible for this year's CSP sign-up. MASWCD is also implementing an NRCS grant to move forward with a Washington DC Leadership Institute to take place in September of 2005. In addition, MASWCD is working with NRCS to implement a grant component relating to diversity training. Planning is in the early stages for these latter two grant components.
- d. Buck presented an update on 2004 Resolution #8 Technical Service Providers, submitted by Pine SWCD. Board members reviewed a letter from NRCS State Conservationist Bill Hunt which states that the technical assistance funds can underwrite 50% of a SWCD's technical assistance costs. It notes that this policy is in effect to make sure SWCDs are not seen as having an unfair advantage over private sector vendors. Board members may want to further review the certification process at a future meeting.
- e. Board members reviewed an update on 2004 Resolution #6 Forest Stewardship, submitted by Kanabec SWCD. MASWCD forwarded the resolution to DNR. Buck reviewed the correspondence from DNR. The Forest Stewardship Committee voted to raise the cap to \$200 per plan and \$2 per acre. Buck also referenced 2004 Resolution #11 CRP Technical Agency submitted by Brown. The resolution seeks to make NRCS the lead agency for CRP administration. It was forwarded on to the national convention but failed.
- f. Board members took action on the February 22 board meeting minutes. Motion by Roiger, seconded by Schulz to approve the minutes. Motion carried.
- g. Buck shared with the board a map of the Clean Water Legacy, scheduled clean up projects (TMDLs).

7. Overview of Retreat/Establish Board Goals for 2005

Buck facilitated a review of the board's annual retreat and a discussion to establish the board's 2005 goals. Work on this will continue an hour before the next board meeting.

8. Adjourn

The next board meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m., April 26 at the MASWCD office in St. Paul. Co-Directors will be invited to participate and an exercise to review the 2004 approved resolutions will take place. There will be no board meeting in May. The June meeting will take place on June 29 with a 9:00 a.m. start time. Motion by Roiger, seconded by Wetter, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.