

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2009
Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN

Present: President Steve Sunderland, Vice President & Area 6 Director Kathryn Kelly, Area 1 Director Russ Severson, Area 2 Director Ross Aigner, Area 3 Co-Director Kurt Beckstrom, Area 4 Director Mark Zabel, Secretary Treasurer & Area 5 Director Clark Lingbeek, Area 7 Director Bob Borchert, Area 8 Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck; and Area 2 Co-Director Ralph Peterson. Absent: Area 3 Director Merrill Loy

1. President Sunderland called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.
2. Motion by Bob Borchert, seconded by Ross Aigner, to approve the board meeting agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Kathryn Kelly, seconded by Ross Aigner, to approve the November 6, December 7 and December 9, 2008 Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.
3. President's Report – Steve Sunderland reported on the status of the 2009-2010 MASWCD committee appointments. Sunderland is reviewing the names of volunteers and will be making final appointments for committees and MASWCD representation to partner organization activities in February. Steve Sunderland, Kathryn Kelly and MASWCD Past President Ken Pederson attended the North Central National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Board Meeting in Chicago, IL on January 8 & 9, 2009. Ken Pederson is Chair of the North Central Region. Three MASWCD resolutions were forwarded but did not receive endorsement at the north central meeting. They will still be forwarded to the NACD Annual meeting for voting by the 52 member national delegates. The board reviewed the 2008/09 fiscal year calendar of board activities. The board discussed the 2008 resolution requesting the association to change the eight area boundaries. MASWCD area directors will be meeting with their SWCD members to make the recommended by-law and election changes for those areas impacted.
4. Finance Report – Clark Lingbeek, MASWCD Secretary Treasurer, reviewed the December 2008 financial report. Motion by Clark Lingbeek, seconded by Bob Borchert, to approve the December 2008 financial report subject to audit. Motion carried. Motion by Clark Lingbeek, seconded by Bob Borchert, to allocate the December 2008 auction proceeds of \$5,279 as follows: \$3,000 for the Minnesota State Envirothon and \$2,279 for the MASWCD Education Committee. Motion by Zabel, seconded by Aigner, to amend the motion to allocate auction proceeds as follows: include \$3,000 for the Minnesota Envirothon, \$1,779 for MASWCD Education Committee and \$500 for NACD's Capitol Court Campaign. Amendment failed. Original motion carried.
5. Executive Director's Report - LeAnn Buck, MASWCD Executive Director, reported on the status of the Lessard Heritage Council and Clean Water Council. Both councils are in the process of working on funding recommendations for the dedicated sales tax. The Association is working with both councils and stakeholders to address conservation and water quality funding related to private landowners and SWCD outreach. The BWSR has posted the findings of their Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment listening sessions held throughout the state. BWSR conducted the meetings to gather input from SWCDs and other local government related to future conservation projects. Ultimately the legislature will determine the appropriations for the funding recommendations. The 2009 MASWCD legislative platform adopted by the board of directors in December 2008 addresses the dedicated sales tax appropriations and the SWCD delivery system. Buck reported that BWSR's Grants Program and Policy committee on December 17, 2008 approved the addition of the NRCS practice bioretention basin (712) as an eligible component for state cost-share. MASWCD submitted the request to BWSR based on the resolution authored by the Crow Wing SWCD. BWSR will be notifying the SWCDs of this change. Buck reported that the National Association of Conservation Districts is partnering with a coalition of conservation and habitat organizations to recommend funding for conservation programs under a federal stimulus package.

Buck will research potential impacts to Minnesota SWCDs' conservation efforts. Minnesota has been selected as a pilot state for "Forests in the Farm Bill" workshops. The purpose of the workshops is to educate resource professionals related forestry Farm Bill programs and forest stewardship plans. Buck forwarded to the board a Drainage Workgroup report submitted by Greg Roiger, Brown SWCD. MASWCD appointed Roiger to serve as the Association's representative to the drainage work group. The work group was an outgrowth of a 2006 MASWCD resolution and includes representation from drainage authorities, agricultural and conservation organizations and state agencies. Consensus items from the work group are being forwarded to the legislature and a bill may be introduced during the 2009 session.

6. MASWCD Task Force Update – LeAnn Buck provided an overview of the two task forces that were created in 2008. Information was shared related to the Elections Task Force and the Watershed Task force.

7. Motion by Mark Zabel, seconded by Clark Lingbeek, to approve the 2009 meeting dates for the board of directors. Motion carried. The next MASWCD board meeting is scheduled for February 23. Motion by Kathryn, seconded by Kurt Beckstrom, to have Tom Schulz, Area 8 Director, serve as the MASWCD representative to the Blandin Foundation's Forest Values and Carbon Markets conference. Motion carried. Tom Schulz, MASWCD Area 8 director, submitted for the board's review, the MASWCD Area 8 policy statements related to the Outdoor Heritage/Clean Water Policy and the support for the continued retention of qualified SWCD staff. Tom Schulz, MASWCD Area 8 director, submitted for the board's consideration a resolution that the MASWCD Areas be referred to by their geographic location within the state (SE, NE, SW, etc.). No action was taken. Motion by Clark Lingbeek, seconded by Bob Borchert, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.