

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
February 23, 2009  
Best Western Kelly Inn, St. Paul, MN

Present: President Steve Sunderland, Vice President & Area 6 Director Kathryn Kelly, Area 1 Director Ross Aigner, Interim Area 2 Director Ralph Peterson, Area 3 Director Merrill Loy, 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 Sheila Vanney; MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist Judy Erickson; Dave Frederickson, Office of Senator Amy Klobuchar; Robyn Sykes, MCIT Executive Director; MACDE President Felicia Brockoff; BWSR Board Chair Randy Kramer, Assistant Director Julie Klocker, Assistant Director Steve Woods and Executive Director John Jaschke; Ken Pederson, NACD North Central Region Chair and East Polk SWCD Supervisor. Others in attendance included Winona SWCD Supervisors Rudie Spitzer, John Bronk and Tom Choinski; Carlton SWCD Manager Brad Matlack and Supervisor Mark Thell; Chisago SWCD Supervisor Roland Cleveland; Wright SWCD Supervisor and Area 4 Co-Director Mary Wetter; NRCS State Conservationist Bill Hunt and Assistant State Conservationist Ann English.

1. President Sunderland called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance.
2. Motion by Lingbeek, seconded by Borchert, to approve the board meeting agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Borchert, seconded by Lingbeek, to approve the January 20 board meeting minutes with amendments. Motion carried.
3. President's Report – Sunderland presented to the board his 2009-2010 MASWCD Committee Appointments. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Schulz to ratify the committee appointments. Motion carried. Loy noted that he doesn't agree with all the committee appointments but has talked to Sunderland and explained his concerns. Sunderland and Kelly reported on the NACD Annual Convention held February 1-4 in New Orleans, Louisiana. At the convention, two awards were presented for Minnesota achievements. The Friend of Conservation Award was presented to Kim Boyce and Lisa Hinz with University of Minnesota Extension Service for their work with the MASWCD Leadership Institute. The District Excellence Award for Policy and Grassroots Initiatives was presented to Winona SWCD. Sunderland noted that Minnesota received recognition for being the state with the fifth highest dues quota. Ken Pederson, East Polk SWCD Supervisor and former MASWCD President, is the NACD North Central Region Chair. At the convention, elections were held for NACD's officer team – the national association will be led for the next two years by President Steve Robinson of Ohio; First Vice President Gene Schmidt of Indiana; Second Vice President Earl Garber of Louisiana; and Secretary/Treasurer Jack Majeres of South Dakota. Sunderland commented that NACD is well respected among members of Congress and has a high level of recognition among stakeholders in Washington D.C. In addition, Minnesota is highly regarded among the other SWCD representatives in the nation. NACD is monitoring the stimulus bill proposals and Farm Bill program rule developments. NRCS is still operating by continuing resolution. Three Minnesota resolutions approved at the December, 2008 MASWCD Annual Convention were submitted to the NACD annual convention for action. The resolution related to NACD providing two years advance notice on the annual convention location was taken under advisement and is already a part of NACD operations. The resolution related to haying CRP with no penalty failed, and it was noted that this program is intended to take land out of production. The resolution relating to cost-share on sediment control construction failed, and it was noted that most states work with their state NRCS office on this issue. Kelly distributed an NACD fundraising brochure and commented on the new "Friends of NACD" Individual Membership Program.

4. Finance Report – Lingbeek reviewed the monthly financial report and Sunderland accepted subject to annual review. Lingbeek discussed with the board the status of membership dues payments. The finance committee will be meeting to review these issues and will present recommendations to the board.
5. Executive Director’s Report – Buck reviewed with the board MASWCD Priority Issues that came out of the annual retreat last month. She also went through the 2009 MASWCD Work Plan. Buck reported on the Lessard Council Stakeholder Process and the Clean Water Council Budget Proposal. She presented a proposal to the board for clarifying the resolution process. Motion by Borchert, seconded by Lingbeek, to have the Resolution/Policy Committee discuss and provide to the board a recommendation on the resolution guidelines and clarifying whether a resolution that has been approved by the membership via pre-convention balloting may be discussed for reconsideration from the floor during the annual meeting. Motion carried. Buck also reported to the board on MASWCD training opportunities for SWCD members including the MASWCD Civic Leadership Session that will take place in Washington, D.C. March 1-5 and an upcoming workshop on Forestry in the Farm Bill. Buck also reported on the combination of DNR Division of Waters and Division of Ecological Resources and the NACD update on federal appropriations for technical assistance.
6. Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust – Robyn Sykes presented information to the board on the services MCIT provides to SWCDs and Area Meeting Training opportunities. Robyn Sykes also provided information on MCIT training sessions and speakers that would be available for Area meetings. Board members can contact MCIT directly to schedule sessions.
7. Legislative Update – Judy Erickson provided an update to the board on the legislative session as it relates to the MASWCD Legislative Platform. MASWCD Legislative Platform items include: Clean Water Legacy Act, RIM Reserve/WRP, and Green Acres policy related to conservation program eligibility.
8. Federal Stimulus Package – Dave Frederickson with Sen. Klobuchar’s office provided information related to the federal stimulus package. Details are not yet available, but funding will be allocated to NRCS for some of their watershed programs.
9. BWSR Report – BWSR Board Chair Randy Kramer, BWSR Assistant Director Julie Klocker, and BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke provided general information related to the Governor’s Budget Recommendations for BWSR.
10. MACDE Report – MACDE President Felicia Brockoff reported on MACDE activities. She noted MACDE has many new members on their board. At their last meeting, MACDE decided not to hold a summer conference and may be pursuing a partnership opportunity with the BWSR Academy. MACDE will be providing a scholarship similar to last year to fund an employee’s participation at the NACD Legislative Conference in June. MACDE also has \$300 available per Area for training efforts.
11. NACD North Central Report – NACD North Central Region Chair and East Polk SWCD Supervisor Ken Pederson reported on the activities of the Region. He noted the North Central Region continues to provide leadership at the national level, which is reflected in the recent officer elections.
12. Motion by Borchert, seconded by Kelly to adjourn the meeting at 4:45 p.m. Motion carried. The next board of directors meeting will be held March 24 at the MASWCD office in St. Paul.