

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
March 24, 2009  
MASWCD Office, St. Paul, MN

Present: President Steve Sunderland, Vice President & Area 6 Director Kathryn Kelly, Interim Area 2 Director Ralph Peterson, Area 3 Director Merrill Loy, Area 4 Director Mark Zabel, Area 4 Co-Director Mary Wetter, Secretary Treasurer & Area 5 Director Clark Lingbeek, Area 7 Co-Director John Jaeger, Area 8 Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck and Sheila Vanney; MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist Judy Erickson; BWSR Assistant Director Steve Woods; BWSR Chief Engineer Al Kean; NRCS Assistant State Conservationist Ann English.

Absent: Area 1 Director Ross Aigner; Area 7 Director Bob Borchert.

1. President Sunderland called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance.

2. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Lingbeek, to approve the board meeting agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Loy, seconded by Lingbeek, to approve the February 23 board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. President's Report – Sunderland provided information for two committee appointments which would supplement those ratified at last month's meeting.

Motion by Schulz, seconded by Loy, to ratify Sunderland's committee appointments which supplement those ratified at last month's meeting: Dennis Thompson, Aitkin SWCD employee, to represent MASWCD on the DNR Forest Stewardship Committee; Nancy Benson, Wadena SWCD Supervisor, Area 8 representative to MASWCD Awards Committee. Motion carried.

It was noted that Itasca SWCD Supervisor Ted Lovdahl also serves as MASWCD representative to the Forest Stewardship Committee, and now with Thompson on the Committee as well, MASWCD has a policy voice with an elected supervisor and a technical voice with an employee. Sunderland then reported on a meeting that took place yesterday with the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC). He, Kelly and Buck met with AMC Executive Director Jim Mulder. Sunderland encouraged MASWCD Area Directors to invite AMC Board Members to Area Meetings. Sunderland also noted that MASWCD representatives serve on the communications committee of the National Association of Conservation Districts.

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 held a conference call on March 19 and Lingbeek presented the committee's recommendations.

Motion by Lingbeek, seconded by Kelly, to accept requests from Aitkin and Mille Lacs SWCDs to pay dues on an installment basis. Motion carried.

Motion by Lingbeek, seconded by Zabel to grant dues hardship status to the following SWCDs while maintaining their membership in good standing: allowing Kanabec SWCD to pay \$925, allowing Mahnomen SWCD to pay \$925, and allowing Marshall Beltrami to pay \$500.

Motion by Loy, seconded by Peterson, to amend motion, changing Kanabec's payment from \$925 to '\$500 if possible, \$250 for sure with another \$250 to follow if possible.' Amendment passed.

Amended motion carried.

Zabel commented that he will contact Isanti to gather information on the district's dues payment and whether it will be forthcoming.

5. Resolution/Policy Committee – Kelly reported that the Resolution/Policy Committee met March 18. She presented committee recommendations relating to the resolution pre-convention balloting process, as well as resolution priorities for those resolutions that were approved by the membership at the 2008 convention.

#### **Resolution Pre-Convention Balloting Process**

Motion by Schulz, seconded by Loy, to delete the following from the resolution process guidelines: *At the second general session, any defeated resolutions may be brought up for further action by the membership if it receives a 66 percent vote of the Supervisors in attendance.* Motion carried to delete this language.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Loy, to add the following language to the resolution process guidelines:

- *If 66 percent of all supervisors whose ballots are received vote to APPROVE a resolution, it will automatically be deemed as moved and seconded at the annual meeting.*
- *If 66 percent of all supervisor whose ballot are received vote to DISAPPROVE a resolution, it will automatically be rejected with no further action at the annual meeting.*

Motion carried to add this language.

Motion by Loy, seconded by Zabel, to add the following language to the resolution process guidelines:

- *If 34 percent of all supervisors whose ballots are received vote to BRING THE RESOLUTION TO THE CONVENTION FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION OR AMENDMENT, it will be brought to the annual meeting for further action. This provision overrides the first two, in the event that this condition and one of the above conditions are both met.*

Motion carried to add this language.

The language in the three bullets will be clarified in the materials that go out for the call for resolutions in April, as well as in the materials that go out with the ballots in September.

Motion by Kelly, seconded by Zabel, to accept the committee's recommendation to change instances of the phrase "dues-paying member" to "member in good standing" in the resolution materials, clarifying and acknowledging that it is existing MASWCD practice to allow districts with dues hardship waivers to participate in Association activities as if they were full-paying members. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution Prioritization**

Kelly presented the committee's prioritization recommendation for those resolutions that were approved by the membership at the 2008 convention. It was noted that the resolution process rightfully instills in the membership an expectation that MASWCD will carry forward and take action on approved resolutions. As an Association with limited resources, however, we need to evaluate and prioritize the resolutions to give the board and staff guidance on how to address them.

Motion by Kelly, seconded by Peterson, to accept the committee's prioritization recommendation. Motion carried.

6. 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.

Motion by Schulz, seconded by Lingbeek, that it be communicated to the legislature that MASWCD supports the Clean Water Council's recommendations for the Clean Water Legacy appropriations. Motion carried.

Motion by Kelly, seconded by Lingbeek, that it be communicated to the legislature that MASWCD supports the work of the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council and the Council's recommendations to the legislature related to allocations. Motion carried.

Zabel provided his Area 4 Director report and left the meeting. Wetter represented Area 4 for the remainder of the meeting. Kelly left the meeting.

*The Board recessed for lunch at 12:15 p.m. and reconvened at 12:55 p.m.*

7. Executive Director's Report – Buck reported on the MASWCD Civic Leadership training that took place in Washington D.C., March 1-5, 2009. She also reported that the Forestry in the Farm Bill Workshop that was scheduled for March 26 has been postponed. Coordination of the workshop has been led by the National Association of State Foresters. Buck informed the board that the RIM Reserve/WRP partnership is one of three finalists for a Natural Resource Protection and Restoration award from the Minnesota Environmental Initiative. Awards will be presented at a May 21 ceremony.

8. Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Report – BWSR Assistant Director Steve Woods provided information to the board related to previous Clean Water Legacy Funding to SWCDs, the proposed BWSR Budget, and a proposal to revise the cost share rule.

9. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report – NRCS Assistant State Conservationist Ann English provided information to the board related to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements that are outlined in the new Farm Bill, LincPass, and Farm Bill implementation of conservation programs.

10. Conservation Technical Assistance Committee (CTAC) – BWSR Chief Engineer provided information to the board relating to the Nonpoint Engineering Assistance Program, the status of Technical Service Area (TSA) Area realignment. With the realignment from eleven to eight service areas, membership on the Conservation Technical Assistance Committee (CTAC) is in a state of flux. Each TSA will need to appoint its representative and alternate to the CTAC. After discussion, there was consensus that the MASWCD Board of Directors support both primary and secondary representatives of the CTAC being supervisors.

11. Area Directors' Reports – Area Directors provided updates from their Areas. Future Area meeting dates include: June 4 – Area 2/West Central; June 5 – Area 3/Northeast; June 12 – Area 8/North Central.

12. Motion by Peterson, seconded by Loy to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next board of directors meeting will be held May 26 at the MASWCD office in St. Paul.