

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2010
Embassy Suites Hotel, St. Paul, MN

Present: President Steve Sunderland, Vice President & South Central Area 6 Director Dr. Kathryn Kelly, Northwest Area 1 Director Ross Aigner, West Central Area 2 Director Ralph Peterson, Northeast Area 3 Director Kurt Beckstrom, Metropolitan Area 4 Director Mark Zabel, Southwest Area 5 Director Ian Cunningham, Southeast Area 7 Director Bob Borchert, Secretary/Treasurer and North Central Area 8 Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck and Stefanie Martinez; MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist Judy Erickson; BWSR Board Member & Carver SWCD Supervisor Bob Burandt, BWSR Board Member & Nob les SWCD Supervisor Paul Langseth, BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke; Jean Coleman, CR Planning, NRCS Ann English, NRCS Tim Koehler and Chisago SWCD Supervisor Roland Cleveland.

1. President Sunderland called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance.
2. President's Report – Sunderland and Kelly reported on the National Association of Conservation Districts annual convention held January 31-February 3 in Orlando, Florida. Sunderland and Kelly serve as board member and alternate to the NACD Board and vote on national resolutions. National policy discussions included debate on carbon policy. During the convention, Sunderland and Kelly had the opportunity to meet Jeff Eisenberg the new NACD Chief Executive Officer and NRCS Chief Dave White. The NACD 2011 Annual Convention will be held in Nashville, Tennessee.
3. Supplemental Budget Policy Request - Motion by Kelly, seconded by Schulz, to send letter requesting BWSR to consider SWCD flexibility and discretion on potential state conservation program reductions. Motion carried.
4. Ramsey Conservation District House File 1217 Endorsement Request - Motion by Zabel seconded by Beckstrom, for MASWCD to support House File 1217 Minnesota Safer Drug Disposal Act of 2010, but not to include as part of the MASWCD 2010 legislative platform. Motion failed. It was noted that the Association does not have current policy on the legislation, the legislative committee had not discussed or forwarded policy on this issue, and it has no direct implications to SWCD workload. It does have implications for water quality.
5. Finance Report - Schulz reviewed the monthly financial report and Sunderland accepted subject to annual review. Schulz discussed with the board the status of membership dues payments. The finance committee will be reviewing dues items and will present recommendations to the board at the March 2010 meeting.
6. Designation of MASWCD 2009 Auction Proceeds - Motion by Schulz seconded by Cunningham, to provide \$3,000 from the MASWCD 2009 Auction Proceeds to BWSR for support of the State Envirothon. Motion carried. Zabel commented and questioned if MASWCD is exposed to liability if we sponsor the State Envirothon. Buck will follow-up with the Envirothon Committee, BWSR, MCIT and the Association's insurance carrier.
7. Executive Director's Report
 - a. Buck reviewed with the board the resolution process and language to help encourage a comprehensive discussion on policy and program issues, including implications to the Association's budget. Motion by Kelly seconded by Beckstrom, to include adding "*Potential fiscal impact for MASWCD (budget, Staffing, committee, etc.)*" as part of the resolution form submitted by a SWCD. Motion carried. The language will be added to the 2010 call for resolutions.

- b. Buck reviewed with the board the MASWCD priority issues that were developed during the annual retreat. Motion by Beckstrom, seconded by Aigner, to adopt the MASWCD board priorities for MASWCD to address in 2010. Motion carried.
 - c. Buck was contacted by Hennepin Conservation District. Hennepin County was considering introducing legislation that would lead to the transfer of the power and duties of the Hennepin Conservation District Board to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The Hennepin Conservation District Board is communicating with the county board and is requesting that there be further dialogue between the county and the SWCD to address Hennepin's resource needs. After the communication, Hennepin County is not pursuing any changes. Hennepin County has over 40 cities and additional LGU's involved in water issues. Zabel commented that MASWCD should have a response sheet for efforts in the future. Sunderland thought it would be a good idea and is receptive to Zabel crafting a draft letter. Buck reported that MASWCD has developed materials related to SWCD governance and funding.
 - d. Buck reported that the Leopold Foundation is preparing a forestry handbook for Southeastern Minnesota landowners and MASWCD will be listed as a partner. Jaschke commented that BWSR will help to distribute the forestry handbooks to SWCDs.
8. Joint Discussion with SWCD representative on the BWSR Board. The board members discussed the Governor's bonding recommendations, supplemental budget reductions to address the state's budget deficit, and Clean Water Grants.
9. NRCS Wetland Reserve Program & EQIP Contribution Agreement Update - Tim Koehler, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist, thanked Soil and Water Districts for all their local and statewide support/partnership with NRCS. Koehler and English updated the board on the status of the upcoming Wetland Reserve Program and potential leveraging for the RIM Reserve program. Koehler also updated the board on EQIP contribution agreements with SWCDs.
10. Legislative Update – Judy Erickson provided an update to the board on the legislative session as it relates to the MASWCD 2010 Legislative Platform. Motion by Cunningham, seconded by Borchert, that the MASWCD Board considers the Governor's proposed BWSR Supplemental budget reductions dated February 2010, is consistent with, the Minnesota Association legislative platform position: *The Minnesota Association of Soil and Water conservation Districts will work to protect SWCD Base budgets from further reduction in funding to ensure the continued effective delivery of conservation on private lands and the ability to leverage other private, local, state and federal funds.* Motion carried.
11. Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework – Jean Coleman with CR Planning, Inc. provided information related to the Legacy Amendment Funding Bill. The 2009 legislation included appropriations for the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center to develop a statewide water sustainability framework. The University is seeking public input via stakeholder meetings and surveys in the early stages. Various teams have also been created for the framework development. A final report will be sent to the legislature in January 2011.
12. The next board of directors meeting will be held March 23 at the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT) office in St. Paul. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.