

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2010
Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Minneapolis, MN

Present: President Steve Sunderland, Vice President & South Central Area 6 Director Dr. Kathryn Kelly, 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 Co-Director Jim Gebhardt, Secretary/Treasurer and North Central Area 8 Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck and Sheila Vanney; MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist Judy Erickson; Bev Nordby, Mower SWCD Manager; Ken Pederson, East Polk SWCD Supervisor; Roland Cleveland, Chisago SWCD Supervisor.

Absent: Northwest Area 1 Director Ross Aigner, Southeast Area 7 Director Bob Borchert.

1. President Sunderland called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and led the board in the pledge of allegiance. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Peterson, to approve today's meeting agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Peterson, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the March 23 meeting minutes. Motion carried.
2. President's Report
 - a. The terms of Association President and the Vice President, expire at the end of this year. Elections will be held to fill these offices at the annual convention, December 5-7, 2010. Sunderland has appointed an MASWCD nominating committee, with Ken Pederson, MASWCD Past President, to serve as chair. Also on the committee will be Nancy Benson, Wadena SWCD Supervisor, and Allen Marble, Blue Earth SWCD Supervisor. MASWCD will be sending a "call for nominations" to the membership in July. The nominating committee will make its report to the Board at the September board meeting.
 - b. Sunderland will be attending the National Association of Conservation District's (NACD's) Legislative Conference, July 18-21. The event will be in Washington D.C. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack will be speaking at the conference. Buck or Vanney may be attending as well, and the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE) will also be sending a representative. MASWCD will be scheduling meetings with members of Minnesota's Congressional delegation to discuss federal conservation issues of interest to SWCDs including technical assistance. Sunderland serves as MASWCD's representative to the NACD Board, as well as the North Central Region Chair. He will be attending the NACD Board meeting and North Central regional meeting held in conjunction with the conference.
3. Finance Report
 - a. Schulz presented the monthly financial report and Sunderland accepted subject to review.
 - b. Board members discussed dues hardship designations that were acted on at the March 23rd board meeting. After that meeting, MASWCD staff sent letters to each of the five districts stating their approved hardship amount and requesting payment of that amount. To date, we have not received the adjusted dues payments. Consensus of the board was to send the five districts correspondence with a deadline date of July 1.
4. MASWCD and U of M Foundation Fund Development Partnership

Buck provided an update on a partnership developing between MASWCD and the University of Minnesota regarding Foundation Fund Development. The partnership would include creating a demand account with the University of Minnesota Foundation for training and facilitation services for MASWCD and our members. Buck presented the terms of the agreement. Motion by Kelly, seconded by Schulz to enter into the agreement. Motion carried.

5. Executive Director's Report
 - a. Wetland Conservation Act Workload Assessment Request (Action Item). Buck presented a recommendation from the MASWCD Legislative Committee. The Committee recommends that MASWCD submit a formal request to BWSR to conduct an assessment of SWCD workload related to the Wetland Conservation Act. The goal would be to quantify workload, assess costs, and highlight changes and trends, in order to assist the state legislature and agencies with determining expectations of SWCDs and LGUs with implementing the law. Buck presented a draft letter for the board's consideration. Several items have impacted the SWCD wetland conservation act workload in previous years. The state is continuing to face record budget deficits and the legislature has already reduced state funding to implement various programs including the Wetland Conservation Act. This request aims to highlight the workload and to gain a better understanding of the true costs and benefits associated with implementing the state law. Motion by Cunningham, seconded by Beckstrom, to submit this request to BWSR. Motion carried.
 - b. Local Government Water Management Roundtable & July 12 Water Summit. Buck discussed the upcoming summit being planned in conjunction with Association of Minnesota Counties and Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts.
 - c. 2009 Resolutions & Policy Committee Update. Buck and Kelly provided a summary of next steps for the MASWCD Resolution/Policy Committee. The Committee will conduct a two-day meeting August 23-24, 2010.
 - d. Leopold Foundation Partnership: Forestry Resource Guide. Buck provided copies of the Forestry Resource Guide to the board and noted that MASWCD is listed as a supporting organization. No funds were expended.
 - e. BWSR Academy Update. Buck noted the BWSR has set the dates of this year's BWSR academy - October 26-28, 2010. Special effort is being made by MASWCD and BWSR to avoid duplication of any meeting topics between the Academy and the MASWCD convention.
 - f. Election Information. Approximately forty-four percent of Minnesota's SWCD Supervisor positions will be on the election ballot this November 2. The candidate filing period is open May 18 through June 1. Vanney provided a summary of statistics of past elections.
 - g. Area Meetings. Areas will be holding Area meetings throughout June to act on resolutions drafted by the members. Area Directors are responsible for submitting Area-approved resolutions via email to the MASWCD office by July 21.
6. MASWCD Legislative Update

MASWCD Legislative Affairs Specialist, Judy Erickson, reported to the board on the 2010 legislative session and the Association's Legislative Platform. SWCD program funding includes \$6.8 million for RIM Reserve, \$400,000 for riparian easements and \$300,000 for wellhead protection areas. LCCMR funding included \$368,000 for a conservation apprenticeship. MASWCD has provided legislative updates with member districts. Erickson noted that she is stepping down from her position as contract lobbyist for the Association. She has enjoyed working for the association and recounted the Association's legislative successes over the past several years.
7. Selection of 2012 MASWCD Convention Site Location

Vanney presented to the board a summary of facility proposals for the 2012 MASWCD Annual Convention. Motion by Cunningham, seconded by Gebhardt, to accept the proposal submitted by the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel Minneapolis South. Motion carried. The 2012 convention will take place December 2, 3, and 4. Board members discussed which Area should host the 2012 convention. Hosting the convention, which includes identifying educational session topics, speakers, etc., rotates among the eight MASWCD Areas. Beckstrom volunteered Northeast Area 3 to host the event. Area 3 hosted the convention longest ago – 2004.
8. The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m. The next board of directors meeting will be held August 10 at the Association office in St. Paul.