

Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2011
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Present: President Dr. Kathryn Kelly, Vice President Mark Zabel, Northwest Area 1 Director Ross Aigner, West Central Area 2 Co-Director Mark Weimerskirch, Northeast Area 3 Director Kurt Beckstrom, Metropolitan Area 4 Director Mary Wetter, Southwest Area 5 Director Ian Cunningham, South Central Area 6 Director Loyal Fisher, Southeast Area 7 Director Ed McNamara, North Central Area 8 Director Tom Schulz, MASWCD staff LeAnn Buck, BWSR Assistant Director Steve Woods, Northwest Area 1 Co-Director Brian Borgen (Norman SWCD) and Southeast Area 7 Co-Director Rudie Spitzer (Winona SWCD).
Absent: West Central Area 2 Director Ralph Peterson

1. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance. MASWCD President Kelly called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm and led the board in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Agenda and Board Meeting Minutes. Motion by Beckstrom, seconded by Cunningham, to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried. Motion by McNamara, seconded by Wetter, to approve the board meeting minutes for January 12, 2011. Motion carried.
3. BWSR Report – Steve Woods, BWSR Assistant Director, provided an update on Governor Dayton’s proposed budget that was announced the day before. The budget proposal includes the BWSR budget and SWCD conservation program recommendations. The overall BWSR budget reflects less than a 10% cut to general fund appropriations. The Governor’s budget does not propose any reductions to the SWCD Conservation Delivery Grants. The budget does include a reduction to the cost-share program but increases the Clean Water Funding from \$38 million for the previous biennium to \$49 million (amendment funding). Also, the Governor’s larger budget proposal avoids cuts to Local Government Aid which has funding implications for county and city governments. BWSR has prepared a communication piece which highlights the future 25 year commitment to Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment and the past 25 years of successful conservation under the RIM Reserve program.
4. President’s Report – Kathryn Kelly
 - a. Committee Appointments. Kelly presented the board with a list of SWCD members she is appointing to the 2011-2012 MASWCD Committees. Motion by Fisher, seconded by Wetter, to ratify the committee appointments. Motion carried.
 - b. Finance Committee Review of Area Finance Process. Motion by Schulz, seconded by Cunningham, for the Finance Committee to review the current area financial administrative processes and report their findings back to the Board including any financial policy recommendations. Motion carried.
 - c. MASWCD Board Meeting Calendar. Motion by McNamara, seconded by Aigner, to approve the MASWCD Board meeting schedule for the remainder of 2011. Motion carried.
 - d. Motion by Fisher, to suspend the rule to allow discussion. Motion carried. Motion by Fisher, to remove “Education Committee (Hiatus) from the committee list. Motion failed for lack of a second.
5. Finance Report - Tom Schulz
 - a. Monthly Financials. Motion by Schulz, seconded by Fisher, to approve the monthly financial reports subject to annual review. Motion carried.
 - b. Dues Status Report. Schulz provided the board with an update on dues payments.
 - c. NACD Dues. Motion by Cunningham, seconded by Beckstrom, to pay \$1775 for NACD quota. Motion carried.
6. Adoption of Local Government Roundtable Policy Recommendations – LeAnn Buck reported on the February 3 Roundtable meeting. The Roundtable is addressing several policy areas including:

Watershed and Basin Water Management; Comprehensive Water Planning & Management -- structure and process; State Funding Process for Local Water Plan Implementation; and Clean Water Council Recommendations for Legacy Funding. Steve Sunderland, Kathryn Kelly and LeAnn Buck serve as the Association's representatives to the Roundtable. Members of the Local Government Roundtable developed four policy statements for water management based on work prepared by an advisory subcommittee. Mark Zabel served on the advisory committee and provided an overview. Each Association is reviewing the policy statements. Motion by McNamara, seconded by Beckstrom, to adopt the Local Water Management Recommendation as current working policy pending any further development. Motion carried. Buck also reported on correspondence prepared by MASWCD, AMC and MAWD that conveys our statement of position and support for the Clean Water Fund. This compliments the MASWCD Board's 2011 legislative platform including the Association's support for the Clean Water Council's recommendation for the Clean Water Amendment appropriations.

7. Legislative Committee Report – LeAnn Buck
 - a. MASWCD 2011 Legislative Platform. Buck provided an overview of the 2011 session to date. Governor Dayton unveiled his biennial budget proposal yesterday. The BWSR budget is being presented for the first time to the legislature and Vanney is attending the hearing today. Vanney is providing informational legislative updates to our members to keep them apprised of budget implications for conservation programs. Buck also provided the board with information related to the Clean Water Council's recommendations by agency.
 - b. Hennepin County. Buck reported that the Hennepin CD reported that the Hennepin County commissioners adopted a legislative platform that included the "transfer Hennepin Conservation Districts duties and authority to the County Board." At this time, no legislation has been introduced. Discussion followed. Motion by Beckstrom, seconded by Cunningham, for MASWCD to oppose the possible transfer of duties and follow the existing process outlined in the current SWCD statute (MS 103C). Motion carried.
 - c. MASWCD Legislative Briefing. Buck reported that the Association is providing a forum for our members to hear the latest information related to state conservation programs. The event is scheduled for February 28 and March 1.
8. Executive Director's Report – LeAnn Buck
 - a. McKnight Foundation Grant. Buck reported that the Association is working with the Wisconsin Association and Jeff Eisenberg on a McKnight Foundation grant proposal related to additional technical assistance and conservation policy.
9. NACD Annual Meeting and Resolution Status – Kathryn Kelly, Mark Zabel, Ian Cunningham
 - a. Kelly reported that the National Association of Conservation District Annual meeting was held January 30 – February 2. Minnesota received a Top Ten award for quota contribution. Steve Sunderland and Mark Zabel serve as the delegate and alternate, respectively, to the NACD Board of Directors.
 - b. Business Meeting and Resolutions: Zabel and Cunningham provided an update on the Minnesota resolutions that were forwarded to the NACD annual business meeting. Resolutions #20 and #22 passed, #24 and #25 failed. Zabel reported that the NACD Board adopted Farm Bill Conservation Principles in preparation for the next farm bill legislation. The general principles include: resource driven and locally led; support for technical assistance, funding support at the 2008 level; easy access to programs, education and outreach, commitment to working lands, sustainable and renewable energy, forestry title, new and alternative ecosystem service and conservation technology. NACD is also in the process of hiring an Executive Director. Zabel discuss the need for area level training related to resolution development and possible classifications for legislative, programmatic and practices. NACD is creating a task force related to non point regulation.

10. Great Lakes Committee – Tom Schulz, MASWCD Representative to the Great lakes Committee, reported that the committee met during the NACD Annual meeting. The Michigan Association submitted a resolution related to future block grants to the States related to Great Lakes technical assistance funding. The Committee did elect officers and the Chair is from Illinois and Schulz was elected as recorder.
11. The next board meeting will be held March 22. Board meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.