Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2013 - St. Paul, Minnesota

Present: President Mark Zabel, Vice President and Southwest Area 5 Director Ian Cunningham, Northwest Area 1 Director Ken Pederson, West Central Area Director Area 2 Director Mike Jorgenson, Northeast Area 3 Director Mark Thell, Metropolitan Area 4 Director Mary Wetter, South Central Area 6 Director Gary Schafer, Southeast Area 7 Director Steve Connelly, North Central Area 8 Director Tom Schulz; MASWCD Staff LeAnn Buck and Sheila Vanney; MPCA staff Dave Wall, BWSR staff Doug Thomas, NRCS Staff Carissa Spencer, Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP) Executive Director Steve Morse, and consultant Joe Newberg.

1. Call to Order. Vice President Ian Cunningham called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Approval of Agenda. Motion by Schulz and seconded to approve agenda. Motion carried.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda. Motion by Cunningham and seconded to approve consent agenda including the August 6, 2013 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, and MASWCD Governance 101 Conference Summary. Motion carried.

4. Finance Committee Report. Tom Schulz
   a. Monthly Financial Report. Schulz presented the monthly finance report. Motion by Schulz and seconded to approve the financials subject to annual review. Motion carried.
   b. Proposed Budget for FY 2014. Schulz presented the proposed budget for the next fiscal year and led discussion. Motion by Schulz and seconded to approve the proposed budget for FY 2014. Motion carried.
   c. Finance Committee Reports at Area Meetings. MASWCD staff will provide materials to the representatives on the Finance Committee for presentations at Area Meetings.

5. Resolution Policy Committee Report – Mike Jorgenson, Chair
   a. Emergency Resolution Request by Freeborn SWCD. Jorgenson presented the emergency resolution for consideration. Motion by Cunningham to approve as an emergency resolution. Motion carried with dissenting votes from Pederson and Schulz.
   b. Proposed 2013 Resolution Packet. Jorgenson presented the resolution packet for action by the board. Motion by Schulz and seconded for special consideration for resolution #12, reinstating the stricken ‘whereas’ statement. Motion carried. Motion by Thell and seconded to approve the packet for distribution to the members for pre-convention balloting, including a separate page consisting of the MASWCD Resolution/Policy Committee Recommendations. Motion carried.

6. MPCA Report on Nitrogen in Surface Waters – Dave Wall, MPCA Watershed Division. The MPCA conducted a study to better understand the nitrogen conditions in Minnesota’s surface waters, along with the sources, pathways, trends and potential ways to reduce nitrogen in waters. Wall presented a summary of the report findings and next steps, which include finalization of the MPCA Nutrient Reduction Strategy, and development of nitrate surface water standards for aquatic life toxicity.

7. Adoption of Local Government Water Roundtable Water Planning & Management Policy Paper – LeAnn Buck. The Local Government Water Roundtable consists of representatives from MASWCD, Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD), and Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC). Buck discussed the policy paper, outlining the key concept developed and supported by the Roundtable – the One Watershed-One Plan approach. The concept came about in response to discussion and information generated by the Roundtables’ collective members during the Local Water Management Summit (July 2010) to answer the
question of what should be the recommended method for organizing, planning and implementing water restoration and protection activities. Board members discussed. Motion by Schulz and seconded to adopt the Local Government Roundtable Water Planning and Management Policy Paper. The policy paper will now go before the full Local Government Water Roundtable for adoption at their next meeting.

8. Clean Water Accountability Act & Emerging Issues – Steve Morse, Executive Director Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP). MEP is a coalition of environmental & conservation nonprofits. MEP works for clean energy, clean water & investments in Minnesota’s Great Outdoors through policy initiatives, public education & community events. Morse discussed with the board the background of MEP, and specifically, their role with legislation passed last session, amending the Clean Water Legacy Act. Morse explained the intent of the legislation was to get a clearer picture from the state about the scope of the problem, what needs to be done to get us where we need to be. Morse stated that Clean Water Fund dollars should be targeted to address impairments, and that dollars will increasingly go to those who can work on a watershed basis. The legislation also requires BWSR to prepare a state non point plan.

9. MASWCD Response to HCD Petition – Mark Zabel. Due to changes to the chapter of state statute focused on Hennepin County last legislative session, Hennepin County has filed a petition with the Board of Water and Soil Resources to dissolve the Hennepin Conservation District (HCD) and transfer the authorities to the County. BWSR will hold a public hearing on the issue. Motion by Cunningham and seconded to develop a letter in support of HCD to be entered into the official record of the public hearing. Motion carried, with Schulz abstaining due to his membership on the BWSR board.

10. 2014 MASWCD Convention Site & Host Selection – Sheila Vanney. Vanney presented a summary of proposals received from hotels and event centers for hosting our 2014 convention. Board members discussed. Schulz left the meeting at 2:50 pm. Motion by Pederson and seconded to accept the offer from The DoubleTree Hotel Bloomington – Minneapolis South, to host us for both 2014 and 2015 at the 2013 rates. Motion carried with dissenting votes from Cunningham and Thell, with Wetter abstaining and Schulz absent. Pederson volunteered NW Area 1 SWCDs to host the 2014 convention. NW Area 1 will have hosted longest ago (2006).

11. MASWCD Representation at Conferences – Mark Zabel
   a. NACD Annual Meeting Scholarship February 2-5, 2014 in Anaheim, California. The National Association of Conservation Districts annual convention will be held in February in California. NACD offers each state a scholarship for use by an individual who has not yet attended an NACD convention. Discussion was held about who among the board members hasn’t attended an NACD convention, who might be interested in taking advantage of the scholarship. Consensus was that the scholarship would go to Connelly pending his schedule.
   b. Climate Adaptation Conference Scholarships November 7, 2013, St. Paul, MN. Zabel and Schulz will be attending this conference with the scholarships.

12. NACD National Envirothon Request – Mark Zabel. Zabel presented this item for the board’s consideration – to have MASWCD become involved with the North American Envirothon donation challenge. Concern was expressed that our own state event is in need of funding as well. No action was taken on this request. Zabel will ask for more of a needs assessment for the North American Envirothon.

13. Next Meeting (November 5) & Adjourn. Motion by Schafer and seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. The next MASWCD meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2013.