

# MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular monthly meeting

**Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020**

**Location:**

- Meeting was called to order at 11:35 AM. The meeting was held as an online Zoom Meeting

**Attendance:**

- Kate Pound, Past-President; Julia Steenberg, President; Tony Runkel, President-Elect; Vanessa Baratta, Treasurer; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Sean Hunt, Management; Andrew Streitz, Newsletter.

**Agenda:**

- Approved.

**Past Minutes:**

- Pound moved to approve pending changes. All voted in favor, motion was approved.

**Reports:**

**Treasurer:**

- Baratta shared the Treasury Report with the Board – total income is \$18,997.77, net income is \$-430.54, and total assets are \$100,016. Baratta noted that the negative net income is due to transferring \$10,000 to the MGWA Foundation and the cancellation of the spring conference. All income is from dues.

**Management (WRI):**

- Steenberg asked if funds were reimbursed for those who had registered for the conference. Hunt said that only a few attendees had already paid but those who had paid received a notice of the cancellation and any charges on a card were reimbursed.
- Hunt noted that a contract with the conference host had not been signed and the host (University of Minnesota) sent a message cancelling the appointment prior to MGWA cancelling the meeting so MGWA does not owe any money for the cancelled venue.
- Hunt stated that a membership report was available on the Google Drive. There are currently 404 members. The past two years, membership has been around 500.
- Steenberg asked about a chart showing members over time and a breakdown for professional members versus state agencies versus university. Hunt noted that there is a percentage breakdown online but it is about 10 years old. Hunt noted he will compile new data for this.

**President:**

- Steenberg wanted to make sure all are in agreement about the Midwest Geosciences discount for MGWA board members. Steenberg said there are three options for distributing this discount:
  - Send email to full ListServe of members and previous members.
  - Send email to only 404 current members.
  - Somewhere in-between: potentially using the discount as a hook to help people renew their membership.
- Steenberg asked if it would be possible to put the username as password in the members-only area of the website. Hunt said while this was possible he would prefer a more straightforward approach and the easiest thing to do is send emails to a group of people.

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- Hunt noted that it is possible to create a list of members who have paid their dues this year and that a message to current members could be sent and a slightly different message could be sent to other members. Steenberg said she will draft two emails for these groups.
- Steenberg said she was thinking of other ways to keep people interested. Baratta asked about doing a virtual happy hour; Pound suggested virtual bingo.

### Past President:

- No updates.

### Newsletter Team:

- Streitz noted that the second issue of the new-format newsletter had been launched and everything went well. Per Streitz, Sherry Kroening of the Newsletter team is fully trained to publish articles in the new format.
- Hunt said that the most recent email about the new articles in the newsletter was sent to 657 email addresses. Approximately 50% of the emails were opened and almost 25% of the members clicked on an article. Hunt noted that these numbers are up from the old version of the newsletter.
- Hunt said 95% of the click-throughs went to Bill Stole's obituary and 59% went to the president's letter.
- Streitz said that new articles will be posted as soon as they are ready – the newsletter team will not save articles to bulk update.
- Hunt had a question on the articles and the email, as the email had 3 or 4 articles instead of the 12 articles the previous newsletter updates contained. Streitz and Hunt will work on the email process for sending updates about the newsletter.
- Pound said that if there are less in the way of technical articles in the works it could be good to have personal interest stories, such as people writing reflection pieces on their careers in groundwater. Streitz said that he would be comfortable with that, as too many hard science posts may make it less interesting for some readers.
- Baratta noted that stories could be written about how MGS Quaternary mappers are operating right now in performing their mapping or perhaps light-hearted articles about rock collections. Steenberg and Pound noted that the Wisconsin Geological Survey does a good job with outreach.
- Streitz and Steenberg mentioned the newsletter team has reached out to the Iowa Groundwater Association about submitting an article to them.

### Other Business:

#### Fall Conference:

- Pound stated it would be good to consider potentially planning for holding the fall conference online. Steenberg agreed and mentioned it would be good to discuss how to hold a virtual conference and that it would be good to have plans in place for a virtual conference to avoid cancelling two conferences in one year.
- Runkel said that the North Central GSA will be holding the conference online and could be used as a reference for hosting online conferences. Streitz, Runkel, and Pound discussed logistics of speakers and moderators at this conference.
- Pound said that the conference will be free for GSA members. Baratta asked if they will offer free attendance for members of organizations that are partners with GSA.

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- Pound and Steenberg stated that an email from GSA says the meeting will be free for everyone. Steenberg is looking in to if the short courses for ethics training will be lead virtually.
- Pound noted that it might be good to send out a questionnaire to membership about if they would like to hold a virtual conference. She also noted that it would be good to get a representative from GSA after their conference to share successes and failures about holding a virtual conference.

### Education Committee:

- Steenberg had noted that she had spoken with the Education Committee last week. Steenberg said we need to decide if there will be a field trip this year. Runkel stated that a virtual field trip might not be great but it would be good to plan a field trip that could be run either this year or next year.
- Steenberg discussed having a liaison from the Education Committee to have periodic check-ins and occasional attendance at MGWA board meetings. Steenberg suggested that the chair of the Education Committee could act as the liaison. Pound and Baratta agreed with this suggestion. Cathy Udem of Dakota County is the current Education Committee chair and Steenberg will ask if she can attend the meeting.

### Whitepaper Committee

- Streitz said the stormwater chloride whitepaper is in the final stretch and is going to the committee for review right now. Streitz noted the content is good and the work being done is about readability.
- The committee will send the paper to the Board once it is done. Streitz said the role of the board is to decide if the group met the criteria and to evaluate the report in the context of the scoping document.
- Pound was on the drain tile review and could potentially provide guidance on this process. Baratta asks if the scoping document will be sent to the board and Streitz noted it was on the Google Drive.

### Advertising and Fundraising

- Steenberg asked Streitz about advertising on the website. Streitz said that advertising is a very small amount of available income but there is the ability to put a rotating ad in the newsletter blog. Streitz says he will take this topic the next team meeting and will come to a proposal for next month.
- Pound says that with new leadership at the Foundation there may be more effort put into fundraising – this is not something that a lot of work has been put into in the past. Pound notes that fundraising generates more in income than the ads ever did.

### Meeting Adjourned: 1:05 PM.

#### Action Items:

- Steenberg will send emails about the Midwest Geosciences discount rate for MGWA members.
- Steenberg will ask Cathy Udem, chair of the Education Committee, to attend the next meeting.
- Streitz and Hunt will work on the email process for sending updates about the newsletter.
- Streitz will discuss advertising on the newsletter page with the newsletter team.

#### Next Meeting:

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- The scheduled date for the next board meeting overlaps NC GSA. Pound suggests May 12<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>. After a voice poll, Steenberg confirms next meeting will take place May 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am on Zoom.