

MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Regular monthly meeting

Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Location:

- Meeting was called to order at 11:32 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; Stu Grubb, Management; Jane de Lambert, Social Coordinator; Andrew Streitz, Newsletter; Jennie Leete, Management;

Agenda:

- Approved.

Past Minutes:

- Pound moved to approve. Baratta seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion was approved.

Reports:

Treasurer:

- Numbers are current as of June 11, 2020.
- Baratta shared the Treasury Report with the Board – total income is \$19,169.41, net income is \$8840.22, and total assets are \$91,873.46. Baratta noted the net income is no longer negative. The \$10,000 transferred to the MGWA Foundation was processed under last year's financials.
- Final numbers from last year will be reviewed hopefully in the next few weeks by Baratta and Leete.

Management (WRI):

- Hunt has updated the website. Chart of membership sections has been updated. In addition, the meeting minutes have been uploaded to the website. These were previously in the newsletter. Hunt notes that he will upload new copies of the minutes as approved.
- Membership numbers have not changed since the last report.

Newsletter Team:

- June issue will be launching in approximately a week. Streitz said an email will be sent to membership to notify them about new articles. There are now two editors who can use Word Press to bring articles to the blog – Sherri Kroening and Andrew Streitz. Streitz notes that they will be teaching the other editors how to use Word Press.
- Streitz notes that an article will be shared about COVID-19 tracing, as a number of MGWA Members at the Minnesota Department of Health are involved in this process.
- Grubbs asks if there is any information about COVID-19 and transmission through water supplies. Streitz says he hasn't heard anything about this. De Lambert says the Minnesota Department of Health will be adding COVID-19 to the suite of viruses they are testing in groundwater. Samples will begin to be collected this fall.
- Runkel asks if MDH is working with the University of Minnesota for the virus sampling. de Lambert says they are not.

Foundation:

- Hunt said there was a meeting in early June. Hunt was tasked to make sure that the scholarship winner information was transmitted. An update was provided about the field camp awards. There will still be a field camp this year but it will be virtual and the costs will be produced. Because of this, there will be no field camp award this year.

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- There was a pending request for the children's water festival this year. Hunt sent an email to the organizer at Carver County and the organizer will resubmit based on updated circumstances.
- Hunt noted that the \$10,000 moved from MGWA to the MGWA foundation is unrestricted funds. Ellen Considine is evaluating fundraising efforts and will bring a proposal to the board.
- Grubb and Pound are working on an article for the newsletter from the Foundation.

Social Coordinator:

- de Lambert notes that there would normally be a happy hour this month and that we need to decide if a virtual happy hour is the preferred path forward. de Lambert said something like bingo or a webinar would be good, as it may be awkward to have just an open Zoom meeting with no direction or plan for the happy hour.
- Baratta agrees that it would be good to have a direction and an activity planned for the happy hour. Pound agrees that that bingo would work or perhaps the equivalent of a pub quiz, as it may be easier to set up and require less work and organization. de Lambert agrees and suggests a groundwater themed trivia could be an option.
- Pound and de Lambert discussed the implementation. Pound suggests that small, socially distanced groups could be implemented for the teams in an activity. Steenberg says that AWG is having an online meeting about diversity and inclusion in geoscience and that MGWA could promote this. de Lambert says it may take some time to put trivia together so it might be good to promote this event until trivia is ready.
- Steenberg asks if we could set an approximate date for trivia or bingo, suggesting July or August. de Lambert says something could be pulled together for an event towards the end of July, perhaps on a Thursday evening. de Lambert suggests a tentative date of July 23 at 4:30.
- de Lambert will work on a plan and will come back to the board once something more concrete has been developed.

White Paper:

- Steenberg provided an update on the chloride in stormwater and groundwater protection act white papers.
- The WPC review is complete for the Chloride in Stormwater final draft. Comments are currently being addressed. The Board will receive the draft paper for review in late July.
- The Ground Water Protection Act (GWPA) Work Group is drafting the outline. The Group plans to deliver the white paper outline in early July for our review.

Education:

- Steenberg said there is no update at this time. The Education committee is working with Minnesota Water Well Owners Association. An update will be provided in July about this collaboration.

Other Business:

MGWA response to system racism:

- Steenberg notes this is a delicate issue.
- Pound and Kara Dennis met to brainstorm ideas about what MGWA could do in response to this topic. Pound presented a resource put together by geoscientists of color, No Time For Silence. Pound says that the section entitled "We call on" was used as a basis for proposed MGWA actions and communications. The link to the website is in the draft document shared prior to the meeting.
- Pound shared the draft statement with further edits. Grubbs noted in comments on the draft documents that it can be difficult to verify and investigate the background of people applying for scholarships. Grubb said that the Foundation had previously looked at establishing scholarships based on financial need but the group did not have the knowledge or experience to evaluate these applicants based on

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these criteria. Grubb noted that this is a similar situation and it would be good to partner with other organizations to help evaluate scholarship applicants.

- Pound note it is important that the group makes a statement about systemic racism and plans to address it. Pound has revised the draft document to make it more concise and focused the resource list to the No Time for Silence reference, which is written by a geoscientist.
- Pound asks if people are supportive of sending out a statement to membership that includes plans for development of an initiative.
- Steenberg notes there was some discussion with the Foundation. Steenberg says a vote should be taken on if the initiative should be undertaken. A second vote should also be taken to see if the Board agrees with the language in the statement. Steenberg asks for input from Runkel, Baratta, and Ginsbach.
- Runkel had several edits and notes the opening statement may be redundant. Runkel said he would like to know how MGWA fits in and how they are able to help. Runkel says if there is a role specifically for MGWA, it would be in helping address the issues with diversity amongst membership. Runkel also asks if this should be more of a solicitation of ideas rather than a statement. Runkel suggests focusing the letter on discussing the lack of diversity in geosciences.
- Grubb notes that a longer term approach to the remedy is required, as this lack of diversity in geosciences is a long-stemming issue. Grubb notes that while it would be good to get feedback but there is a place for leadership in the Board and the Board should not hesitate to act.
- Pound would be hesitant about actively soliciting input. Steenberg suggests that rather than asking for input the document could include a call to be part of the initiative. Pound agrees and will work to modify the statement.
- Pound will advocate that something needs to be sent out soon – there is a chance to make a really big difference.
- Streit says that he is on the board of another non-profit and notes that it is important to take a stand – the Board is here to represent the membership. Streit says that action must be taken and the Board can lead the membership.
- Baratta suggests she would make the language a bit soften some of the language in the initial statement. Pound agrees there can still be some wordsmithing. Leete says that if the language is softened, there should be a discussion of how there are groups actively asking MGWA to take actions as the MGWA is well established and could act.
- Pound says she will rework the letter and send it out for further edits. Pound notes the area of concern is the statement. Pound asks if the portion about the actual work being done should be separated out for voting purposes. Pound says that she and Kara Dennis are willing to be the lead but this needs to be voted on by the board.
- Pound if a vote to support her and Kara Dennis working on this initiative should be taken. Hunt asks if the Education committee has been contacted. Pound says yes and will provide an update prior to the Education Committee’s meeting tomorrow. Baratta asks how the motion should be phrased.
- Pound’s phrasing is as follows: “Motion to support an initiative related to diversity within the groundwater community with contacts.”
- Steenberg asks if this should be an initiative if the MGWA board should look into or if this is more of a separate subcommittee to address this. Steenberg notes that this is something that is part of the normal operation of the Board and the Foundation.
- Pound clarifies that it is important to do this as a group but also to assign tasks to specific people so the tasks are completed.
- Pound’s second proposed motion language: “Pending approval of edits to the statement, MGWA will send out an email to its membership.”

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- Baratta seconds the motion and suggests that the final motion could be made through email. That way, a final draft could be reviewed by all members. Steenberg agrees and wants to make sure the statement represents all five board members. Pound asks if she should make a revision this afternoon before sending it out to the larger group. Steenberg agrees.
- Grubb doesn't think the Foundation needs to review this and that it should be an MGWA initiative. Steenberg states that the Education committee will review and discuss.
- Steenberg will ask for a motion via email after everyone is able to review the document. Hunt asks about timing about the issuance of the email and asks if something will be sent by the end of the week. Steenberg says that would be the goal. Motion has been tabled pending approval of final draft.

Virtual conference discussion:

- Steenberg has listened to a few webinars on hosting a virtual conference. The speakers from the spring conference will be contacted later this month. Steenberg asks if the time and date for the fall conference are appropriate.
- Baratta asks for clarification if there is still a potential for an in-person conference and asks if there is a reservation at the University of Minnesota.
- July's meeting will have a representative from NC GSA to discuss virtual conferences.
- Baratta asks if the July meeting should be extended or if some usual business should be removed from discussion to save time. Steenberg says that if information is given beforehand it could be included in the agenda and not need to be discussed at length during the meeting.
- Runkel notes that decisions about in-person conferences is not just based on the state guidance but also the University of Minnesota.
- Steenberg asks about cost for the virtual conference and says it would be good to discuss what needs to be charged. Steenberg asks how much of the cost is for the food and venue and how much goes towards funding MGWA. Baratta says this is a better question for Leete.
- Hunt says that he can get some funds about what the conference usually costs and the distribution of cost. Hunt notes that there is a break-even point for the conferences.

Op Manual:

- Steenberg asks if it is on someone's radar and wants to make sure that a copy of the operations manual is located on the drive.
- Baratta says that the copy of the manual is at the DNR office and she will get the copy from there this week. Baratta notes that she and Considine will take a look at it before sharing with the larger group.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:06 PM.

Action Items:

- Pound will modify the verbiage in the draft initiative document and send it to the group.
- All board members will review the revised initiative document and the document will be sent to an email vote.
- de Lambert will work on a preliminary plan for a virtual social hour.

Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will take place July 21st at 11:30 am on Zoom.