

MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Regular monthly meeting

Meeting Date: Tuesday, January 19, 2021

Location:

- Meeting was called to order at 11:33 AM. The meeting was held as an online Zoom Meeting

Attendance:

- Julia Steenberg, Past-President; Tony Runkel, President; Jeré Mohr, President-Elect; Vanessa Baratta, Treasurer; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Sean Hunt, Management; Kate Pound, DEI Committee

Agenda:

- Steenberg has a couple potential additions including a potential exhibitor and discussion about newsletter clickthrough
- Approved.

Past Minutes:

- Runkel notes that Baratta had a comment on the minutes in the email chain for this meeting related to a typo on today's meeting date. This error has been fixed in the Google Drive version.
- Approved.

Reports:

Treasurer:

- Baratta said total income is \$6975; net income is \$6575; total assets are \$104,183.31. Baratta noted that these numbers are different than the previous reported numbers because we are now in 2021 and the total and net numbers reset with the new year.
- Baratta said that final numbers for 2020 will be submitted soon.

Management (WRI):

- All of the votes for new elections went to the published candidates. Each candidate received 125 votes.
- Hunt mentions that he and Leete are the "business office" and they take care of the mechanical and delegated tasks for the officers. Hunt listed out the various activities that the Management team takes care of for the benefit of new officers.
- Hunt shared a document that describes the difference between the MGWA Foundation and MGWA. The document contains a chart that displayed the difference between these two groups and a typical membership organization. In particular, the IRS declared that MGWA was not able to be classified as a 501 (c) 6 list most typical organization but instead is a 501 (c) 4. MGWA is a community-driven organization that has members.
- Hunt will put a copy of that document in the Google Drive.

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- Mohr asked about access to the Google Drive. Hunt asked Mohr to send their preferred email address for use as a log-in and will give access to the Google Drive.
- Steenberg forwarded the email containing access to the president email account to Runkel.
- Hunt shared a membership update. Hunt created and mailed a physical renewal reminder to members who had been paid members in the past three years. Hunt notes that there are typically around 500 paid members - in 2020 the count was about 400. Hunt will put a copy of the membership on the Google Drive as well.
- Baratta noted that numbers are generally not high until the spring conference. Hunt agreed and said it was membership renewal season and some people don't sign up until the conference.

Newsletter Team:

- No Newsletter members were able to attend the meeting today.
- Steenberg reported that the newsletter went out at the end of December.
- Steenberg said that Andrew Streitz forwarded statistics about click through for emails about the newsletter. Steenberg said that the numbers were down for both.
- Baratta and Ginsbach noted that the newsletter was in their Junk Email folder in their state email addresses. Steenberg asks if there is any way to prevent this. Baratta said that she had not looked into it. Ginsbach said that the email had a disclaimer that it was another junk email filter that blocked the email.
- Steenberg will send Streitz an email about it.
- Steenberg asked Hunt if there were other options for sending the email. Hunt said he was not aware of a good solution at this point.
- Steenberg said that she will let Streitz know that the results were finalized and ready to be published.

Foundation:

- Steenberg said there was a Foundation meeting in early December and there are no updates since the last MGWA board meeting. Steenberg will attend the March Foundation meeting.
- Baratta asked Steenberg to update Mohr on the DEI Committee. Steenberg provided the history and reason for establishing the Committee. Steenberg said that the Freshwater Society is hoping to host 2-4 internships as part of the MGWA DEI initiative. Steenberg said that the proposal was two high school students and two college students. It is noted that the Foundation is in charge of this, not MGWA. Steenberg said that Pound provided the information to the Foundation.
- The Foundation was concerned about the price and sustainability of the initiative. Steenberg said that the support for the high school students alone would be about \$5000 and that conversations are on-going.
- Runkel notes that Pound will join the meeting at approximately 12:20 if the meeting is still on-going.

Other Business:

Officer Elections Results and Social Coordinator Vacancy:

- The officer election results were provided in the Management update.

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- Runkel said that Sharon Kroening was going to provide an update on the social coordinator position but was not able to attend.

DEI Proposal:

- Pound said that the Foundation had heard the proposal and were interested in supporting two high school interns. Pound worked with the Freshwater Society to finalize the grand proposal that was to be submitted to the Foundation. Pound said that it had been sent to Hunt to be forwarded to the Foundation president - Hunt confirmed this was the case.
- Pound said that because she is no longer on the board she was not aware of the progress at the Foundation but will email Stu Grubb of the Foundation to find where it is in the process. Pound said that this will be a vote at the Foundation. Pound noted that there were some discussions about the funding of the Foundation.
- Pound said Jen McDonald of MGS has joined the DEI Committee. The Committee will meet towards the end of February to read through some guidance to DEI in addition to viewing some webinars. Pound notes that the DEI Committee is interested in new ideas and new members of the Committee.
- Steenberg asked how the DEI Committee is going to move forward with the Education Committee, especially with the idea of discussion curriculum. Pound said that she had sent Cathy Udem a proposal for education and connecting with Project Wet. Pound said she will follow up and find out what the Education Committee is interested in.
- Runkel and Steenberg will be copied on the email to the Education Committee. Pound said there is interest in general working with the University of Minnesota urban hydrology field camp.
- Runkel said there is some chance there may be an urban hydrology field camp this summer. Runkel said that, at worst, it will be kicked off a year from this summer.

Spring Conference Update:

- Runkel said the conference will be virtual and will be on April 27th. Runkel said that there are approximately 7 speakers lined up for the event. Runkel asked Hunt what was required for the conference. Hunt said if the title and potential speakers are known a website could be set up for this conference. Hunt noted that it would be good to have something solid by the beginning of February to send out to members.
- Runkel asked Hunt if the speaker names would be needed for the February announcement. Hunt said the speakers are not required for this first mass mailing - the title, date, theme, and cost of the conference would be included in this email. The speakers would be included on the webpage Hunt said if there was a particularly notable speaker that could also be potentially included.
- Hunt said that there was a question about including posters as part of a virtual conference. Steenberg noted that this decision is up to Runkel and noted that when a call for posters went out for the virtual conference there were not any responses. Steenberg said that if there were enough speakers there may not be a need for a call for abstracts for posters.
- Mohr asked if there was a potential theme for the conference. Runkel said that the working title is "Groundwater Research - What's New and Useful". Runkel said the intent is to be a mix of topics from researchers that have strong applied value - not esoterica. Runkel said that an example is a leading PFAS remediation speaker from Colorado State.

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- Runkel said another speaker is Crystal Ng from the University of Minnesota who will be presenting on why the health of wild rice in Minnesota and Wisconsin has decreased in recent years. Another speaker is Jesse Meyer from the University of Iowa who researches multilevel monitoring of contaminated sites. Bonnie Keller from the University of Minnesota is a policy and economics professor who works on quantifying the impact of water quality. Randy Hunt from the USGS is a groundwater modeler.
- Runkel's intent is to get presenters who are pushing their fields and are applying their research.

Other Business:

- Runkel asked if he should be attending the Education Committee meetings - Steenberg noted that she is no longer attending. Steenberg will reach out to the Education Committee to update her name to Runkel's name.
- Baratta asked Hunt if there was anything they had been waiting on. Hunt said no.
- Steenberg received an email from "The Water Group" about being an exhibitor at the conference and included a presentation that was presented to a national groundwater group. Steenberg asked if the newsletter team was looking for any advertisement for the newsletter.
- Baratta said that she thought we stopped doing advertisements because there was very little interest and a lot of paperwork involved and that when the switch was made to an online newsletter advertisements were dropped.
- Runkel said he would look at the same emails to see but suggested discussing that with a switch to virtual conferences there is no good path forward with exhibitors.
- Baratta noted that the Operations Manual is on the Google Drive. Baratta and Steenberg will look through the manual before sharing with Mohr.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:45 PM.

Action Items:

- None at this time.

Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will take place February 16th at 11:30 am on Zoom.