

MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Regular monthly meeting

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 27, 2022

Location:

- Meeting was called to order at 12:06 PM. The meeting was held as an online Teams meeting.

Attendance:

- Tony Runkel, Past-President; Jeré Mohr, President; Sandeep Burman, President-Elect; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Sheri Kroening, Newsletter; Sean Hunt, Management; Jennie Lete, Management

Agenda:

- No changes to agenda.

Past Minutes:

- Mohr asked if Burman was able to access the Google Drive; Burman stated that he attempted to access the previous minutes on the Google Drive and was not able to. Hunt asked Burman to send his Gmail account to get access to the Google Drive.
- No changes to the December minutes. Runkel moved to approve the minutes, Mohr seconded. All in favor, past minutes approved.

Officer Election Results:

- Mohr welcomed Burman to his first meeting as President-Elect and thanked Runkel for his term as President.
- Mohr stated that Ginsbach and Burman were up for election as Secretary and President-Elect respectively. Both candidates were elected unanimously, with 144 votes for Burman, 143 votes for Ginsbach. Ginsbach notes he did not vote for himself and left the item blank.
- Mohr asks if the election results were posted; Hunt said no but it is important to note in the minutes to formally recognize them. Kroening stated that the Newsletter team will put up a post that Ginsbach remains secretary.
- Hunt said that most of the votes were submitted shortly after the notice went out but there was good participation on the votes.

Reports:

Treasurer:

- Hunt stated that for the year 2021 net assets are \$10,119 and profit is a net \$13,693.

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- Leete said there is no reason to produce numbers for January, since until the previous year is closed out memberships are included on the previous year. Leete noted that a task is to lose out the year and start on the new year.

Management (WRI):

- Leete wanted to discuss the issue of how meetings will be proceeding going forward. Leete said that going to another location than the Continuing Education Center would result in increases in costs - other venues would cost non-members \$300+ per meeting.
- Leete notes that the Continuing Education Center has canceled the reservations and will henceforth only allow conferences that they are hosting.
- Leete also noted that this fall meeting will be the 40th anniversary meeting and it would be nice to be able to host an in-person celebration to commemorate this anniversary.
- Leete said that the Continuing Education Center can host meetings for other groups but all of the profits go to the University. Leete asks if there is some way to utilize the MGS to allow a reasonably-priced in-person meeting. According to Leete, April 2023 would have a field conference component that included drillers and field staff located north of the Continuing Education Center.
- Hunt said that MGWA has used the University's conference centers for at least 20 years.
- Runkel said that MGS would be open to having MGS sponsor the conference to continue using the Continuing Education Center. Runkel said that the finances of it are up to Management and expressed concern about the loss of income from the meetings. Leete said that the conferences are a good source of income and the virtual meetings have been profitable.
- Runkel said that he has received feedback that while some attendees enjoy the virtual meetings, no one has suggested online-only for all future conferences.
- Runkel and Mohr stated that it is trending towards online-only for the spring conference; Hunt said that traditionally the venue has been booked a year ahead of time.
- Hunt said it is membership renewable time; 285 memberships have been renewed so far and that more are expected with conference registration. Hunt said we would typically have 600 paid members a year back in 2015 but now it is around 400 paid members.
- Hunt posted a copy of the membership information to the Google Drive. Mohr notes that is still early in the year.
- Hunt informed Burman that while the Board has their tasks but the day-to-day tasks are delegated to him and Leete.

Newsletter:

- Kroening reported the December newsletter email was sent out successfully. Open rate was good at 27% , the click rate was excellent at 12.7% , and the most popular article was the article on Highland Spring.

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- Kroening has a post pending on a new Atlas. Kroening also notes that Newsletter will post about Burman's election and Ginsbach's re-election.

Foundation/Education Committee:

- Mohr was not sure if there was anyone in attendance with an update. Runkel said that the next meeting will be in March and that there is no update at this time.
- Runkel said that David Crisman noted the white paper on the Groundwater Protection Act has been fully reviewed but they are still working on responding to comments. Runkel said that Crisman has asked to talk at the February or March meeting about the comments.
- Runkel notes that the scoping document for the next whitepaper is nearly complete and that someone from the White Paper COmmittee would like to attend the February meeting.
- Runkel said that someone from the Education Committee wants to attend the February meeting to discuss an in-process letter regarding changes to earth science standards and expressing concern about the declining earth science standards. The Education Committee would like to get Board approval to send this letter.
- Runkel notes that the MGWA Social Director, Jen McDonald, has left the MGS and a new Social Director is needed. Kroening states that they usually ask for volunteers in the Newsletter and does not get much of a response. Runkel, Mohr, and Kroening note that this is not a priority.
- Hunt reminded that the Past-President serves as the liaison to the Foundation; Runkel will contact Stu Grubb.

Spring Conference Planning:

- Mohr asked if a date had been selected for the conference. Leete states that there is no specific date. Mohr asks what the normal timeframe would be; Hunt and Leete said end of April, with the last two meetings being on the 27th and 28th of April.
- Mohr asked if this typical schedule should continue. Runkel asks if the conference are hosted on Tuesday-Thursday; Hunt confirms.
- Hunt says that the middle of February is a good timeframe to get notice about the conference. Hunt said the mailed brochure doesn't need everything but should have the main points; there is also the website that can be more up-to-date.
- Mohr has a concept in his head for the theme but it is not well developed. Mohr states that his idea to have interesting projects and studies from around the state - potentially dividing the states into quadrants to get representation from across the state.
- Runkel thinks it would be good; Julia Steenberg did a conference on the Metro and Runkel had a conference on southeast Minnesota so this would cover other areas. Runkel is in favor of this idea.
- Hunt wrote down "A Groundwater Tour of Minnesota".

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- Kroening said keeping it broader is good - there could be agriculture related topics from the northwest or central part of the state that would help include Department of Agriculture members.
- Mohr would like to get additional help from the Board to find speakers from other parts of the state.
- Rukel discussed the Department of Natural Resource's Groundwater Provinces map that could help to organize and divide the state.
- Leete brings up things like aquifer breaches, effects of well interferences on artesian aquifers that are important and interesting from non-metro Minnesota.
- Mohr said he will circulate some ideas among the Board members.
- Mohr wanted to discuss the DEI's suggestion of an ethics training. Mohr said that there was a survey about having the ethics training and asked if it was a popular idea; Runkel confirmed that it was popular but does not remember the breakdown of the responses. Mohr said that this might be pertinent to include in the spring conference, as licensure renewal is coming up.
- Runkel is in favor and asks if it would be a normal talk, over the lunch hour, or some other time. Mohr states that he is not sure of the logistics; Mohr and Burman state that the requirement is two hours of ethics for renewals.
- Runkel suggests looking back at the poll to see what the responses were and asks Leete and Hunt if MGWA has offered non-conference trainings. Leete confirms that these have occurred in the past. Hunt said we haven't typically done concurrent talks aside from things like student mentoring time. Mohr said he wouldn't want to put people in the position to have to choose between a talk or an ethics training. Leete suggests a meeting expansion, after the meeting.
- Kroening said that a lot of conferences have things like this the day before or after the conference, since later meeting extensions might interfere with other actions. Mohr said that it could be advertised as associated with the conference but on the day before or after.
- Runkel offers that he is not in favor of having training eliminate talks at a conference.
- Leete suggests that an hour of the training could be offered to partially meet the requirements.
- Mohr suggests passing on it for now; Kroening agrees. Runkel suggests having it between conferences.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:59 PM.

Action Items:

- Runkel will reach out to the Foundation.

Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will take place on February 15, 2022 at 11:30 am on Teams.