

# MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular monthly meeting

**Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022**

**Location:**

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

**Attendance:**

- Tony Runkel, Past-President; Jeré Mohr, President; Sandeep Burman, President-Elect; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Vanessa Baratta, Treasurer; Sheri Kroening, Newsletter; Sean Hunt, Management; Jennie Lete, Management; Jared Trost, White Paper Committee

**Agenda:**

- No changes to agenda.

**Past Minutes:**

- Mohr had a few typo corrections in the Newsletter and Foundation/Education sections. Ginsbach has corrected these typos.
- Mohr moves to approve the January minutes pending these changes.

**Groundwater Data White Paper Scoping Document:**

- Trost notes that this is his first attempt at bringing white paper topic to the board; Mohr notes that he is also new to the process.
- Trost notes that he has been involved in the White Paper Committee for a few years with David Crisman as his mentor.
- Trost said that the driving questions behind the scoping document are related to sharing data resources - understand the data available, if the data is publicly available or available on request, or if the data is complex. The topic has been limited to empirical data.
- Trost asks if the group has done large modeling or applied national datasets to Minnesota. Runkel and Mohr said that they have not used national datasets. Trost notes that the USGS will use nationwide datasets for Minnesota but the resolution is often not great.
- The first objective of the white paper is to characterize the present groundwater situation in Minnesota - how are we using data, what data are we missing, and what data are hard to use according to Trost. Trost notes that there are a lot of data available but there is always a need for more data.
- The second objective is to develop forward-looking paths to improve Minnesota's data economy. Trost said a good way to view this is to frame it as where could we go in the future to improve this.

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- An example of a dataset that would be relevant here according to Trost, is the aquifer test database from the DNR.
- A big source of information for the white paper would be a survey of MGWA members. Trost notes that there are a wide variety of groups in MGWA and it will be interesting to see how these groups are using data.
- Trost notes that he does not envision this being a catalog of existing datasets, as this can change over time. If the results of the survey were to show that people do not know the data sources, that could identify a catalog as being important.
- The timeframe is approximately one year and might potentially include a fact sheet.
- Runkel notes that he read the document ahead of time and was impressed with the idea of reaching out to MGWA members to get input on this. Runkel and Mohr state that this will help engage the members.
- Hunt notes that Survey Monkey could be used, as MGWA has invested in this. Trost suggested it might be helpful to incorporate the survey into a conference schedule as a way to encourage participation - potentially next fall.
- Trost mentions that the group would like to interview data producers and heavy users of data to design the survey and that the work group would not be ready for this by the spring meeting.
- Mohr asks how much time the work group would need at the spring conference. Trost notes that it would be about a five minute introduction and a request for workgroup membership.
- Kroening notes that something could be added to the newsletter to help recruit members to the work group. The next newsletter with articles is expected to be in mid-March according to Kroening. Kroening said it would be good to have text and an image submitted to the newsletter team by the end of the month. Trost said that he will try to get something to the newsletter team by the end of this week or next week.
- Kroening brought up several issues with data access from multiple groups.
- Hunt said that he has not updated the white paper section on the website recently so it may need some work. Hunt said that once the scoping document is approved it should be posted on the webpage. Hunt notes that there are email, website, and newsletter tools that could be used.
- Trost asks if the scoping document should be posted to the Google Drive or if there are any changes/suggestions.
- Mohr said the document was put together well and the only thing he had in mind was reinforcing that this is not the MGWA approving datasets and the end user is still required to determine if the data is appropriate - not QA/QC of the data but rather building awareness of the data that is out there.
- Trost said that the group debating including water quality in the work group or if it should just be physical properties. He notes the preliminary list includes preliminary water quality data that could be indicative of the system itself - limited water quality, not contamination data.

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- Runkel asks if we vote here and makes a motion to approve.. Mohr seconds. All in favor, motion approved.
- Hunt says that the public facing documents should be ready to go prior to the meeting and that he and Trost should talk about this in more detail.
- Trost notes that the white paper committee might ask for funding to design the survey as there is a lot that goes into the questions.
- Mohr will allocate time for the spring conference to include a time frame to discuss this new paper.
- Trost has an update from Crisman, where the next step is to get the final white paper committee comments and submit the document to the board. Mohr said that when he was ready Crisman can reach out to the board to get some agenda time.

### Reports:

#### Treasurer:

- Baratta said that Hunt and Leete have submitted last year's hours and they have been paid. Total income is \$11,581.01 and net income is \$11,552.19. Total assets are \$114,647.45.

#### Management (WRI):

- Leete notes that the finances have moved into 2022. The bills have been finished for 2021 - Baratta has sent the checks for those bills. Hunt was asked about the status of the website as no efforts have been made to see if the website is still appropriate. Leete said that her focus is completing the taxes and another letter from the IRS has been received stating the tax return has not been received.
- Leete said that Hunt has been working on updating membership information. Hunt said that another renewal is needed.
- Hunt said there is one element left on the website that is password protected - the member directory. Hunt plans to send out an email to update the members with a new password for the membership area on the website. Hunt says that the password used to be updated in March - an email will be sent in February or March with the password update after membership renewals are processed.
- Mohr asked Hunt about Leete's note related to the website update. Hunt thinks this was likely the password update question and there is no plan to change the web structure at this point.
- Mohr asked if there is anything needed from the board to resolve the IRS issue. Hunt is not sure if anything specific is needed at this point.
- Hunt notes that there will be some documents sent to Runkel that will need to be signed.

#### Newsletter:

- Kroening notes the newsletter team met yesterday and the newsletter will be sent out in the middle of March. Kroening notes that the annual financial update is usually included in the March newsletter. Baratta said that she is working on these and may include the past two years worth of numbers, as last year's numbers were not published.

#### Foundation/Education Committee:

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- No update at this point, as the next meeting is in March.
- Runkel emailed Stu Grubb to get added to the foundation email list. Runkel said there is no update on the education committee at this point but they are working on writing a letter that will be sent to the legislature to strengthen K-12 science standards.

### **Spring Conference Planning:**

- Mohr's primary item was to finalize the date for the conference. He notes that the proposed dates were April 27 or April 28; Mohr proposes April 28. Runkel asks what day of the week this is - Mohr notes it is a Thursday.
- Runkel, Baratta, Ginsbach, and Kroening do not have any conflicts.
- Mohr still plans on having the theme be "A Groundwater Tour of Minnesota" and plans to use Runkel's suggestion of following the DNR's groundwater province areas. Mohr is looking for ideas for speakers from other areas of the state.
- Runkel asks if there is a document that could be placed into the shared folder. Runkel and Mohr will both put out feelers for speakers. Mohr will place a document onto the Google Drive and email Runkel as a reminder.
- Kroening, Baratta, and Ginsbach will also look at the document. Mohr will update the board when it is ready to take a look at.
- Mohr asks if some information is needed for a "save the date" - Hunt confirms. Runkel asks if this initial step is just a name, date, and a few sentences of what the conference will be about. Hunt confirms and says that about two months of lead time is required to get the conference ready. Hunt notes that it would be good to have the ability to register for the conference by the end of the month, format of the conference, and cost structure.
- Hunt reminds Mohr that a physical brochure is usually sent out for the conference. Web page, mailing, and emailing will all be sent about the conference as updates.
- Runkel asks if the topics should be "sciencey" or if applied topics will be accepted. Mohr confirms both are acceptable.
- Baratta asks if it would be appropriate to bring someone in from another state to give a talk about something that is pertinent and relevant to Minnesota. Mohr confirms this would be appropriate and he will include this in the lineup of potential topics.
- Runkel gave Burman an update about the spring conference plan.

**Meeting Adjourned: 12:31 PM.**

### **Action Items:**

- None at this time.

### **Next Meeting:**

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