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Minnesota Ground Water Association
Board Meeting Minutes
Regular monthly meeting

Meeting Date: Tuesday, January 17, 2023

Location:

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

Attendance:

- Jeré Mohr, Past-President; Sandeep Burman, President; Rebecca Higgins, President-Elect; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Eric Bunge, Treasurer; Sherri Kroening, Newsletter; Sean Hunt, Management; Jennie Leete, Management

Agenda:

- Mohr received a request from someone asking for information related to flooding risk related to natural infrastructure. Leete mentioned that this is a DNR-related issue and the person should reach out to Jennifer Shillcox at the DNR.
- The agenda says to review and approve the November meetings instead of December.

New Board Members:

- Burman asked the current board members to introduce themselves to the newly elected board members. Mohr, Hunt, Leete, Ginsbach, Kroening, and Burman all gave a quick introduction of what their position is with the MGWA and what they do in their professional careers.
- Higgins and Bunge both introduced themselves and provided a brief summary of their technical backgrounds.
- Burman asked Hunt and Leete if there were any resources for onboarding for the new members. Leete said the foundational documents are on the Google Drive and that the website will show documents such as past tax returns. Leete notes that the board took over the task of updating the operations manual and is not sure of the current status.
- Bunge said that he is not sure about the current status of the operations manual but a hard copy of the document was provided to him by Vanessa Baratta.
- Hunt said that there are some foundational documents and it would be either beneficial to either have a separate meeting or reserve 10 minutes for each meeting to go over the operations manual. Hunt said that the executive summary will show the MGWA's approach to reaching their goals.
- Kroening recalls looking at the updated version of the operations manual but does not remember the Newsletter section being updated to represent the swap to the web publishing.
- Leete said that the Vanessa Baratta and Aneka Swanson at DNR may both know what the status of the updates are, as they both worked on the document.
- Burman suggested it may be good to review the operations manual to ensure there are no loose ends about the status of the updates.

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- Higgins suggested that it might be worthwhile to compile key information from the operations manual into a slide deck to help with onboarding.
- Burman asked Bunge if the hard copy of the operations manual is the only copy that exists. Mohr said there is a copy of it on the Google Drive dated February 2021. Kroening confirmed it is on the drive. Leete noted that Julia Steenberg was the last one to work on the document and that when she turned the documents over it contained a comprehensive summary of what goes on.
- Burman asks if the new members have access to the Google Drive. Hunt mentioned that Higgins had previous access but she has new expanded access now. Higgins mentioned that she has access to the Drive. Bunge has confirmed he has access as well.
- Hunt mentions it might be good for everyone to take a quick look of the operations document. Burman concurs and suggests the Board take a look for a quick review prior to the February meeting.

Past Minutes:

- Burman asked if anyone had any additions or changes to the minutes from the December meeting. No comments or edits suggested from any board members. No objections, minutes are approved.

Spring Conference Planning:

- Burman recapped some of the discussion from December for Higgins and Bunge. Burman reiterated that the current plan is to have the spring conference virtually, noting that access to the conference, easier travel for outstate members, and more comfort meeting virtually are points in favor of having the spring conference virtually. Burman notes that the current plan is to have the fall meeting in-person.
- Higgins is in favor of the idea of having one in-person and one virtual meeting per year. She notes that a lot of other organizations are also grappling with the question of if they should have meetings in person or online.
- Kroening said she is also in favor of having the meeting virtually as she wasn't able to attend the in-person fall meeting.
- Bunge agrees with this approach as well, echoing the comments of Kroening and Higgins. Bunge suggests swapping which of the two conferences is hosted virtually.
- Burman mentioned that the virtual spring conference allows presentsers to be located outside of the metro area. Burman reminded the board that the tentative topic for the spring conference is unique public water supplies in Minnesota. Burman stated the goal is to pick 8 to 10 of the water systems across the state. Burman reminded the Board that there can be a diverse range of speakers for these talkings, including speakers outside of state government including public water supply operations, engineers, and others. Burman asked for comments, thoughts, and suggestions for speakers.
- Higgins stated she recently watched the City of Minneapolis's YouTube video describing their drinking water treatment system. She mentioned that not many members may know the intricacies and details about the treatment train. She notes she'd like to hear from folks who operate that system or who had worked on upgrades to the system.
- Higgins also thought it may be interesting to get a historical perspective about how Minnesotans used to get their drinking water.

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- Kroening gave the name of a contact at the City of Minneapolis, George Kraynick, and reiterated how many tests the City performs.
- Burman stated that MGWA is planning on utilizing the Minnesota Geological Survey's Zoom platform to host the meeting. Burman will reach out to Tony Runkel to confirm if this is still the case.
- Burman asked if a "save the date" should be sent via the newsletter and asked for more information about how these notifications should be sent.,
- Kroening said the next newsblog update is in March and if an update is provided before then it can be included.
- Hunt remarked that members can find information in many places, including the website, newsletter, and emails. He notes once everything is ready to go, a website can be built that describes the conference in detail. Hunt said that once the website is done, an email can be sent reminding folks to register. He notes that paper brochures will also be sent. Hunt said he likes to give people as much time as he can to give enough time for payments and registrations and that it would be good to aim for mid-February to get the information available.
- Hunt said once about half the speakers are ready, the website can be built but that at least 3/4 of the speakers should be finalized and that all of the details about cost and location will need to be included.
- Higgins suggests that it might be good to have someone from the Department of Defense talk about the Waters of the United States ruling. Burman confirms there are some groundwater impacts in this ruling.
- Burman said that the fall conference might have a bit more of a policy feel to it and a discussion of the WOTUS might be better suited for that. Burman said that 2024 is the 50th anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the proposed theme for the fall conference would be about this act.
- Burman will share potential titles with the Board members and notes that he will be gone from February 3 through February 18. Burman will try to have enough information to have the "save the date" ready before he leaves and has set a tentative deadline of February 1 to get information together.
- Burman asks if there should be any logistical discussions about the spring conference today. Mohr does not think so but offers to help find additional speakers.
- Burman will reach out to Tony Runkel about both the Zoom link for the conference and to discuss potential topics or talks he might be willing to give.

Reports:

Treasurer:

- Burman asked Bunge if he had received information from the previous treasurer, Vanessa Baratta. Bunge confirmed that he had.
- Bunge states that gross income is \$65,543.89; after costs and expenses submitted up to now, net income is \$11,318.61. He also notes that there may be some additional expenses still pending. Total liabilities and equity are \$120,658.92.
- Leete stated the numbers from 2022 are still in flux until the hard close happens. She notes that now everything can be finalized. Leete notes that there is a concept of "prepaid dues". She notes that beginning in August, dues are accepted for the next year. She notes

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that the accounting system doesn't put this information into the balance sheet for the current year. She said that those prepaid dues are in limbo.

- Leete said that she moved the prepaid dues to an actual revenue today and should not have any negative values for these dues. Leete said that the revenue as of today is \$7875, \$60 of which will go to the Foundation.
- Leete is sending an updated report from QuickBooks to Bunge so he has a copy of it.
- Hunt said that the contract that he and Leete work under for MGWA is dated 2011 and he has shared a link to the Google Drive. He has developed a new rate sheet for Board approval. Hunt notes that he and Leete do a lot of the day-to-day work so the Board members do not have to focus on these tasks.
- Hunt shared the new Schedule of Compensation with the Board. The Schedule listed the tasks and per-hour costs for the activities that need to be performed. These are mostly \$50 per hour but the higher level accounting activities are to be billed at \$65 an hour.
- The Schedule also includes costs for software, email, web hosting, and other insurance requirements.
- Burman notes the Schedule is 12 years old so he thinks it is a good idea to update it.
- Higgins asks if the Schedule includes mileage and materials reimbursement. Hunt said that is included as the standard IRS reimbursement rate and that items such as posters or banners are cost recovered after.
- Mohr agrees that the Schedule is reasonable and moves to approve. Higgins seconded the motion.
- Bunge asked where the Schedule is located on the Drive. Hunt informs him that it can be found on Operations > WRI > Contract Documents.
- Burman asked if there needs to be a new contract written and signed to represent this change. Hunt said no, this is just an update to the attachment but he will pull everything together into one up-to-date document.

Management (WRI):

- Hunt said that membership renewals start in early fall and that, to date, there are 244 membership renewals. He notes this is down compared to previous years. Hunt will plan to send an email to members who were members in the past three or four years to let them know that renewals are available now.
- Hunt notes that we have seen a decline in membership over the past five years.
- Higgins suggests adding a discussion of how to improve membership and potentially a root cause analysis for the decrease to the next agenda.
- Leete submitted the renewals to the Secretary of State and will be preparing a proposal to increase dues from \$45 to \$50 for professional members, \$65 to \$75 for sustaining members, \$25 to \$30 for retired members, and \$20 to \$25 for students before August. She notes that the current dues do not appear to fully cover the costs.

Newsletter:

- Kroening will reach out to some of the Board members for certain items for the March newsletter, such as the President's Letter.

White Paper Committee:

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- Burman asked if there are contacts for the White Paper and Education Committee updates. Hunt said that Dave Crisman has been serving as the point of contact to the White Paper.
- Leete said that the only formal liaison is to the Foundation, which is a responsibility of the past-president.

Education Committee:

- Hunt said that Julia Steenberg is on the Education Committee and had done the reporting about this Committee during her time on the Board.

Foundation:

- Mohr states there are no updates from the Foundation but he plans to attend the next meeting which is scheduled for March.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:02 pm.

Action Items:

- Burman will reach out to Tony Runkel to confirm the hosting platform for the spring meeting and will brainstorm titles for the conference.
- Two additional items will be added to the February agenda, including a discussion of how to boost membership numbers and to discuss appointing formal liaisons to the White Paper and Education Committees.

Next Meeting:

- The next meeting will be held on February 21, 2023 at 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on Teams.