

# MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular monthly meeting

**Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 18, 2023**

**Location:**

- Meeting was called to order at 11:41 AM. The meeting was held as an online Teams meeting.

**Attendance:**

- Sandeep Burman, President; Rebecca Higgins, President-Elect; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Eric Bunge, Treasurer; Sean Hunt, Management

**Agenda:**

- Scott Alexander was referred to as Scott Calvin in the March minutes. Minutes are approved pending edits.

**MGWA-MWWA Letter:**

- Burman noted that Bruce Olsen wanted Higgins to sign the letter. The letter needs to be modified to insert that Higgins is signing on behalf of the MGWA board. Higgins suggested that "on behalf of the MGWA board" be added on the line below her signature.
- Hunt discussed additional changes to the letter, which Burman added in real time to the document. Burman noted the complexity behind the letter and that Olsen and MDH have given feedback on the letter. Burman said here are some politics between organizations on private well sampling and education efforts and this letter is an attempt to repair relationships to move the effort forward. In addition, Burman noted MNWOO, MDH, and the well drillers roles involved with this effort have caused added complexity.
- Burman said there is a triangle between MDH, MNWOO, and MWWA who all work with drillers. Olsen suggested removing MDH from the letter as they are the oversight agency for private wells so they should not be included as making an official statement. He notes MDH is motivated to get well owners cheaper, faster, easier well testing and this letter is trying to advance this goal while adhering to legislation. Burman has been removed as the signer of this letter because of his MDH affiliation and any reference to MDH has been removed. The MGWA education committee has also approved this letter with the hope that this will only serve a positive purpose.
- Rebecca: finds pause with second to last paragraph involving "in lieu of" wording in this. She suggests saying "in addition to" to make it clear it should not be side stepping legally accredited lab. This has a different tone and makes sure we are honoring the accredited labs and the existing legislation.
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- Higgins suggested a change in the phrasing of the letter to change “in lieu of” to “in addition to.” Burman said it did not appear to change the intent. Hunt said that the phrase “in lieu of” on page 1 could be changed as well.
- Higgins said it is important to use the message to encourage additional testing. Higgins asked what the next steps are for this letter and what happens if the board doesn’t send the letter - who will suffer if this process does get completed? She notes it is an opportunity to get ahead of this issue and be proactive.
- Burman suggest that “in addition to” or “develop additional strategies” or other phrasing could be used so that the message is communicated clearly but does not contradict state rules or statutes.
- Burman said that the Education Committee is willing to help out with this process and to aid in the development of future water testing events. Burman said that the group could include state reps, MWOO reps, county reps, and MGWA repos.
- Burman said that the clinics will need to decide if they want to use full qualified analytical laboratory methods or if alternative methods could be used to help stretch the funds. He also notes that the group could help evaluate the and explain the data to the well owners as part of this effort.
- Burman said that well owners are getting mixed messages from well drillers and from MGWA/MNWOO/MWWA related to testing. He notes that this is getting in the way of MNWOO getting things completed at the legislature and muddying the messages from the state agencies. He said there is a lack of cohesiveness among the various groups.
- Burman and Higgins discussed the historic discussions that have occurred between MWWA and MGWA/MNWOO and noted that hte letter is intended to better the relationship between the groups.
- Ginsbach asked what the “screening criteria” referenced in the letter are. Burman said that the intent was to get the support of the screening criteria and the specific methods would be determined by the workgroup as set up by MGWA’s Education Committee.
- Higgins reiterated that the goal of this letter to get the conversation started, get people moving on the issue, and to help improve relationships between the groups.
- Ginsbach and Higgins suggested some additional changes to the letter to make the letter more accurately represent the situation described by the letter. Burman suggested that the Board review the letter again and send additional comments back to MNWOO for their review.
- Higgins suggested narrowing the focus of this letter to get things moving.
- Burman suggest having a MNWOO rep attend the next month’s board meeting to provide an update as to how things are going after the letter was submitted. Burman asked for a vote to approve signing the letter pending the minor changes suggested during this meeting. Higgins made the motion to approve, seconded by Bunge. Burman will send to the MNWOO representative for his review and approval.

### Spring Conference Planning:

- Burman notes that the dry run went well yesterday. He will get the bios and speaker pictures to Hunt before the weekend so they can be put on the website. Burman will also ask the speakers to send a copy of their presentations in case there are internet issues.

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- Burman will get a full list of speakers and presenters and will provide to Julia Steenberg to ensure everyone has the appropriate permissions for the meeting. This will allow speakers and presenters to automatically be given the appropriate permissions.
- Burman asked if Steenberg has privileges to access the drive. Hunt confirms that she does. Burman will update the document on the Google Drive so the most current list of speakers and presenters is available to all.
- Hunt said that a soft deadline of the end of the week has been set for registration and asked if he should send a reminder email. Burman said that he was going to ask about this and suggests that it is a good idea.
- Burman asked when the link will be sent. Hunt said he would like to do a batch this week with who has been registered and then send out another emails periodically prior to the conference.
- Burman noted that based on yesterday's dry run, Ginsbach and Higgins will be monitoring the Q&A for the spring conference and will hand off the oversight of Q&A throughout the day.

### Newsletter Advertising Question:

- Burman said that a former newsletter advertiser had reached out regarding advertising and that the response was that the advertising had stopped with the transition to digital. Burman said that the team lost the advertisement coordinator but asked if there were other reasons as to why the newsletter couldn't advertise.
- Hunt said noted that part of the issue comes down to the cost-benefit ratio - would there be enough revenue generated to account for the effort? Hunt said there were no political or legal reasons that it couldn't happen but the Newsletter team may need to work out how to create the advertisement in the new Wordpress format.
- Hunt said there would also need to be a new price schedule developed for the new structure. He also notes that the Newsletter team is more of an editorial team than a formatting team.
- Burman and Hunt both suggested waiting for the full team discussion. Burman will put it on next month's agenda.

### Reports:

#### Treasurer:

- Bunge said the gross profit was \$24,635.31, total expenses were \$6878.51, net income was \$17,756.80, and total assets were \$128,25947.

#### Management (WRI):

- Management team is mostly focused on the conference. As of last count, there are 194 registrations for the spring conference and there are a total of 345 members. Hunt noted that there are a fair amount of registrations on the pre-registration day and that the email reminder will get additional folks registered.
- Burman asked what the numbers usually are for the registrations. Hunt said that it is usually in the low to mid 200s.

#### Newsletter:

- No newsletter committee members were present.

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### **White Paper Committee:**

- No update from Higgins.

### **Education Committee:**

- Bunge said the Education Committee is mostly focused on the MWAA/MNWOO/MGWA letter at the moment.

### **Foundation:**

- No Foundation members were present.

**Meeting Adjourned: 12:59 pm.**

### **Action Items:**

- Spring conference is next week.

### **Next Meeting:**

- The next meeting will be held on May 16 at 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on Teams.