

# MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular monthly meeting

**Meeting Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023**

**Location:**

- Meeting was called to order at 11:39 AM. The meeting was held as an online Teams meeting.

**Attendance:**

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

**Agenda:**

- Mohr moves to approve the agenda, Bunge seconds; agenda approved.
- No changes to October minutes, Mohr moves to approve the minutes, Bunge seconds; minutes approved.

**Fall Conference Review and Discussion:**

- Higgins's primary takeaways were that attendees enjoyed the venue and that attendees did not have any major concerns about the distance needed to travel to get to the conference center.
- Mohr notes that there was an overwhelming desire in the conference survey results to have in-person meetings going forward. He said that there may be some bias in these results, as the meeting was in-person. Higgins said that there was a comment about flipping the virtual and in-person meetings but that could be dicey.
- Higgins asks if there has been any discussion about a third meeting. Mohr was not aware of this but Leete had mentioned in the past that it might be good to have another meeting. Kroening stated that there were field trips years ago and board member volunteers organized them. Higgins asks if there could be a call in the newsletter asking retirees to host or organize a field trip to contact the board. Kroening said this could be put into the newsletter and asked Higgins to draft a section.
- Higgins said there were lots of notes about the number of presenters who were emeritus and this is something that should be important to the membership drive. Higgins said having the spring conference be more tech-heavy might entice newer members into attending. Higgins suggested that we keep the Spring 2024 conference virtual to bring in presenters from outside of Minnesota. Higgins said that there is an opportunity to have a winter get-together for MGWA in the future to have an opportunity to have a social event outside of the happy hours.

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- Bunge received a few comments, including how many retirees were attending and presenting. He said that the 40 minute talks are long and it can be hard to sit through. He notes he was also thinking of ways to get new career professionals and students present, including bringing back lightning talks to lower the entry to presenting. Higgins agrees with the idea to have shorter talks and building in time for questions and answers. Bunge suggests having at least one lightning talk session involve only students or new career professionals.
- Kroening agrees that 40 minutes is a long time for a talk. Mohr agrees that it is tough and that even after stressing to presenters to limit the talk to 30 minutes and 10 minutes for question and answer, presenters often take up the entire time. Kroening also likes the idea to put out a call for abstracts for topics.
- Higgins said that she would like to have a more tightened timeframe for the conference and potentially going from 9 to 3:30 instead of 8 to 4:30. Mohr also likes that idea but notes that people are relying on this for professional development hours. Higgins says that the conference is geared more towards PGs than PEs and is not super concerned about this. Kroening said that it might be worth taking a baby step to start at 8:30 to ensure people can get there in time.
- Higgins asked the board to reach out with any suggestions for speakers for the spring conference. Mohr will reach out to contacts at Barr to give presentations about groundwater monitoring. Bunge said that if groups are using ArcGIS Pro's 3D modeling or ArcPy it could be
- Ginsbach said that the topic is a good idea and that it could help bring in students. He suggest reaching out to folks at the University of Minnesota to get student presenters or topics and to also help improve the attendance by students. Ginsbach echos Higgins's suggestion to reach out to contacts the Board may have nationwide and worldwide to have new presenters.
- Higgins suggest that it would be a good idea to make things more interactive and using phones to not only view the agenda but also have surveys. Higgins said this would also help move away from paper, which is a suggestion received. Kroening agrees with this. Mohr said there could be a handful of printed agendas for people who want them but it is a good time.
- Hunt said that for a group purchase order the buyer receives a copy of the purchase. Higgins said the way to capture that would be to show that the attendee had signed in rather than the purchase note. Higgins said that if it was a group purchase order, there isn't much benefit to the individuals. Kroening said she has not paid much attention to the purchase order copy in the folder. Ginsbach notes that the receipt is shared with the purchaser who shares the receipt with the person who made the purchase order who shares it with all the attendees.

### **2024 Officer Ballots and Nominations:**

- Higgins asks the Board if they have any ideas for the president-elect position and encourages the board to cast a wide net for potential candidates. She notes that she will be asking people to see who has interest.

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- Higgins asks Hunt if there is a hard deadline for sending out the survey. Hunt said that the second week of December is probably a good time to get the survey out. Kroening said that the December newsletter will include the survey, which will go out around December 11th through the 15th.
- Higgins asked the Board if there have any potential nominees. Mohr and Kroening note that they do not have any off the top of their head. Kroening reminded Higgins that the secretary position is also up for election. Ginsbach noted that he will run for secretary again and confirms to Hunt that the last biography he presented still works.

### Reports:

#### Treasurer:

- Bunge has not received any new numbers yet and will update the Board in December.

#### Newsletter:

- Kroening said the group is working on the December newsletter.

#### White Paper Committee:

- Ginsbach said that he, Baratta, and Trost met to finalize the questions in the survey. He said that they are very close and just need confirmation from the team.

#### Education Committee:

- Mohr said there is nothing much to report. The Education committee continues to focus on the water well screenings and will be writing an article for the December newsletter.

#### Foundation:

- Mohr notes the primary focus is to get the scholarship notice ready to roll out and will be doing both the Gil Gabanski and Field Camp scholarships ready. Kroening said that Steenberg will have something for the December newsletter.

#### Membership drive

- Higgins said there was a lot of good chat about the membership drive in previous discussions.

#### Other

- Higgins said that it would be good to work together with Minnesota Water Well Association in the future. She suggests that it might be a good idea to work together to do a training for well sampling in coordination with MWWA and well drillers or other well companies to work together to have a clinic on well sampling.
- Higgins asked if we could have a followup discussion on ensuring that we are working efficiently with other organizations on next month's calendar along with a hands-on demo of sampling equipment. Mohr, Kroening, and Bunge all agree.
- Higgins suggested that there could be a participation note for the hands-on training opportunity. She said that it would be good to ensure that newer career professionals get an opportunity to see sampling hands-on, especially in cases

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where members went right from academia to an office job. Kroening said that there are training opportunities from NGWA but they cost in excess of a thousand dollars.

- Higgins suggests focusing on the fundamentals and perhaps having it as a series. Ginsbach agrees that this would be a great opportunity and way to encourage newer career professionals to join.

**Meeting Adjourned: 12:28 pm.**

### **Action Items:**

- The Board will work to find candidates for president and share via email to help get the election survey out by mid December.

### **Next Meeting:**

- Next meeting will be held on December 19th.