

# MGWA MINUTES

Minnesota Ground Water Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Regular monthly meeting

**Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2020**

**Location:**

- Meeting was called to order at 11:34 AM. The meeting was held as an online Zoom Meeting

**Attendance:**

- Kate Pound, Past-President; Julia Steenberg, President; Tony Runkel, President-Elect; Vanessa Baratta, Treasurer; Michael Ginsbach, Secretary; Sean Hunt, Management; Jennie Leete, Management; Sharon Kroening, Newsletter

**Agenda:**

- Baratta asks to add LCCMR discussion to the agenda for today.
- Approved.

**Past Minutes:**

- Ginsbach noted that previous meetings notes are located on the Google Drive now.
- Hunt notes that the Foundation and Association minutes are both posted on the website.
- Pound moves to approve. Baratta seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion was approved.

**Reports:**

**Treasurer:**

- Baratta said total income is \$31,844.03; net income is \$12,211.69; total assets are \$94,457.43. Baratta said that Leete noted there was a slight delay in pass-through dollars but this should not impact these numbers.
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**Management (WRI):**

- Hunt said there was a web outage on Friday that has been resolved. Hunt was not able to resolve the issue but contacted Ole Olmanson, who set up the website in 2016. Hunt noted the issue was that WordPress was updated to version 7.6, which caused some issues with some of the plugins. Olmanson was able to fix this by downgrading and disabling some of the plugins. Hunt said that he normally upgrades WordPress to the latest version to help with security issues.
- Hunt said that he sent out a membership notice for 2021 and there have been some orders being submitted from that notice.
- The white page and the videos from the conference have all been posted on the webpage. Hunt asks if the Association should send update emails related to the new white page and conference videos.

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- Leete notes that the MGWA laptop is having connection issues. Pound asks how old the MGWA laptop is and if it needs to be upgraded. Hunt said that it's relatively new and only a few years old.
- Leete said that the white paper was submitted as a fully formed document. Leete said that it only needed a few pages and some changes the footer. The footer change impacted the formatting but Leete was able to fix it. Leete said that a fix would be to have the next white paper use the designed format with the footer and the page numbers.
- Leete has been working with the IRS for the Foundation. Leete has not heard back from the IRS for MGWA's notice about not filing. Leete notes that the Foundation does not earn enough money to file the full 990 so the 990N was filed instead. Leete also said that the cutoff for the IRS is \$50,000 per year in fundraising, which the Foundation has not reached.
- Hunt asked if it is okay to send the conference update to the full email list or if it should just be sent to members and conference attendees. Steenberg said that it was good to send to the full members list and is likely okay to send to everyone.
- Kroening asked if the updates should be on the news blog page or if they should be on the main page. Hunt said that traditionally for the newsletter there is a long-form update on the conference. Hunt said there are multiple places to post updates: the newsletter, the main webpage, and emails. Hunt said that he usually tries to keep the main webpage posts short. Hunt said that for a conference recap, for the main post it would just be notification that the video has been uploaded.
- Steenberg asks if the newsletter team needs content. Kroening said that the newsletter team has been able to put that together in years past.
- Hunt would like to post the date of the next conference. Hunt said we don't have to set a date now but that March or April are coming up soon. Runkel said he had a date on his calendar of Tuesday April 27<sup>th</sup> for the spring meeting. Hunt said that the conference is generally on a Tuesday or Thursday. Pound said it would be good to set a date now.
- Runkel said that he would be okay with the April 27<sup>th</sup> date. Runkel has three speakers collected so far and has given them this date as a tentative date for the conference.
- Steenberg agrees this date will work and mentions to Hunt that this could also be included in an email. Hunt said it is not new web content so it might not be relevant to be in the email. Steenberg said that the date could be posted on the website.

### Newsletter Team:

- Kroening said the team met this morning and are working on getting all of the new newsposts in WordPress to get those published. Once they are published, an email will be put together to update members that the newsletter has been updated.
- Kroening said that there is usually a post about the president-elect and any other officer positions up for election in the December news release. Kroening asks for some information about the candidate along with a photo for the posting. Runkel said that he has sent the bio and photo for the candidate but will resend it to the newsletter team.
- Kroening asked if Baratta was running for treasurer again. Baratta confirmed she was and will get an update. Kroening said that the newsletter team said that if there are update about funding or other such topics to reach out to the newsletter team for an update. Pound said she has been assigned that task for the Foundation and will get something to the newsletter team.

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- Kroening said there were some issues with the Newsletter team being able to access Google Drive and that the team is working on evaluating other methods to share information.

### Foundation:

- Pound said the Foundation met last Tuesday and everything looks better than anticipated. Pound said the Foundation discussed the DEI initiative. Pound said there was a long discussion on the proposal that was very positive and the Foundation liked the idea of what was being proposed. Pound said that there was a lot of discussion about this but it came back to a discussion about how much money could be spent.
- Pound said that at the end of the meeting, there was a discussion about budgeting for supporting various efforts that the foundation typically supports. Pound said the outcome was that the Foundation indicated they wanted to support two high school interns and the next step is to work on a grant proposal submittal to the Foundation.
- Hunt said that there have been a number of large donations but there is not a technical thank you procedure in place. Hunt said a spreadsheet has been set up in Google Drive to show who donated and how much they gave along with a way to track thank you notices.
- Hunt said that Pound took on the task of putting together a fundraising notice to include in the physical mail notice. Pound is currently working on formatting and editing of this notice. Pound said that she hopes to get the notice to Hunt and Kroening this weekend. Hunt said the paper renewal would be sometime in the next few weeks.
- Pound said that there were a number of rollovers on the Foundation board. Pound said James Vanderwall is stepping down. Pound said everyone else is continuing as director. Pound will be stepping off and Julia will be stepping in. Hunt said there were no new nominees so MGWA do not have to vote on anything. Pound says she will stay on as the leader of the DEI committee.
- Pound there was an update from the budgetary and planning meeting. The Foundation evaluated the income and the endowment. The decision was that 3-5% of the Foundation endowment can be spent on an annual basis. Pound said that this year things look good enough that the spending can be 5%. This amount will be reviewed annually. Leete said that the scholarship funds are flexible and could be used to funding an intern but that dedicated funds must remain dedicated.
- Pound asked Leete for clarification about the legality of disposition of funds. Pound asks for clarification if that there are a lot more constrains on how money is spent that how the Foundation appreciates. Leete says yes.
- Steenberg asks for clarification about the Foundation spending. Leete says the Foundation is spending the money correctly right now but if they want a new program and they don't want to cut out children's water festivals then something has to change in distribution of funds. Hunt noted that there are restrictions for money that have been given for the endowment. Leete notes that the undedicated funds are able to be used on anything that educates the public on groundwater.
- Leete notes that the Foundation is set up to receive money as a charitable contribution. Leete also said that MGWA can take sides more easily than the Foundation can. Pound says that the disposition of funds needs to be discussed with the Foundation and that she will report to the Foundation that there was a bit more discussion about the intricacies of how various funds will be spent and that further discussion is recommended for the next Foundation meeting.

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- Pound said that there would be a language tweak to note that if people gave funds that were unrestricted that they could be used to support general educational goals.
- Steenberg asked for clarification about the internship. Pound said that the funds were looked at and that their understanding of the money between the unrestricted funds and scholarship money could be used for a somewhat broader purpose than just scholarship. Hunt was not sure if this was explicitly stated in the meeting. Pound said her understanding was that the Foundation was going to put the full \$5000 forward for the DEI initiative.
- Leete asked what happened to the proposed path to include a college student. Pound said that there wasn't enough funds to support one college student in addition to two high school students. Leete said that there are not enough funds in the unrestricted money. Leete said if it does, the Foundation will not be able to continue funding children's water festivals – there are enough funds in here for a year of typical activities.
- Hunt said he thought that it was a \$10,000 project, with \$5000 from the Foundation and \$5000 from Freshwater. Pound said this was not the case. Pound said the original proposal had a price tag of just over \$20,000. Pound said that when the Foundation looked at everything, the cost for the high school interns is \$5000.

### **Social Coordinator:**

- Steenberg said that Jane de Lambert is stepping down as the social coordinator. Kroening said she will ask de Lambert if she will put together a post for the newsletter for the social coordinator position.

### **Other Business:**

#### **Officer Elections:**

- Steenberg said that this should be good as long as the new candidates provide updated information.
- Hunt asked if there was a president-elect candidate. Runkel said yes. Hunt said the ballot includes the name of the person and the bio. Hunt said typically the ballot would be open from now until the end of the month. Hunt said there would also be an email that updated members on the election in coordination with the newsletter.
- Kroening said that Runkel had provided the president-elect information to her and she will share it with Hunt.

#### **LCCMR:**

- Pound asks if the LCCMR is asking for projects or for participation on the board. Baratta said that it was to add members to the board and that the request was to see if MGWA would send an email asking for applicants to the board.
- Baratta will send an email to everyone containing the text for the email.

#### **DEI Proposal:**

- Steenberg noted that this was covered in the Foundation update.

#### **Operations Manual:**

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- Steenberg said that if there were anything to add or change from the operations manual to let her know. Pound said that there should be a coordinated approach and that this will likely occur in mid-January. Pound said it would be good for Steenberg to provide the approach and she agreed.
- Baratta said she has a much better handle on the operations manual now than she did in the past.

### **Education Committee:**

- Baratta asked who would be the liaison to the Education committee. Steenberg said she was the point.
- Baratta noted that she had submitted a white paper request for compilation of data resources across the various state agencies. Baratta said that instead of a white paper this could be a resource on the MGWA page instead.
- Steenberg said that the Education committee started a portal workgroup to have a section on MGWA's webpage for a groundwater education portal. Steenberg said that there was only one application for this – Stuart Orłowski at the Department of Agriculture. Baratta thought that this focus might be more so for teacher resources. Steenberg said that that does not seem to be the case right now. Steenberg said that Orłowski and Cathy Udem would be the best point of contact.

### **Meeting Adjourned: 12:58 PM.**

### **Action Items:**

- None at this time.

### **Next Meeting:**

- The next meeting will take place January 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am on Zoom.