

**Board Meeting Minutes of the
MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS**

**8 April 2011
Brainerd Area DNR Office**

Present: Anna Lipenga, Dan Steward, Bill Faber, Willis Mattison, Jack Lauer, Paul Stolen, Beau Liddell, Ray Valley & Jesse Amo.

Anna called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Secretary's Report

Beau presented the minutes from the annual meeting; Ray moved to accept minutes as amended by Ann (misspelled names), 2nd by Bill; passed.

Treasurer's Report

Anna presented the treasurer's report in Ann's absence. \$1,875 was generated from registration & memberships (representing 75 members), \$45 for three who only sent in membership dues, \$619 raised during silent auction, for total annual meeting income of \$2,539. Cost of annual meeting was \$1,155.07 for net income of \$1,383.93. As of today's meeting, balance in checking of \$864.96; balance in savings of \$2,509.90. Anna needs to be added and Ray removed from financial accounts.

In future we need to provide option to only pay for workshop fees and not membership since DNR will not cover membership costs for their staff.

Last year we had only 29 memberships (\$565) but did better on auction (\$787). Thus, for this year we increased our membership by 3-fold, but may be only a perception since many may not have paid membership dues if given option.

Beau moved to accept the treasurer's report, Willis 2nd, passed.

Dedicated Funding Working Group (DFWG) Status & White Paper

Ray presented update on this group, a coalition of watchdog groups around outdoor heritage fund (OHF) funding comprised of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), MN Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA), Trust for Public Land (TPL), Pheasants Forever (PF), Mn Outdoor Heritage Alliance (MOHA) and others totaling at least 12 groups to make sure OHF, Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) and other dedicated funds are being spent appropriately relative to enabling language. They work a lot at the legislature. Right now focusing on supplement/supplant issue regarding Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) funds, but also on recent attempts to change LCCMR recommendations and form. Looking for better integration of clean water fund, OHF, and LCCMR so that they aren't each operating in a silo; to prevent redundancy and improve efficient delivery of conservation.

This group and its member organizations are quite frustrated re: legislature and lack of traction with them. Considering turning to agency commissioners and suggesting blue-ribbon citizen

committees to advise agencies since governor's administration is more open to working on these issues. Thus, DFWG may focus more on the executive branch after this legislative session since the legislature is not listening or engaged and have misaligned values on conservation issues.

Ray feels our involvement could be important since we provide more of the biological expertise that their policy-oriented groups & members lack. We need to think about how involved and assertive we should be in this group. Ray and Brian are close, and being involved could provide us more involvement in issues they take up and give our organization more influence. They are pretty cohesive, but ad-hoc.

Paul asked about their perception of our organization, it's purpose and our involvement. We are kind of the old guard. Ray's impression is that they want us there and have invited our involvement since we bring the on-the-ground agency experience and history to the table.

Group is a larger, broader policy-based group compared to ours. Are they inviting our involvement because we could be the science-based arm of the group? Possible, but we don't really know. Perhaps this is how we can sell our involvement. Paul thinks they are heading down the right path of working with executive agencies, and we fit a good role of how the agencies work internally, but if we really want to participate we need more than one individual at their meetings to maximize our input and value since issues and our own membership are so diverse with many different areas of expertise.

But, how many of us can attend. We may need to engage our membership and delegate some responsibilities as issues surface. Ray feels they are more steeped in terrestrial species and habitats and have more need for expertise on aquatic systems.

Anna asked Ray to keep in touch with Dave Zentner to figure out the agenda items and who we could send to their meetings.

Website

We've not had a lot of activity on web development since the annual meeting. Need to change the homepage now that the workshop is done. Need to provide some guidance to Jack. He continues to update website as documents are worked on and updated. Need to get cover page refreshed, add scrolling images, and new logo (see below).

Board information has been updated, along with latest letters, AOA and Bylaws. Paul will work on a summary of the workshop for board's review and then review by Deb S. before we post to our website. Also still need to get permission from most speakers to post their presentations.

In future we should request abstracts from speakers. We also should provide a formal thank you on our new letterhead to all speakers.

Logo & Letterhead

Paul showed the logos his niece has worked up. Voted for upper left logo on the mock-up that was provided, transposing the loon & walleye. Passed.

Consensus was that we'd have acronym in all caps. Decided to have acronym and full name to right of logo and increase font size by 1 level, and to take out acronym in the address, and move the address to the top of header. Insert "professional" in the footer after "promoting" in the organizations mission/purpose statement.

Motion by Jack, 2nd by Jesse to adopt and finalize logo as discussed. Passed

Survey Monkey Results & 2012 Annual Workshop & Meeting

Anna will condense and post the survey results on the website. In the future we will try to do the survey and have it done asap after the conference.

Everyone felt Camp Ripley was a good venue for the event.

There was one suggestion for more time or space to allow for networking. Does add more complexity, expense, and may take away from nuts and bolts of workshop.

Could have an evening social the day before, or could have it in the cities over two days. Could have more press, have separate workshops/networking opportunities and better integrate with other environmental/conservation groups, the public, technical people and bridge some gaps/disconnectedness that may be out there. May make some sense, but perhaps joint meetings with other groups would be better and easier to implement and spread around the workload & cost. Assoc. of SWCDs and SWCD Employee's Assoc. may be interested in it. MN Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) also has a 3-4 day academy. These entities may be more aligned with our organization than with MCEA, etc. If we want to do this we don't have a lot of time for this year.

Would be ambitious and much more costly.

Would we lose some who can only afford the one day....and, would it be difficult to get agency buy-in.....could we maintain level of interest?

We need to maintain and increase membership. What do we need to do to accomplish this? Need good topics for annual meetings/workshops. Also need to take action on issues.

Much of conservation work is local. Must have some local relevance. May be interesting to survey members to ask what they want us to do.....be active legislatively, or networking with local professionals, building/coalescing support/enthusiasm.

Jack recommended we still keep it to 1 day for now since it may be too soon to expand our efforts in regards to events, etc. We have momentum with expanding our base. Our efforts may be to focus on hot button topics of broad interest.

We can expand break time and not have speaker during lunch so we can maximize networking without lengthening the day. Can perhaps integrate break-outs and facilitate some discussion during lunch without having a canned talk.

Potential theme: Environmental management & conservation in local communities and municipalities. Related to this are mandates from the state and local implementation.

Paul suggests a roundtable for planning workshop- toss out theme in email.

Objectives: make it appealing to enlarge membership.

- Environmental management in local communities- appeal to local government. Useful suggestions for dealing with the legislative environment.
- Dan-everyone has been asked to do more with less- use success stories to engender hope.
- Paul Radomski is a good speaker and scientist.
- Watershed management in municipalities.
- Where the legacy money is going.

Auto Rally Agenda Item

- Paul proposes that we update a letter sent by our organization when it was the MN Fish & Wildlife Employees Association (MFWEA) sent to both commissioners, proposing a meeting with DNR and MPCA commissioners.
- Anna's signature on letter.
- Bill says that even if we can't measure the efficacy of our actions, we can't fail to take action.
- It's important to discuss the scientifically proven effects.
- Effects on license buyers- increased OHV use=driving hunters or others out.
- Willis made the motion for the board to approve him and Paul to work on the cover letter to attach to the old MFWEA letter. Seconded by Jesse. Passed unanimously.
- Paul made the suggestion to insert language regarding invasive species and ATVs.

Letter to Editor Discussion – Sediment sources in public waters

- Too much time has gone by, so letter to editor is no longer germane.
- However, Star Tribune will be running an article about sedimentation this weekend.
- Gupta and Mulla are attending winter agricultural trade shows discounting the science that has shown where the sediment is coming from. Saying is it "natural".
- Question- to add signatures to Willis and Larry Lander's letter, or add a second letter.
- Paul suggests that we send letters to Dept of Ag, PCA commissioner, U of Mn President, and BWSR, supporting the science.
- Willis made the motion for Paul and Willis to draft a letter. Language to be approved by the board once it is written. 2nd by Bill; passed unanimously.

Email Voting Procedures

- In order for timely discussions, we can make motions via email.
- Be free and timely with comments.
- Motions still need to be made, seconded, and then quorum is needed.
- Letters written – send around for comments, use track changes when possible. Letter writer will compile changes and then send to Anna & board for final review and vote.

Hard Rock Mining

How do we go about taking action on this? Need to elevate the science above the politics.

Miscellaneous

Thank you to Megan for logo work, and for Matt for work on the website. Need to come up with a thank you gift. Bill has a contact for embroidered fleece.

Next meeting: Suggested date, June 10 @ 10am, Brainerd Area DNR Office. Be sure to send out e-mail prodding folks into thinking about topics prior to next meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Paul, 2nd by Willis, Passed. Meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.