

Minnesota Watersheds Board of Directors Meeting

August 21, 2023

Via Zoom



1. CALL TO ORDER

President Vavra called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. A quorum was present.

Minnesota Watersheds Board (Board) members present: Peter Fjestad, Linda Vavra, David Ziegler, Mary Texer, Jeff Gertgen, Wanda Holker, Don Pereira, and Brad Kramer

Board member absent: Gene Tiedemann

Others present: Jill Crafton, John Jaschke, and Joe Collins, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Jan Voit, Minnesota Watersheds

2. GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

Agenda

Director Fjestad made a motion to approve the agenda. This was seconded by Director Ziegler and carried unanimously.

Member Comment Period

No Minnesota Watersheds members were present to address the Board.

Secretary's Report

Director Holker made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 22 meeting. This was seconded by Director Ziegler and carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Director Ziegler reported on the bills paid and the account balances as of August 18, 2023:

- Checking: \$19,125.52
- Savings: \$280,175.56
- Total: \$299,301.08

It was also noted that Cormorant Lakes WD paid their 2023 dues on August 14.

Director Ziegler moved to accept the treasurer's report. This was seconded by Director Fjestad and carried unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

Lobbyist Succession Plan

At the June meeting, the Board of Directors directed Executive Director Voit to initiate discussion with the lobbyist about a succession plan. She discussed the proposal with Lobbyist Bohn several times between the end of June and beginning of August. Lobbyist Bohn submitted the draft plan on August 8. The draft plan was sent to the Executive Committee for review on August 9.

Discussion was held regarding bringing someone on board for the 2024 session to work with Lobbyist Bohn, determining what outcomes are included in the current lobbyist contract, creating a new proposal that includes specific deliverables, as well as documenting what reports or updates are submitted and when. Discussion was held about the need to work with Lobbyist Bohn and the value of his assistance in finding a suitable replacement, meeting the needs of the organization, legislative accomplishments, and the roles Lobbyist Bohn has served with the organization. In addition, the board discussed the value of a succession plan that includes training for the new person that is filling the position. It will mean extra cost in 2024, but it is important that we not wait until the end of Lobbyist

Bohn's contract.

Director Texer made a motion to have the Executive Director draft a counter proposal containing specific dates that meet the organization's needs, and includes training someone during the upcoming session. The motion was seconded by Director Ziegler and it carried unanimously.

DWG Adequate Outlet Subcommittee and DWG Meetings

Minnesota Watersheds representatives on the DWG currently are Linda Vavra, Ray Bohn, Myron Jesme, and me. The DWG has established an Adequate Outlet Subcommittee on which Myron Jesme represents Minnesota Watersheds. It would be advantageous for Minnesota Watersheds to retain his services to continue participating in these important meetings. He also represents the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) on the Adequate Outlet Subcommittee. Although retiring from his position as the administrator, Myron Jesme is working part-time for the Red Lake Watershed District and is willing to continue representing both Minnesota Watersheds and the RRWMB at the DWG. Minnesota Watersheds and the RRWMB are recommending a budget of \$10,000 for Myron's time, mileage, expenses, hotel rooms, meals, etc. through the beginning of the next legislative session. The cost would be split 50/50 between the organizations.

Director Fjestad made a motion to pay 50%, up to \$5,000, of the time and expenses for Myron Jesme to represent Minnesota Watersheds and the RRWMB at the DWG. Director Gertgen seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Legislative Accomplishments

Since the end of the legislative session, Lobbyist Bohn and Executive Director Voit have been working on a document that describes Minnesota Watersheds legislative accomplishments over the past 10 years. Discussion was held regarding the order in which the legislative efforts are listed and reducing it to a two-page report with the intention of it then being used as a promotion for Minnesota Watersheds. The revised version will be sent to the board before it is distributed to all watershed districts and watershed management organizations.

5. REPORTS

President's Report

President Vavra reported on planning for the fall conference, meetings with the Pelican River Watershed District (PRWD) staff and attending their board meeting, contact from members, the DWG, upcoming Region 1 meeting, and working with Executive Director Voit.

Executive Director

Executive Director Voit provided an update on the statewide organization survey, board education and training survey, succession plan, legislative platform committee, handbook, annual conference, PRWD, DWG, the upcoming BWSR tour and meeting, monthly meetings with Justin Hanson, and interaction with the Minnesota Association of Watershed Administrators.

Partner Reports

BWSR

John Jaschke provided information on an upcoming meeting with Local Government Water Round Table staff, the Minnesota Watersheds lobbyist succession plan, BWSR committee meetings, pursuit of federal funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program for matching funds for water storage and soil health, the upcoming BWSR tour and meeting, sharing the Minnesota Watersheds abstract information with BWSR staff, DWG meetings, and BWSR board appointments and committee changes. President Vavra thanked BWSR for changing the location of the DWG meetings to St. Cloud.

Confirm Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, September 18 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Director Fjestad made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:04 a.m. This was seconded by Director Ziegler and carried unanimously.

Wanda Holker
Secretary