

Minnesota Watersheds Events-Education Committee Meeting

April 10, 2024

Via Microsoft Teams



Committee members present: Region 1 Manager Gene Tiedemann, Red Lake WD; Region 1 Administrator Mori Maher, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD; Region 2 Manager Brad Kramer, Shell Rock River WD; Region 3 Administrator Tina Carstens, Ramsey Washington Metro WD; Region 3 Manager Rick Sanders, Capitol Region WD; and Maddy Bohn and Jan Voit, Minnesota Watersheds

Committee members absent: Region 1 Managers Linda Vavra, Bois de Sioux WD and Region 2 Administrator Dan Coughlin, Middle Fork Crow River WD

TASK 1. REVIEW 2024 LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING AND RECEPTION

The committee members that attended the event liked the format. The Minnesota Association of Watershed Administrators (MAWA) meeting had good information and discussion. The partner updates were informative. Hearing from the new lobbying team and having the opportunity to interact with them was well received. There were a record number of legislators at the reception.

While Minnesota Watersheds sends invitations directly to legislators, it is important for members to also send invitations. Figuring out a better way to schedule meetings would be helpful. It would also be beneficial to understand the value in meeting with key legislators regarding Minnesota Watersheds legislative priorities.

Lower member attendance was noted for the entire event, but especially for the MAWA meeting. It could be related to the legislative session itself or that there was only one fee for the entire event, rather than a separate fee for the MAWA meeting.

The goal is not to make money on this event, but to provide an opportunity for members to gain a better understanding of the Minnesota Watersheds legislative efforts and those of our partner agencies, as well as to interact with legislators. The location of the event was conducive for legislator's attendance. However, the costs are higher than other locations in St. Paul. Renting the meeting spaces for the MAWA meeting and Board of Directors meetings is over \$1,000. The cost for the box lunches was about \$27 each.

TASK 2. 2025 LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING AND RECEPTION

The Minnesota Watersheds lobbyists recommended holding the 2025 event at Capitol Ridge in mid-February. The committee agreed. They also believe that it is important messaging for members to understand the costs involved in holding the event and the importance of membership attendance.

TASK 3. 2024 AND 2025 SUMMER TOURS

An initial meeting with Tracy Halstengard was held on April 9 in preparation for the 2025 Summer Tour in Roseau. The date was set for June 24 to 26. A location for the education sessions and reception was chosen. Maddy Bohn will research hotel accommodations.

The venue and hotel accommodations have been secured for the 2024 Summer Tour in St. Paul. Registration will go live at the end of April.

The event is hosted by the Capitol Region and Ramsey Washington Metro WDs. Tour stops will be split between the two watersheds. Work has begun on the tour stops.

Ideas for the education sessions are being compiled. Human resources (HR) is almost always suggested as a workshop topic. At a meeting on April 9, Brad Kramer and Jan Voit met with Gwen Gierke. Her company

works exclusively with HR. Gwen is putting together draft survey questions regarding HR topics. A survey will be sent to administrators to gather information. Survey results will be used to develop workshops at the Summer Tour and the Annual Conference.

It was suggested that having a photographer at the event would be beneficial. Tina Carstens will check into this.

TASK 4. 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Maddy Bohn informed the committee that while lodging is not an issue at Grand View Lodge, the process for reservations will be different. She intends to give an update to MAWA about this at the Summer Tour.

The meeting concluded at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting notes by Jan Voit