



MWEA 2023 FALL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 13, 2023 — 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Present: Collette Anderson, Rickey Schultz, Bruce Souder, Barb Coffman, Matt Waite, Rika Lashley, Robin Matthews-Barnes, Scott Buecker

Call to Order – Collette A., 10:00

Old Business:

1. Review & Approve Spring Board Meeting Minutes – All
 - a. Higher dues were submitted to WEF in June; will go into effect Jan 2024.
 - b. Barb motioned to approve the minutes; Rickey seconded; motion carried.

New Business:

1. Budget Report – Rika L.
 - a. Checking Account: Matt W. and Robin M-B. added as signers.
 - b. Mutual fund: Added Barb C. and Robin M-B. as signers.
 - i. We would like to look into other investment options that may offer better returns. Barb reported that Sean Pahut, Montana Wealth Management, would be willing to set up a Zoom meeting to go over options., Barb, Rickey, Rika could take the lead and report back to the Board. Barb will check with Sean on when we could meet.
 - c. SYP Budget and communication with Alex and Nina
 - i. Discussed budget that was provided by Alex. After looking through the line items, responsibility to MWEA would be about \$3,000. Current MWEA budget line item for SYP is only \$1,000. Rika encouraged Alex to apply for further reimbursement next year to see if funds for other line items did not get used.
 - ii. Discussed reimbursement for conference attendance. Consensus was that that would normally not be covered but could be considered on a case-by-case basis if an employer will not help out.
 - iii. Robin will contact Alex and let them know roughly what we discussed.
 - d. Conference proceeds:
 - i. ~\$21,700. Robin will have final numbers at joint board meeting on November 20th.
2. Report on status of MWEA name change with IRS and reinstatement as non-profit – Rika L.
 - a. IRS sent a letter addressed to our current correct name with instructions on how to file for reinstatement of non-profit status. Rika will take care of this.

3. MWEA Committee Reports:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Board Oversight</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>
<p>Beneficial Reuse Will need to see if any members are willing to chair. Robin will email and cc Rickey.</p>	Rickey Schultz	No chair
<p>Education MSAWWA has preconference this year – committee not very active yet; not sure who will be chair?</p>	Barb Coffman	Chair unclear
<p>Government Affairs Barb reported on SB 462 (RRGL irrigation preference) killed in 3rd House hearing; HB 761-762 (plumbers for UV operators) killed in the House. Barb had written a letter against HB 761 and MRWS had written letter against SB 462.</p> <p>Robin asked if anyone would be interested in going to fly-ins or if offering to pay for those would spawn interest in the committee. Barb said that interest in that went away decades ago. Also, we felt since MSAWWA is going, it didn't seem really important to also send folks. Scott might be willing to go and represent the wastewater side and report back. Robin: fly-in and legislative tracking are the only things the MSAWWA committee does – no other activities.</p>	Scott Buecker	Scott Buecker
<p>Honors & Awards Jeremy encouraged us to look for nominees. Up this year are: Small Systems, Beneficial Reuse (Big Sky?, Missoula?), WEF Hatfield (operator) award, Lifetime & Teagarden awards</p>	Rodney Lance	Jeremy Perlinski
<p>Grants for Teachers Amy reported that committee members are working with several teachers and are hoping to have an application for a grant soon</p>	Rika Lashley	Amy Deitchler
<p>Strategic and Long Range Planning Last meeting in June; feedback received from members and comments incorporated; see agenda items below</p>	Barb Coffman	Board Members
<p>Membership Will get numbers from Laura/Robin</p>	Collette Anderson	Laura Gundlach
<p>Pretreatment Ben Rigby and Amy are interested in being involved but there is no chair. Robin will email to see if they want to organize themselves.</p>	Bruce Souder	No chair
<p>Stockholm Junior Water Prize Quiet until spring; Grace Wandler, Missoula, Hellgate, regional winner; still need to pay invoice for student travel to national</p>	Matt Waite	Kristi Kline
<p>Stormwater Committee members from spring are different from the three listed – Robin will reach out to all and cc Bruce</p>	Bruce Souder	Zach Magdol (?)

1. Strategic Plan Update – Barb C.

- a. Discussion to add board oversight folks to task as primary leaders who will coordinate with the listed committee chairs. Motion to approve pending the discussed changes

was made by Rika, seconded by Scott; motion carried. Strategic Plan will be sent to WEF for their records (WEF does not need to review or approve).

2. WEF Code of Conduct and Conference Terms and Conditions – Barb C.
 - a. Contents were discussed and there were no objections or comments; Collette motioned to approve the docs and send to MRWS for review and then pass along to WEF for their records (WEF approval not needed). Rickey seconded; motion carried.
3. Long Range Plan Update – Barb C.
 - a. This was partially rolled into the strategic Plan. The next task will be to create a Policies and Procedures guidance document that includes the committee descriptions and other items that currently reside in the Long Range Plan. Docs should focus on a three-year term. Barb will start this process. Board members to contact committee chairs for input on committee descriptions and send any info they may have that should be included to Barb.
4. Updating By-Laws – Barb C.
 - a. When Bylaws are revised, the membership will need a 30-day notice before being asked to vote to approve the updated document. Plan is to have that happen one month prior to the next conference and have members vote to approve at the membership meeting. Motion needed to approve the Bylaws, send to MRWS lawyer for review, and to WEF for their review, if needed (Barb to find out if WEF review is needed). Matt made motions for the above, Collette seconded; motion carried.
5. Nominees for Junior Trustee:
 - a. Please see if you can find potential nominees and start a conversation with them.
6. How can we make our conference relevant again? – Rika L.
 - a. Brainstorm to see if we can come up with ideas that will work for us and are feasible to implement. Collette: conference is still relevant to many as is; however, bringing new people on the board and into committees could invigorate things. Offer workshops/interactive sessions? How can we get municipalities more involved? Bruce: this is different to the spring and fall schools – case studies and lessons learned are appreciated. Create a track called “Lessons Learned”? Vendors were unhappy with lack of traffic last year. Vendor track? See next item.
7. Revival/Restructuring of Joint Exhibitor Committee – Collette A.
 - a. Committee will look into what could be done to help vendor traffic, incorporate into conference. Need to make sure DEQ will support – worthwhile checking with DEQ to tell us what is required to check the boxes to get credit. Restructure breaks and vendor time? Logan emailed something – need to check with him. Look into a vendor presentation slot with submitted abstracts.
8. WEF Delegate Report – Scott B.
 - a. WEF House of Delegates encourages members to attend WEFMAX. Content has been changed a bit. Scott will apply for grant and check with employer for funding.
 - b. We are the smallest MA by a huge margin. Should we partner with someone? Distance and size of venue has been main arguments for not doing so.
 - c. Lots of DE&I content. Signed up for Workforce Committee and be a liaison with the Advocacy Committee.
 - d. At WEFTEC: What are MAs doing that’s working well: forming emergency response clearing house for communications that PWDs, superintendents could access when needed (where can I find sandbags, vehicles, etc.). In Montana, this niche is somewhat

filled with the Montana WARN project through AWWA (Kirk Yoder, DEQ, is working on that). Let's check on status of this project and if it addresses wastewater as well.

9. Other Business – Barb C., Collette A.
 - a. WEFMAX – Will need to gauge commitment by Board members and others to help organize this. Will need to have financing in place (credit card, sponsorships). Will need to check if we are still listed in the rotation for 2025.
 - b. Should MWEA be a member of Montana Non-Profit Association?
 - i. MSAWWA is a member. Robin has not seen a direct benefit for MSAWWA but it is a way to support an organization that supports non-profits.
 - ii. Fee is \$85 – might make sense to have access to the services they provide.
10. Robin: Expressed frustration over not hearing back about joint board meeting scheduling.
11. Butte conference: doubled amount of sponsorships. Good attendance. 89 in preconference. Food was good, facility was good. Exhibitor complaints no different than anywhere else. Take out Great Falls and put Butte into rotation, as a possibility to consider. MSAWWA may propose this at the joint board meeting.

Adjourn: 12:24 pm

Action Items:

- Rika: Email Robin a scan of the IRS letter, and any IRS correspondence thereafter.
- Barb, Rickey, and Rika to get with Sean Pahut to see about investment options.
- Robin will communicate with Alex and Nina, SYP Committee Co-Chairs, about today's discussion and encourage them to submit reimbursement requests.
- Robin will email committee members of committees who don't have chairs listed and cc the Board oversight person.
- Scott to visit with Nate about benefits of fly-ins.
- Collette to check in with Laura on member numbers and committee activity.
- Barb to start first draft of a Policies and Procedures document. Everyone to check if they have any documents with info that should be included. Board members to contact committee chairs to see if they have input on committee descriptions.
- Collette will spearhead getting back to the Exhibitor Committee and check on items listed above.
- Scott will check on Montana WARN and report back.
- Scott to write up a brief delegate report and will be attached to the minutes and used for newsletter.
- Rika needs to get non-profit reinstatement done.
- Rika needs to get a credit card application started.
- Barb will check with WEF on whether we are still listed on the WEFMAX rotation for 2025 and we'll go from there.
- All: When Robin sends an email asking for feedback, please be responsive!
- Robin: Regarding membership in Montana Non-profit Association, Robin will take note of what MSAWWA may be benefitting from, if anything, over the next year and report.

Attachments (when available):

Approved Spring meeting minutes

Budget report

Approved Bylaws

Approved Strategic Plan

Approved Code of Conduct and Conference Attendee Terms and Conditions