



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

**MASWCD MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Capitol Plaza Hotel**  
**Jefferson City, Missouri**  
**March 5, 2019**

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**Present**

Ryan Britt, President  
Kenny Lovelace, Past President  
Ron Willis, Area I  
Steve Radcliff, Area II Alternate  
Scot Shively, Area III  
Beverly Dometrorch, Area IV  
Mike Haeffner, Area V  
Harold Lampe, Area VI Alternate  
Dan Greeson, Area VII  
Kenny Spooler, Area VIII  
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

J. R. Flores, NRCS State Conservationist  
Jim Boschert, DNR Soil & Water Program  
Brent Vandeloecht, MDC  
Melissa White, District Employees Assn.  
Sandy Stratman, Maries County SWCD  
Brenda VanBooven, Area V Alternate  
Chris Terry  
Andrea McKeown  
Tiffani Scott

**Not Present**

David Morris, Area II  
Kathryn Braden, Area VI  
Henry Heinze, Treasurer

President Ryan Britt welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. with a quorum established.

The agenda was amended to move the Farm Bureau report further down due to Kelly Smith not being able to attend until later. The amended agenda was approved.

The minutes from the 11-25-18 meeting were presented for approval. Beverly Dometrorch made a motion to approve the minutes, Mike Haeffner seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

A financial report that shows the yearly income and expenses for all accounts from 2013 through 2018 was reviewed. Henry Heinze was not able to attend, but did provide a dues report and stated the balance in his account is about \$95,000. Dan Greeson made a motion to accept the treasurer report and file it for audit. Ron Willis seconded. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The Board requested a printout of the dues paid history so they can see the trend of the

districts that have not paid dues. It was suggested a letter including information on all dues sources (NACD, MASWCD and Employees Association) be sent to the districts.

**MDC Report:** Brent Vandeloecht reported they are on target to spend all of their cost-share this year. MDC is looking at permit pricing adjustments, they haven't been updated since the 70's. They are also looking at landowner deer tag requirements. They will be taking public comments on these. They are up to 103 positive CWD tests in the state. This past year 9963 feral hogs were eliminated which is up about 3,000 from last year. There were 27 additional trappers this past year. There is a group (MO Hunting and Working Dog Alliance) causing issues with access to trap in certain areas (Forest Service property) on feral hogs. They are still on track to have funds to piggy-back on state cost-share. They are working with Ameren, Fish & Wildlife, and others on ways to incentivize CRP and other cost share programs for projects installed along the Osage river and there is an opportunity for MASWCD to handle the administration of these funds (Lower Osage River Enhancement Project-LORPEP). Steve Radcliff made a motion to support this effort and have MASWCD provide administrative assistance to this. Ron Willis seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). Beverly Dometrorch asked Brent about the elk poachers, he responded that they have not yet been caught.

**NRCS Report:** J. R. Flores stated NRCS has a new chief, Matt Lohr, a farmer from Virginia. The group attending the NACD meeting in San Antonio did get to meet him and he has been invited to speak at our Training Conference this year. J. R. stated the Chief has 3 goals – 2018 Farm Bill, streamlining delivery of programs and improving customer service. They are still waiting on the final budget allocation. There were 52 new positions filled this past year (40 at the field level, 6 at the area level, and 6 at the state level). They also lost 36 positions last year, mostly to retirements. There are currently 162 partnership positions plus the 320 NRCS employees. The staff is currently working on planning and ranking for EQIP applications. They are working on additional funds to address ephemeral gullies. Over the past year there was conservation planning and implementation on over 1 million acres. The new Farm Bill demonstrates strong congressional support of conservation. Beverly Dometrorch asked about drones and tablets. J. R. stated that USDA cannot own drones, but they are looking at partnering for that. They are still working on GPS tablets for compatibility. There was a question on why districts cannot have input when an NRCS person is hired. J. R. stated that the federal employee hiring is confidential, the resumes cannot be shared. He stated that districts can have input on what type of skills and knowledge is needed in their district.

**Commission Report:** Commissioner Kenny Lovelace stated the Commission is working on a couple of problems in the state. He said he received an invitation from Franklin SWCD to their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary meeting. Jim Boschert reported that \$62.9 million has been allocated for cost-share. Of that \$43.9 has been obligated and \$17 million has been claimed. There is a request in the Legislature for \$4.4 supplemental cost-share. If that is approved, the cost-share will be opened up again and supplemental allocations will be available. Most likely will use the same rules for supplemental allocations. There will be technical equipment funds again this year, probably in May and will most likely extend the deadline for the use of those funds from the current fiscal year so the 2 years of funds can be used together is desired. They are working on a new accounting system that will be programmed into MOSWMS. This should be in the districts by the first of the fiscal year. All computers will be required to be upgraded to Windows 10 by October which is driving the time-frame for the accounting

system. The Commission meeting is tomorrow at 1 pm. The training later today will be 3 parts – MOPERM, Liability for Board members by Jim Plassmeyer, and Jim Boschert will present information that was presented to the Program Delivery Committee for options to address budget issues should it be necessary to keep expenses to the level of yearly sales tax income.

**Employees Association:** Melissa White stated the Employee's Board met yesterday. They have 85% of all district employees as members and 136 non-employee members. They will be looking at updating their bylaws in the near future. They are still filling a couple of Area Rep positions.

They are hoping to increase the number of awards they give at the Training Conference. Everyone appreciated the extra space at the Trade Show this past year. They hope to increase the number of vendors since there is room now. Most districts have not spent their technical equipment funds. She stated they are hoping the list of eligible items can be opened up for input. Their board discussed the maternity/paternity benefits now available to state employees and stated that districts can offer the same to district employees if it is included in their personnel policy. This is for 6 weeks maternity leave and 3 weeks paternity leave. This is paid leave in addition to annual leave and sick leave. They are still discussing ways to improve the progression line for district employee salaries. She has heard from some employees a desire to have the health insurance coverage looked to see if other insurance carriers are interested in our group due to the cost of the family coverage. They will be having some kind of a fund-raiser at the Training Conference this year. They made about \$2500 profit from last years' shirt fund-raiser. They also discussed training at their meeting yesterday. Maybe more FOSA technical training sessions could be held. They also discussed the idea of having training at the August MASWCD Area Meetings for the face-to-face conservation planner trainings.

**Budget Committee:** No report.

**Bylaws Committee:** Ron Willis reminded everyone that there will be elections in odd-numbered areas this year and it is time to get started on organizing the nominating committees.

**Strategic Planning Committee:** The committee met earlier today. Tiffani Scott from Pettis SWCD has joined the committee. Andrea McKeown, Sandy Stratman and Kenny Lovelace are the other committee members. Andrea reported that they looked at the evaluations from the Training Conference. They are recommending if possible, to have the MASWCD board meeting start earlier on Sunday and have Sunday evening as a free evening for those districts that want to do something. On Monday, they suggest leaving the Opening Session in the morning, maybe combine the Area Meetings into 2 larger meetings and continue with workshops for Monday afternoon. The tours were a big hit and should be offered again. Maybe offer more than 1 type of tour if possible. Due to comments on the evaluations, they are suggesting to move the Awards Banquet to Monday evening with entertainment and have the Live Auction on Tuesday night with a reception and cash bar. They felt the idea of having workshops during the business meetings for those not attending the business meetings were a good idea.

The Board discussed the Live Auction and it was pointed out that the items have mostly come from the MASWCD Board. It was suggested to encourage all the districts to contribute to the Live Auction like they contribute to the Employees silent auction. Districts can use local funds to purchase items for the auctions if they wish or get them donated. It was also suggested to look into a sponsor for the Tuesday night reception. Ron Willis suggested a universal letter that can be used for obtaining auction items that also indicates they are tax deductible.

Workshops at the conference were discussed. It was suggested to have districts make presentations on what projects they are working on or what practices they do that might encourage other districts to offer those practices to landowners. Ryan Britt stated he would also like to have the Soil Health Trailer. An email will be sent to the districts asking for their ideas on what workshop topics they would like to have at the conference. The entertainment for the banquet was discussed. By moving the banquet to Monday evening it opens up the opportunity to have Main Street Opry come with their Christmas Show. Steve Radcliff made a motion to have entertainment at the conference with a maximum of \$4,000 for entertainment with Main Street Opry as the first choice. Dan Greeson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Those that attended the NACD Meeting in San Antonio gave a brief review of the meeting. Ryan Britt said NACD has a nice table top display that would be good to have at the Training Conference. NACD is asking each state to provide a name of someone to participate in their Forestry committee. Rick Merritt from Pike County was suggested.

Communicated received from NACD on the MRRIC committee was discussed. Yearly dues are \$400 per state. Missouri has not paid the dues for several years due to having Bruce Biermann attending MRRIC meetings and paying his expenses instead of the yearly dues. Bruce is no longer attending the MRRIC meetings so NACD is asking for the \$400 yearly dues from the states along the Missouri River which the MRRIC committee represents. Dan Greeson made a motion to pay the \$400. Ron Willis seconded the motion. The vote was 3 in favor and 2 against.

The Leopold award will be offered again this year. The Board discussed continuing to support this award. Beverly Dometorch made a motion to continue support at the \$2500 level. Mike Haeffner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (8-0).

The MASWCD awards were reviewed. There will no longer be a Grassland Farmer award, but the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award for soil health will be offered. A reminder will be sent to the districts with this information and encouraging them to submit nominations for all MASWCD awards.

The agenda for the Education Seminar was reviewed. Plaques will be presented to Rep. Remole and Senator Munzlinger for their assistance last year with the LAGERS legislation.

**Area Reports: Area 1:** Ron Willis reported he drove through snow to get to this meeting. There are still some crops in the field, a lot of ruts in the field. The hay situation is tight.

**Area 2:** Steve Radcliff said they have had nasty weather. The cost-share has slowed down. They see a lot of obligated cover crops that will not be claimed.

**Area 3:** Scot Shively remarked that it is amazing to go from drought to mud so quickly. They have a lot of crops still out. There are several projects started but not completed.

**Area 4:** Beverly Dometorch said same on the weather. Her area continues to have turn-over in employees. 4 new district managers and can't keep a count on the technical turn-over. Everyone is waiting to get in the field.

**Area 5:** Mike Haeffner said the weather is the same. They have had several landowners wanting extensions due to the weather.

**Area 6:** Harold Lampe said they have had wet weather and a hay shortage.

**Area 7:** Dan Greeson said his area has had variable weather but the cows are calving.

**Area 8:** Kenny Spooler said they have been very wet, hardly any snow, crops are out. They have experienced some employee turn-over.

Area Meetings for this summer were briefly discussed. Due to the idea of wanting some training possibly at the meetings it might be a good idea to return to the old schedule of having one meeting per day and holding over a 2-week time-frame. That would also allow time for employees to have a break-out session.

Correspondence: None

Other Business: None

The next meeting date will be in June. Motion for adjournment made by Steve Radcliff, seconded by Ron Willis. Motion carried unanimously (8-0). The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

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Ryan Britt, President