



Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

**MASWCD MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**USDA Service Center**  
**Jefferson City, Missouri**  
**June 5, 2018**

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**Present**

Ryan Britt, President  
Kenny Lovelace, Past President  
Ron Willis, Area I  
David Morris, Area II  
Henry Heinze, Area III/Treasurer  
Beverly Dometrorch, Area IV  
Kathryn Braden, Area VI  
Dan Greeson, Area VII  
Kenny Spooler, Area VIII  
Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

J. R. Flores, NRCS State Conservationist  
Jim Boschert, DNR Soil & Water Program  
Melissa White, District Employees Assn.  
Sandy Stratman, Maries County SWCD

**Not Present**

Derrick Cope, Area V

President Ryan Britt welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. with a quorum established.

The minutes from the 2-20-18 meeting were approved as presented. Dan Greeson made a motion to approve the minutes, Kathryn Braden seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). The conference call minutes of 4-19-18 were approved as presented. Kathryn Braden made the motion to approve, Beverly Dometrorch seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

A copy of the financial report that shows the income and expenses for all accounts in Jefferson City for 2016, 2017 and 2018 was reviewed. The report was also prepared to include the MDC funding and one without the MDC funding to show a better picture of the MASWCD income and expenses. Henry Heinze distributed a report of dues paid to date. The balance in his account is just over \$73,000 which is about \$10,000 less than at this time last year. The profit from the Training Conference this past year was \$2400 which has not yet been transferred to Henry's account. Kenny Spooler made a motion to accept the treasurer report and file it for audit. Dan Greeson seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**MDC Report:** Brent Vandeloecht was not able to attend.

**NRCS Report:** J. R. Flores reported he had received approval to hire 40-50 staff which should happen in the next few months. The majority of the positions will be located in the field. The current Farm Bill expires 9-30-2018. The House version of the new Farm Bill failed. However, NRCS eagerly awaits guidance that a new Farm Bill would bring and looks forward to delivering those opportunities to Missouri farmers and ranchers. When he started in Missouri 9 years ago Missouri was receiving \$19 million for EQIP annually. This year it could will be just over \$40 million for EQIP. There were 1500 applications for CSP this year which is a 50% increase over last year. He stated he has signed about \$300,000 worth of agreements with partners for conservation work. The State Technical Committee meeting will be June 13<sup>th</sup> at the Carver Farm in Jefferson City, followed in the afternoon by the Soil & Water Commission meeting. An agreement with FSA was signed for their use of the NRCS vehicles. There also was an agreement signed with DNR for the vehicles for the 50/50 shared FOSA technicians. He stated vehicle use will continue to be tight. There will be a National Civil Rights review in July. Some of the local board members may be interviewed by the Civil Rights team. There will be some training scheduled for ATV/UTV use as they comply with the new policy on these for safety. J. R. stated it has been a good year. He distributed copies of the 2017 Annual Report. When asked about employee turn-over he responded that most of it has been due to retirement.

Beverly Dometrorch requested approval to attend the State Technical Committee meeting. President Britt gave her that approval to attend.

**Commission Report:** Jim Boschert reported the Soil & Water Commission meeting is June 13<sup>th</sup>. The August Commission meeting will not be in conjunction with the State Fair this year, but will be held on August 2 in Jefferson City. This is due to the deadlines for the red-tape reduction. He stated there are 4 districts in Missouri (Nodaway, Carroll, Stoddard and Polk) that received a technical grant from NACD for a technician position, with 3 more waiting for additional funding for the NACD Technical Grant program. Missouri hosted the regional NASCA conference last week. The vehicles for the FOSA technicians will be purchased through the state contract. They are also looking at providing funds for purchasing technical equipment. There will be a list of approved items that can be purchased with these funds. Each district will receive \$7000 for this. Districts can go together to combine their funds to purchase the more expensive items. Jim reported they are getting real close to the \$40 million for cost-share. They have paid \$30.5 million so far with about \$4.2 million waiting payment approval. Their reports show there is just over \$38 million board approved cost-share across the state. He stated they may look at a supplemental cost-share appropriation from the legislature next fiscal year. The MASWCD resolutions from the Training Conference will be on the August Commission agenda.

**Farm Bureau:** Kelly Smith was not able to attend. Ryan Britt did report on a meeting he attended at Farm Bureau last week concerning the district engineer positions planning to be hired. The funding for the engineer positions is coming from an agreement with DNR and NRCS. The Nature Conservancy had pledged funds to help get the engineers on board by offering \$20,000 for moving expenses or a sign-on bonus. There was a concern on mixing private donations with the sales tax funding, especially in this amount coming from one source. The Nature Conservancy was interested in participating in the interview and hiring process, but the discussion last week indicated that was not necessarily the best idea. The districts involved in hiring these engineers are ready to move forward with the hiring but are reluctant to the involvement of the Nature Conservancy. Dan Greeson stated there may be

rules on donations according to the Ethics Commission that districts need to be aware of and this would be a good topic for a workshop at the Training Conference.

**Employees Association:** Melissa White is the new President for the District Employees Association. They elected new officers at their last meeting Mar. 20<sup>th</sup>. She stated they have 244 employee members as of 3-20-18. They approved 7 scholarships recently, there were no scholarship applications from Area 1. She stated they are shifting duties around, will probably have new people taking over the Trade Show at the Training Conference; once theme & logo information is available, vendor letters will need to be sent out, & perhaps we could host more than 17 vendors with a change in location this year. They are hoping to have a newsletter after the first of the fiscal year and are in hopes of getting the website up and going; should know more after our next meeting scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup>. Will discuss then to a fundraiser such as selling shirts to help support scholarships and employee awards. She stated they would like to see more steps on the Progression Line, maybe even a level 5 for those who complete the certified conservation planner with a significant wage increase. For level IV, wage steps for completion of two design or agronomy job approvals at the current level then another wage increase above that once becoming an apprentice conservation planner. She also stated that several district employees have expressed the desire to see reports or minutes from the Plan for the Future committee meetings to see what they are working on.

Beverly Dometrorch asked if there was any provision for employees sharing sick leave. There is a circumstance now where that would be helpful. Jim Boschert replied that employees within the same district could share sick leave if it is in their personnel policy, but sharing with other districts is difficult since there are different employers. Melissa White said she had received questions from employees about this as well.

**Committee Reports:**

**Budget** — No report at this time. The Budget Committee is Kenny Spooler, Beverly Dometrorch, Henry Heinze and Kathryn Braden.

**Bylaws** -- No report at this time. The Bylaws Committee is Ron Willis, David Morris and Kathryn Braden.

**Strategic Plan** – The committee provided recommendations for the Training Conference which are being included in the plans for the 2018 conference. The Strategic Plan Committee is Kenny Lovelace, Sandy Stratman and Andrea McKeown.

**Old Business:** Ryan Britt gave an update on the LAGERS legislation. It has been approved by the Legislature and is waiting for the Governor's signature. The effective date of the legislation is August 28, 2018. The Program Office sent out a request for districts to indicate if they are ready to proceed with actuarial studies now and so far there have been 56 positive responses with only 2 saying no.

The Board discussed the 2018 Area Meetings. The Program Office will work on scheduling the facilities for the meetings. The agendas will most likely include LAGERS, Training Conference changes, Awards, New Cost-Share Practices and the Area Director election. Area Director nominee information and ballots should be sent to the districts around July 1.

**New Business:** The Board discussed sponsoring the Private Lands Partner Days to be held in Springfield on October 2-4. This is a national organization of private landowners that communicates and collaborates on conservation partnerships for working landscapes to benefit present and future generations. Ron Willis made a motion to approve \$500 Bronze

level support. Dan Greeson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). The sponsorship includes admission for 1 person, Kathryn Braden indicated she could plan to attend. If she cannot attend, Kenny Spooler is the back-up.

The Board reviewed a draft agenda for the 2018 Training Conference. Some changes that will occur include no Monday evening scheduled meal or auction but to allow free time for those that want to go out to dinner. The auction will be held on Tuesday evening in conjunction with the awards banquet. Opening Session will be at 9 am on Monday morning. Mike Brown, NASCA Executive Director has agreed to be the Opening Session speaker. Several workshop topics were suggested. Peggy will work with NRCS and the Program Office on workshop speakers and topics. The theme and logo was discussed, several examples were reviewed. Ron Willis made a motion to select the "Together We Can Make it Better" theme and logo. David Morris seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). Ryan Britt appointed an Awards Committee to help re-structure the awards. The Awards Committee will be Beverly Dometrorch, Dan Greeson and Ron Willis. There have been previous discussions of scheduling some tours during the Training Conference. Some possibilities are tours of the Lake Ozarks dam, dinner cruise on the lake or a winery tour. Those are still being worked on and trying to figure out where to fit them into the conference schedule.

The NACD Summer Meeting will be in Virginia the first week of August. Ron Willis made a motion to approve expenses for Ryan Britt and Beverly Dometrorch to attend. Kathryn Braden seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Ryan Britt read a letter from the Missouri Envirothon Committee requesting support for travel expenses for 2 people to attend the national Envirothon in Idaho. Missouri Envirothon plans to pay for the rental car, but lodging, meals and registration support is needed. The total requested is \$2624 for the 2 people. David Morris made a motion to approve this request. Dan Greeson seconded. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**AREA Reports:** Area 1 – Ron Willis said they are living rain to rain, ponds are getting low and the hay is about 2/3 of last year's hay amounts.

Area 2 – David Morris said it is very dry, but a lot of construction is getting done.

Area 3 – Henry Heinze stated it is plenty dry but the Mississippi River has been at flood stage.

Area 4 – Beverly Dometrorch reviewed a list of unwritten duties of an Area Director which include speech judges, nominating committee, area awards, attending some of the events sponsored like poster contests or Envirothon, attending a Commission meeting, and items for the Conference for the auction and door prizes.

Area 5 – No report

Area 6 – Kathryn Braden stated they have a little green grass but underneath it is dry. The ponds are dry and they are short on water.

Area 7 – Dan Greeson stated his area is quite green, they are getting rain every few days.

Area 8 – Kenny Spooler said they have had plenty of rain, their corn couldn't be better.

Ryan Britt stated he had attended several things in the last few months. There is a grassland dinner in Springfield he will be at tomorrow.

**Correspondence:** None

**Other Business:** None

The next meeting date will be September 11 at 1:00 pm at the Cole County USDA office. Those interested in lunch can plan to meet at 11:30 a.m. at the JC Pizza on McCarty Street. Motion for adjournment was made by Henry Heinze, seconded by Ron Willis. Motion carried unanimously (7-0). The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Peggy Lemons, Executive Director

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Ryan Britt, President