

MACD State Council Meeting

June 4 & 5, 2017

DoubleTree Hotel, Bay City

Meeting Minutes - Approved

Sunday, June 4

State Council Meeting Welcome

President Art Pelon called the meeting to order at 1:23 pm, with a special welcome Larry Nowak from Otsego County. In attendance: Donna Fritz, Nancy Szikszay, Bernie Huetter, Jack Herrick, Tony Czymbor, Keven Craig, Paul Schroeder, Jerry Miller, Art Pelon, Elaine Brown, and Lori Phalen. Guests, John Switzer, Rory Mattson, Erik Johnson, and Larry Nowak.

Approvals

State Council Agenda – additions/corrections Pelon

Motion by Szikszay, second by Schroeder to approve the agenda as written. AYES-CARRIED.

Consent Calendar: Pelon

Motion by Szikszay, second by Schroeder to accept the February State Council meeting minutes as written. AYES-CARRIED.

Committees/Projects/Programs

Finance Committee Fritz/Committee Members

Motion by Szikszay, second by Miller to approve the financials.

Motion by Herrick, supported by Szikszay to place \$750 to NACD State Council line from outreach – office expense and admin wages.

Development Committee Miller

Pelon thanked Miller attending meetings and events when he has not been available.

- Committee Membership – listed current members. The committee is still looking for a chair for this committee – looking for a volunteer to lead.
- Events Management Contract Update – Phalen provided an update on contract activities. The contract will run through the end of November.
- Associate Memberships Dues. Donna donates stamps – consider this her associate membership.

Motion by Szikszay, support by Miller to use the postage that Donna purchased for MACD financial activities as her associate membership. AYES-CARRIED.

Miller updated the Council on the MDEQ draft Statewide TMDL. The MACD 2016-1 resolution for the state to establish state minimum standards was used to draft comments that were submitted to MDEQ. Miller provided a hard copy of the comments to attendees and provided as Attachment A.

White Paper/Legislative Committee Brown

Phalen noted that the White Paper Committee will be called the Legislative Committee.

Brown committee activities update: Moving forward with the white paper but the process continues to be adjusted. The Legislative Committee has met with DNR, NRCS, and Office of the Great Lakes leadership to discuss. Notes from the meeting provided as Attachment B. It has been made clear that the likelihood that funds can be garnered in the FY18 budget is minimal. More realistically, we are looking at getting \$\$ into the FY19 budget.

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MACD Legislative Consultant Deena Bosworth has had many conversations with legislators and found that not all legislators understand CDs and they are not interested in funding districts to do tree sales. Bosworth also advocates for drain commissioners and found the same situation when she came on board with their association. They worked to build communications and understanding with the legislature, improving messaging and their ability to get things done. She is proposing the same with MACD.

The proposed next step is to meet with CD partners, facilitated by Bosworth, to gain input and understanding on concerns and to gain their support in moving forward with a funding proposal. This effort will begin by meeting with Farm Bureau on June 16, with a work group following.

The Legislative Committee is preparing a Power Point presentation for the work group meeting and a legislative flyer. Brown distributed copies of the draft flyer and a funding flow chart for input.

Suggestions: The 10-17% maintained from grants for operations is too high. Small districts keep less than this percentage. Change this bullet to show economic impact for the local community instead.

By consensus the Council agreed to frame as program support instead of district operations.

Forestry Assistance Program and QFP All

Rory Mattson asked that MACD send MDARD a letter regarding the FAP grant language with a request that grant template language include focused goals for the enrollment of landowners in QFP.

Szikszay motioned, seconded by Huetter to send a letter to MDARD to create draft language of deliverables, including QFP Acreage and provide to FAP grant holders in September, prior to September Steering Committee meetings.

Pelon called for a vote: AYES-CARRIED

Background: The grant needs to prioritize QFP enrollments. At present, FAP Foresters are not placing an emphasis on QFP which is the funding source for FAP and critical to the continuation of the program.

Switzer noted that FY18 language has stronger language and he is working on guidance to RCs to guide FAP steering committee FY18 goals to include a stronger emphasis on QFP enrollments. MDARD could do a better job in communicating state yearly QFP goals, and distilling down these goals to the local level.

Farm Bill Outreach Activities Phalen

Farm Bill Staff Hearing, Miller attended. The event was a great networking opportunity for informal conversation with DC and Michigan regional staff. Comments from participants included the need to increase the ceiling for CRP.

Formal Senate Hearing with Senator Stabenow, Brown attended. Two panels of pre-selected participants spoke at this event. Dave Williams, Shiawassee CD board member and a landowner from Oceana talked about the importance of conservation programs and conservation districts. (MACD made contact to CDs asking if participants were local cooperators to provide them with background information prior to the event.)

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About 400 were in attendance, including Senate staff from regional and DC offices. MDARD, DEQ, DNR representatives did not speak, but were in attendance. MACD submitted electronically comments in line with the NACD nine Farm Bill Principles. Notes from the Hearing are posted on the Senate Committee website. Kansas Senator, Pat Roberts thanked MI farmers for sending supplies to Kansas farmers impacted by the fires there this spring.

Governance Committee

Miller

MACD Bylaws: The committee reviewed and found a few changes needed, including an update on districts to include the Blue Water District.

Endowment Fund: This will take a resolution to address. With the focus on legislative activities, this update is on the back burner.

MACD Policies: This is a lengthy document, with 39 sections. Miller noted that a committee will target a meeting to review for accuracy and updates. Goal to bring forward updates as resolutions for annual meeting.

Officer Elections: Nominations from the field need three districts in support. An elections committee will be formed. Miller asked for all to provide names to Phalen before the end of the event.

Resolutions: To be filed 60 days before the Annual Meeting. Make sure to bring up resolutions during your region meeting. A great way to address is regionally, with the opportunity for discussion and support.

Pelon and Miller sit on the NACD North Central Region Committees. Several states come forward with resolutions to move forward to the national level. NACD Resolution Process begins locally, passed through the state, then the region and finally to the NACD Annual Meeting.

Summer Region Meetings

Phalen

- Region 1 and 2 – Delta
- Region 3 – Leelanau
- Region 4 – Manistee
- Region 5 – to be determined
- Region 6 – Midland
- Region 7 – Kent, August 4
- Region 8 – St. Joseph
- Region 9 – Lapeer, 19–26 of July
- Region 10 – Washtenaw, July 11 -13

NACD Activities

Phalen and Miller

- National Leadership Symposium: Phalen informed the council of event details including the stipend opportunity. Attendees from Michigan: John Switzer, Elaine Brown, Lori Phalen, Sherry Blaszak, and Melissa Higbee.
- NACD Summer Conference and North Central Meeting: Miller plans to attend. Will be visiting Iowa and is coordinating this meeting with his trip. Will not submit expenses for the NC meeting.
- NACD Executive Director Conference: Scheduled for Salt Lake City Utah, Phalen plans to attend.
- January North Central Board Meeting: Grand Rapids, MI on January 4-5. Eight states will be in attendance. Phalen and Miller worked with Beth Mason to bring the meeting to Michigan. State Council members and guests are welcome to attend. Submitted resolutions will be vetted and voted on by states to move on to the NACD meeting.

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MACD Training Program Phalen

- Phalen shared the Summer Conference agenda. Asked State Council to assist in providing meal invocations. Pelon will ask Thompson to assist.
- New Director and Staff Training Workshops: Final preparations are underway. Phalen will provide the final agenda to Council members via email.
- District Manager Retreat is targeted for August 3.

Michigan Envirothon Report Sandusky

- The State Competition held at MSU on May 17-19. Twenty-two teams participated, which is the same participation level as 2016.
- State Champions: Hillsdale High School
- NCF event: Working with team to prepare.
- Of special note: By splitting ME regions into 10 regions, which match MACD Regions, the program has secured additional interest in many areas. Two new schools this year: Camden Frontier – Hillsdale County, and Genesee ISD.

MACD Dues Discussion All

Additional funds are needed to support legislative advocacy contract with MAC for FY18. Suggested that a separate request to support the contract be prepared, requesting each CD to support with a minimum contribution.

Herrick motioned, support by Schroeder to send a letter requesting every district to provide \$325 for to support lobby assistance in FY18 to support the goals of state funding for CDs. AYES-CARRIED.

Discussion: This will support funding for lobby assistance from October 1, 2017 through September 30 2018. MACD supported the first 9-month contract. In order to maintain lobby activities, we are asking for their financial support.

Homework Assignment: Each State Council member to connect with a director at each district to ask for their support.

Meeting Recess Pelon

Pelon called for recess at 5:15 pm.

Monday, June 5

Reconvene Meeting Pelon

Pelon reconvened the meeting at 8:04 AM

In Attendance: Art Pelon, Jerry Miller, Nancy Szikszay, Elaine Brown, John Mitchell, Tony Czymbor, Jack Herrick, Bernie Huetter, Larry Thompson and Lori Phalen. Guests: Jim Pawlowicz, Sherry Blaszak, Shelby Burlew, Emily Reinart, Diane Gray, Melissa Higbee, Chris Savona, Joe Kelpinski, John Switzer, Erik Johnson, Kip Miller, and Jack Knorek.

Partner Reports

NRCS Gray

Garry Lee is on detail as Interim Civil Rights Director. Diane is Acting State Conservationist in his absence.

Programs Update:

- EQIP programs funding cycles are wrapping up.

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- Strongly encourage FY18 program applications to be submitted. Program signups will take place early in the Fiscal Year, as they are revamping how they are managing signups.
- All states have been asked to provide a list of vacant positions to National. Michigan currently has about 40-45 positions open. The agency has 10,700 employees; working within the agency and leadership to see how they can reduce headcount.

FSA Allen

Allen respectfully declined the invitation, noting that he was unable to attend the meeting.

MDARD Switzer

Switzer is the new MDARD ESD Conservation Programs Manager. The position description has been redeveloped to shift the focus to work with CDs to build capacity within Michigan Conservation Districts. Switzer will have a collaborative approach, with increased communications with partners.

Activities:

- Working to draft FY18 grant language, with final language available by early September. To address Mattson's concern, the FAP QFP goal for FY18 is 300,000 acres, with stronger language for QFP engagement.
- District Operations Manual is being reviewed for updates. Will talk with Phalen and Pelon on how best to accomplish an update.
- MDARD will be implementing a new accounting system beginning in FY18. Will be asking for accelerated reports in order to send out payments prior to the change.

CDEM Blaszak

New website: www.cdemployeesmi.org. Currently managed by Tracy Bronson of Calhoun.

- Region 1 - Matt Watkeys
- Region 2 - Vacant
- Region 3 - Vacant
- Region 4 - Sherry Blaszak, President
- Region 5 - Janet Reins
- Region 6 - Dawn Hergott
- Region 7 - Melissa Eldridge, Vice President
- Region 8 - Tracy Bronson
- Region 9 - Melissa Higbee, Treasurer
- Region 10 - Catherine Acerboni

CDEM has provided \$1900 thus far this fiscal. Currently coordinating the NRCS Bootcamp, with three people attending this year: Aletta Daniels, Aubrey Proctor, and Rob Bates.

MDARD – MAEAP Kelpinski

Meredith Smith has been hired and will be working on MAEAP communications activities. The MAEAP Communications Workgroup will continue as a volunteer committee. Will be marketing the value of the program to the citizens to gain brand recognition for MAEAP.

Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement Domestic Action Plan outlines phosphorus load reduction target of 40% by 2025. The document will be released for public comment next week, with a 30-day window for comments.

National Conservation Districts Employees Association Higbee

Melissa participates on the National Conservation Planning, Farm Bill, and CTA Task Forces. The Conservation Planning Task Force just released a document to provide information on planning, including new guidelines and policies. Andrea Stay is also involved on this task

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force. The Farm Bill Task Force has been working on CRP and what they would like to see in changes in the program in the next Farm Bill.

Michigan Farm Bureau

Emily Reinart

Involved in grass roots events promoting the programs available through local service centers, with a focus centered in the WLEB and Saginaw Bay. A new Contributions Agreement to provide local events through community grants will begin in FY18.

MFB is working on policy development process. Local meetings are now being held. These grassroots meetings begin the policy development process that will culminate at the MFB Annual meeting.

MSU Extension

Shelby Burlew

Ag and Agribusiness Institute has recently added staff members to the team. The Ag Innovations Day will be held in August. Two Breakfast on the Farm events are scheduled for this summer.

Region Updates

All

Region 1:

- Houghton-Keweenaw CD is involved in mine reclamation activities. The 2017 annual meeting had 250 people attending.
- Chippewa/Luce/Mackinac is hiring a new forester; they also have a new manager and MAEAP technician.
- Several CDs are working on invasive species projects, with a full season of field work, information, and outreach activities planned.

Region 2:

- Delta is assisting the Schoolcraft CD and hosting forestry workshops at Delta College.

Region 3

- Charlevoix MAEAP technician also covers Otsego. Recently involved the Boy Scouts in a FWH Phase I event.
- Antrim just received a sizable property donation.
- Kalkaska is just ramping up the new HHW program as part of their millage.

Region 4:

- Larry Thompson visited the Newaygo nursery this spring – a great facility.
- Missaukee Hazardous Waste Collection was held last week, with a cumulative 17 semi-trailers filled to date. Missaukee will be hosting an electronics collection this fall.
- Several Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collections are being held by CDs in the region.
- Missaukee co-hosted the first Ag-Plastics Symposium in MI, now establishing a work group to move forward recycling in MI. Also defining how much Ag plastics are generated in the state.
- All districts in the region have full boards.

Region 5:

- Manager vacancy in Presque Isle
- Arenac leads with HAP in the NE of the state.
- New forester in Oscoda, Laura Freer has retired.

Region 6:

- Gladwin is working with many partners and developing an education park next to their building.

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- Midland is currently housed with NRCS currently has a contributions agreement with NRCS, is engaged in HAP, and is sponsoring a field day.
- Arenac is now engaged in SESC activities, hosting many educational workshops and engaged in the poster contest with 651 entries this year. Also working on HAP with 34 properties enrolled and will be hosting a summer MAEAP BaySail event.
- Isabella received an additional grant for the environmental educator.

Region 7:

- Montcalm will be pursuing a millage in partnership with two other organizations. This is the first time a district has tried this type of partnership.

Region 8:

- Berrien is taking on the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control (SESC) program.
- New district managers in place in Kalamazoo and Cass.
- Van Buren currently going back to all partners who supported the millage to identify their conservation needs. They are also provided support to neighbor district by supporting CISMA coordinators in these counties.
- Cass County invasive species coordinator is hosting several events this summer/fall.

Region 9:

- Lapeer hosting the summer region meeting.
- Genesee has a Safe Foods grant.
- Sanilac and St. Clair have merged into the Blue Water Conservation District. They may look into taking on the Macomb District in the future.
- Shiawassee is hosted a HHW event this year, collecting e-waste. Will be selling their no-till equipment and contracting to provide this service. Have a new non-traditional partner with the Shiawassee Hope, which works with youth ages 5-12.
- Dennis Rice retiring as district manager in Washtenaw at the end of this fiscal year.

Region 10:

- Monroe is hosting Clean Boats Clean Waters events this year. Hosting 2 field days – young farmers and CSA farmers. Engaging with Girl Scouts, two events are planned with a native plant focus.

Meeting Close

Pelon

Pelon asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Motion by Mitchell, second by Thompson to adjourn the meeting. AYES-CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 AM.