

MACD State Council Meeting

May 31, 10:00 – 11:30AM – Conference Call
June 5, 2:00 – 4:00PM – Doubletree Hotel, Bay City

Minutes - Approved

May 31, 10:00 – 11:30AM – Conference Call

State Council Meeting Welcome

Call to Order, Welcome & Introductions _____ Pelon

Pelon called the conference call to order at 10:05 AM

In attendance John Mitchell, Tony Czymbor, Randy Gentz, Jane Bishop, Elaine Brown, Carol Hart, Art Pelon, Kevin Craig, Nancy Szikszay, Paul Schroeder, Clark Humrich, Jerry Miller and guest Eric Herrygers, Oceana CD Chairman.

Pelon noted that a quorum was in presence.

Approvals

State Council Agenda – additions/corrections _____ Pelon

Motion by Schroeder, second by Brown to accept the agenda as written. AYES - CARRIED

Consent Calendar: _____ Pelon

- February State Council Minutes

Motion by Mitchell, second by Schroeder to accept the February minutes as written, with corrections. AYES - CARRIED

Committees/Projects/Programs

Legislative Advocacy Program _____ Phalen

Special Assessment Update -

Hart noted that directors she has talked with have commented that they have not heard from MACD, beyond the thank you letter. Phalen shared that two updates have been thus far provided electronically: a legislative update and the first quarter MAC report. Planned updates include the legislative update during the plenary session on Monday of the conference, followed by a written report out to members following the event. The challenge: Directors need to open their emails and managers need to provide the reports during their monthly meetings.

Assessment follow-up consists of phone calls by the State Council volunteers. The Council agreed by consensus to provide a written request reminder with the legislative update; with Council follow up by phone to district chairs.

Council Team: Jane Bishop, Carol Hart, Jerry Miller, Elaine Brown, Clark Humrich, John Mitchell and Paul Schroeder. Phalen will inform team member when the letters have been sent along with an update listing of region board members. The letter is scheduled for release within the next two weeks in order for them to be available for discussion during July board meetings. The second request will also be sent to John Switzer as did the first.

Legislative Committee Update -

New committee member: Caroline Kellogg Genesee Conservation district board member.

FAP Funding: Phalen and Bosworth met with Rep. Victory – left with the impression that he is willing to reinstate FAP funding level. We expect funding to at a minimum match the executive budget (\$130,000 less than FY18 – which MDARD states they will absorb internally). Awaiting the announcement of the conference committee to finalize the MDARD budget.

During the Rep. Victory meeting the need for district base funding support was also discussed. We asked for interim funds, at a level of \$20,000 grant per district. Victory was in agreement and asked for boiler plate language to be provided. The Executive Council was briefed and approved the following:

Boiler Plate Language: To be eligible for a grant of \$20,000 a conservation district must submit a copy of their most recent natural resource assessment tool developed within the last 24 months to the department. The natural resources assessment tool must contain a description of the conservation district and identify the top 5 natural resources concerns within that district. The funds shall be used for operation support in the development of and execution of a business development plan designed to meet the needs identified in the natural resources assessment tool. It is the intent of the legislature to work over the next year to identify a dedicated revenue source to support ongoing operations and business plan execution at the district level.

Legislation Overview:

- Ducks Unlimited bills – to create new wetland permit category with DNR as lead agency. Two hearings thus far held. DEQ is working with DNR and DU to work this out. Look for a substitute bill to be released. Do not expect it to go away, but not sure when it will move.
- Newly introduced bills were provided and discussed. The following positions were taken by the committee:
 - HB5711 – reduction in age for hunting licenses on public lands. *No position*
 - SB965 – Authorizes two municipalities to work together on a SESC. *Support*
 - HB5854 – 5855. As introduced. There are substitutes coming forward. *Determined to wait until the substitutes are released. Specify local conservation districts by name.*
 - HB5772 – Establish CWD fund – Include language to provide grants to Conservation Districts to provide Education and Outreach. *Support. Will ask to specifically note districts in the bill.*
 - SB943 – Increase of tipping fees. To be used to replace the Clean Michigan Initiative funding. *Support. Specifically note Michigan Conservation Districts in bill language.*
 - HB5904 – *Support. Specifically note Michigan Conservation Districts as one members of the committee*
 - 5944 – Duplicate of Senator Hune’s bill. *Support*

Phalen to provide Deena Language to support why CDs belong in these bills. Example: “HB5904 – add CDs to the council because there are federal programs available for pollinator health and they...”

Additional committee activities:

- MACD policy Book review
- Develop strategy for candidate outreach
- FY2019 advocacy action plan

Workgroup Update –

Continue to research restricted revenue sources, accountability standards and changes needed to the current district law.

Interim funding boilerplate business plan concept – all agreed this is needed and those district boards are responsible for leading the development of the Natural Resource Assessment and the business plan. It was noted that some CDs consider the Natural Resource Assessment as an unfunded mandate.

Development Committee Miller

Hart agreed to volunteer as committee chair. Members include: Jane Bishop and John Mitchell, with Jerry Miller, Elaine Brown, Lori Phalen, Garry Lee and John Switzer serving as resources.

Committee charge: Association survey to members and determination of dues structure and rates.

Phalen suggested that Beth Mason is an excellent resource. Phalen to provide Hart with Beth Mason’s contact information. Phalen also noted that the MACD Constant Contact system can be used for the survey.

Governance Committee Miller

Regional Councils –

New representation needed for Region 4. Eric Herrygers, Oceana CD chair attending the conference call as a guest to learn more about the work of the Council. Herrygers is interested in participating on the Council for Region 4. Phalen to send an information packet. Susanna Schwager, Missaukee CD chair is also interested; Phalen has talked with her and provided the information packet.

Vice chair positions are currently vacant in Region 2,3,4,5,7,10. The Executive Committee asks that chairs to work with districts within the region to solicit participation.

Summer Region Meetings –

Phalen will be sending meeting information and the agenda template to SC members. Council members are asked to take the lead in working with a district to set a date and develop the agenda. The Executive Council also asks Council members to lead their region meeting, including providing the MACD update. Phalen will only attend region meetings as schedules allow.

Summer Conference Details for the Council Phalen

Phalen shared the details of the event and asked for moderator assistance for the four sessions not filled with planning committee and MDARD staff.

Meeting Close

Art adjourned the meeting at 11:36 am. The State Council meeting will reconvene on Tuesday at 2:00pm after the close of the Summer Conference at the Doubletree Hotel in Bay City.

June 5, 2:00 – 4:00PM – Doubletree Hotel, Bay City

Reconvene Quarterly State Council Meeting Pelon

Pelon reconvened the meeting at 2:15pm. In attendance: Pelon, Miller, Brown, Phalen, Mitchell, Czymbor, Szikszay. Guests: Switzer, Jim Pawlowicz, Chris Savona, Jack Knorek, and Melissa Higbee.

Approvals Pelon

State Council June 5 Agenda – additions/corrections: Added payment authorization of NACD region dues to the agenda.

Michigan Envirothon Report – Oral Report Sandusky

- Three new schools participated in the 2018 program
- Making new connections, with active engagement as outcomes, including DTE
- State Competition 24 teams invited, 20 participated. Two of the three new schools participated at the state competition
- All Community Outreach presentations are being uploaded to YouTube
- Assisting the State Champs prepare for NCF in Idaho
- 2019 – This summer will be looking at new locations for the SW state competition location – with Mitchell retiring from Ft. Custer, other sites will be investigated.

Committees/Projects/Programs

State Council Conference Call - May 31 Review Pelon

- Special assessment update – Discussed State Council members who will be making calls. All clear on next steps and assignments
- Interim funding: Highlighted the boilerplate language provided to Representative Victory.

Summer Region Meetings Miller

Miller shared responsibilities document, draft agenda and a table outlining districts in line for hosting in 2018.

MACD Financials Brown

Approval of financial reports

Motion by Mitchell, second by Bishop to pay the NACD North Central Region Dues. AYEAS-CARRIED

Motion by Brown, second by Szikszay to accept as presented, with the request to adjust line item approvals for the September meeting. AYES-CARRIED

New Director Workshops Phalen

Phalen provided an update on the dates, locations and content of the 2018 director workshops.

Partner Updates Pelon

MDARD:

- District Manual – In process. The timeline has been pushed back b/c of the new RC hiring process. Still planning on having a new district manager workshop at convention.
- RC search and selection process. A selection and initial offers have been made; currently waiting drug test and background check activities. An updated job description with a more focused emphasis on assisting and building capacity of districts is now in place. RCs will live in their service area, with one in the NE and the other in the UP
- ESD preparing transition report for the new administration. Including information on CD capacity and funding.
- Switzer also notified the Council that DNR is taking back the oversight of CREP, HAP, HIP. They are not renewing the agreement with MDARD and will be running the grants directly with MDNR. This impacts the 5 Farm Bill Biologists and essentially defunds what is remaining of the CREP. The DNR still has an arrangement on CREP and MDARD will continue to work with them on active agreements that are in place with landowners.

- New MDARD – FISMA – 5 food safety grants. Tim Slawinski has moved to Division Director of Food and Dairy Division from the Food Safety area that began the food safety grants held with districts.

Szikszay motioned to send a letter to MDNR expressing concern with the unilateral decision of moving the DNR programs most expressly because of the partnership agreement MDARD and USDA-NRCS.

Discussion:

The DNR funds that were provided to MDARD included some grant administration funds. Districts are nervous about this change.

Shiawassee – with the FFB – her CD is caught in the middle – Departments ask different things and the district doesn't know how to respond.

The RCs have spent a great deal of time in working with CDs to develop the HAP locally. Will CDs receive that level of support from the DNR?

Czymbor supported Szikszay motion.

Discussion: Brown suggested that the Director Keith Creagh receive the letter. With a cc to Director Wenk and Garry Lee.

Pelon called for a vote: AYES-CARRIED.

Pelon requested that the Vice President sign the letter due to conflict of interest issues.

CDEM – Melissa Higbee

- CDEM Looking for new region representatives.
- Higbee assisting in the completion of the workload survey of local offices in Michigan.
- Higbee participates on the National Planning Partnership and Farm Bill Task Force.
- At present the RCPP will remain in the next FB, with 20% taken away from the working lands program and given to special interest groups. NACD does not support. Miller asked Higbee to keep MACD up to date so that we can encourage our base to connect with Senator Stabenow to inform her we do not support RCPP in the next Farm Bill.
- Certified Planner Process – We need a more clear focus and path to promote district staff to become certified planners. Need to streamline this. Seven in person courses the rest are on AgLearn.
- MAEAP techs are considered apprentice planners.

Summer Conference Discussion Pelon

- The People Matters was very well received. Need to be more clear on descriptions, including who should attend (the what's wrong with this picture session).
- The Your Land Your Options - Q&A was very vague on answers. More of a program advertisement than showcasing land protection strategies.
- Dale Allen presented with Mike Parker this morning and noted that he is now able to participate with MACD.
- Participants really had a very positive attitude and Art received at least three comments on this.

State Council Quarterly Meeting Schedule Phalen

Phalen outlined the meeting schedule for the rest of the fiscal year and asked the Council on their preference for the October meeting. Brown suggested a conference call prior to the annual meeting to discuss resolutions, with an in-person wrap up after the close of the convention.

By consensus the council will meet via conference prior (week before) and an in-person meeting after the close.

MACD Convention and Annual Meeting Phalen

- Date and Location: October 29 – 31, Shanty Creek Resort
- Region meeting elections: 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9
- Annual Meeting – Tuesday, October 30

Other business Pelon

Szikszay asked if we should send a letter to Stabenow regarding the low staffing levels. Debbie Stabenow noted that she is not hearing from farmers on the current level of staffing and the lack of technical assistance available. Should we follow NASCA's lead and prepare a letter for Michigan. Have one of MACD committees look into the NASCA letter – ask Garry for his plenary session staffing numbers and then go from there on developing an approach the issue and ask for district contact with Stabenow's office.

Have MACD lead on asking CDs to contact Stabenow's office to share concerns.

NACD Miller

By consensus the SC agreed to have the Ex. Committee determine participation at the NACD Summer meeting in Williamsburg VA.

Meeting Close

4:00 PM