

MEHA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 14, 2015

Chatterbox Pub

800 Cleveland Avenue South

St. Paul, MN. 55116

Call to Order: Quorum: 6 of 11.

First Past President: Kim Carlton

Second Year Director: Sharon Smith

Second Past President: Dan Disrud

President: Jim Topie

Member at Large: Valerie Gamble

Third Year Director: William Toscano

First Year Director: Kris Keller

Treasurer: John Tracy

Vice President: Jeff Luedeman

Secretary: George Wahl

President Elect: Sadie Pulk

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Topie at 11:36 a.m. The following Board members were present: Jim Topie, Sadie Pulk, Kim Carlton, Dan Disrud, Kris Keller, Jeff Luedeman, Sharon Smith, William Toscano, John Tracy, Valerie Gamble and George Wahl. The following MEHA members were present: Jeff Brown, Michael DeMars, Heather Flueger-Whalen, Chris Forslund, Eric Freihammer, Jesse Harmon, Nicole Hedeem, Jesse Hennes, Kyle Johnsen, Jessica Jutz, Colleen Paulus and Amy Zagar.

Introductions

Jim Topie – Board, MDH

Kim Carlton – Board, MDH

Dan Disrud – Board, MDH

Sharon Smith – Board, MDH

Sadie Pulk – Board, Target Corp.

George Wahl – Board, MDH

Jeff Luedeman – Board, Bloomington

Kris Keller – Board, Washington County

John Tracy – Board, Stearns County

William Toscano – Board, UMN

Valerie Gamble – Board, MDA

Jeff Brown – Edina

Michael DeMars – MDH

Heather Flueger-Whalen – MDH

Chris Forslund – Burnsville

Eric Freihammer – MDH

Jesse Harmon – Brown-Nicollet Counties

Nicole Hedeem – MDH

Jesse Hennes – MDH

Kyle Johnson – MDH

Jessica Jutz – Bloomington

Colleen Paulus – Independent

Amy Zagar – Hennepin County

Agenda Approval

M/S/P Smith/Toscano to approve the meeting agenda as submitted.

M/S/P Carlton/Pulk to discuss new business agenda items at the time appropriate committee reports are discussed.

Secretary's Report

Amend the February 2015 Board meeting minutes as follows:

Page 4, Delete from the first line of the Technology Committee report: Kim Carlton discussed.

Page 5, Under Old Business, Nominations for awards: Replace original statements with: See awards committee report.

M/S/P Disrud/Luedeman to approve February 2015 Board meeting minutes as amended.

Treasurer's Report

Eric Freihammer provided the treasurer's report for April 2015. The report showed the activity since the February 2015 report. Activity for the period between February and April 2015 reflected a net increase in MEHA funds. Income for the period was from membership dues, winter conference fees, interest earned on CDs and income from sale of T-shirts. Expenses were for winter conference (food/facility and name tags), President's Budget-Networking Event, Survey Monkey-two month subscription and membership reimbursement.

M/S/P Luedeman/Wahl to approve the April 2015 Treasurer's report as submitted.

President's Report

- Our weekly E-Blast Bulletin continues to build readership. Last week's bulletin was sent to 398 current members with active email accounts. Of that, 162 (41%) opened the email, and 72 (13%) clicked on a provided link.
- Jim Topie volunteered to continue researching & receiving information, formatting and sending out the weekly E-Blast Bulletin after his term ends as President. It takes about two hours to do this for each Bulletin.
- Jeff Luedeman has completed our annual inventory check
- NEHA Region 4 Conference is October 7-8, 2015 in Waterloo, Iowa. The Iowa coordinators are seeking abstracts and speakers. Jim will send a notice to our members.
- MEHA continues to build upon our partnerships.
 - This includes the Environmental Health Continuous Improvement Board, SCHSAC and LPHA.

On April 7 President Jim Topie contacted MDH Commissioner Ehlinger, MDH Assistant Commissioner Allwood, and MDH EH Director Hogan about what MEHA is about, our various committee work (such as Legislative Committee) partnerships. Jim asked them to please contact him if they have any questions, or if they would like to meet with some of our Board of Directors to discuss how MEHA may further partner with MDH. Here was Assistant Commissioner Alwood's response: "Hi Jim, Thanks for your message and congratulations on your presidency! As you know, I've been a MEHA member for many years, and am highly supportive of the mission of the organization. As public health problems become more complex, it is increasingly necessary to work across boundaries to address them. I compliment you on the outreach you are conducting to LPHA and other public health organizations, and wish you success in those endeavors. I look forward to future contacts. Best, Paul"

Committee Reports

Awards – Dan Disrud submitted awards committee report to Board listserv and discussed. Five (5) nominations for Emerging Professional Award, two (2) nominations for Merit Award, and five (5) nominations for Frank A. Staffenson Environmental Health Professional of the Year have been received. The Awards Committee (John Boettcher, Rebecca Caulfield, Dan Disrud, Jill Johnson, and George Wahl) met on March 27, 2015 to review and discuss the nominations. A consensus was reached to present awards in each of the three categories.

The name of the 2015 Frank A. Staffenson Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award recipient will be provided to the MEHA President for forwarding to the National Environmental Health Association for their National Certificate of Merit. The name will also be provided to Sharon Smith for the purpose of using the same plate engraving service to maintain appearance on the consolidated award commemorative plaque.

In addition to inscribed plaques for the awards referenced above, a Past-President Award (plaque) layout has been prepared and the order is ready for completion through Great Engravings of Grand Rapids pending further discussion of the MEHA logo.

Conference Planning – Jessica Jutz submitted report to Board listserv. Sharon Smith discussed. The Conference Planning Committee has been planning for the spring conference. We have arranged many interesting topics and speakers. We are still trying to fill a few time slots. One of our special guests will be Amy Theilen who is a celebrity chef on the Food Network. She will be giving an educational session and also doing a cooking demonstration during our social hour on Thursday evening. The resort is preparing appetizers from her recipes. We hope you can all join us for the conference which is May 14th and 15th at the Arrowwood Conference Center in Alexandria, Minnesota. The draft agenda and registration information is available on the MEHA [website](#). Please note you must register for *lodging* by 4/18/15.

The expense summary from the winter conference was also submitted. We had a net loss of \$2249.07 on the conference due to the large number gratis registrants (student poster session and mentor participants, conference committee chairs and president) and because the \$30 member registration fee was less than the actual cost of the room and food. The actual cost per attendee for food and room rental was \$37.83 and there were some additional fees for AV and risers.

Finance – Committee report was provided by Lisa Schreifels to Jim Topie. Jim Topie discussed.

History – No report submitted.

Legislative – Bette Packer submitted report to Board listserv. Colleen Paulus discussed. Colleen Paulus agreed to co-chair this committee and her input and expertise has been valuable for this legislative session. Additionally, several MEHA members have contributed to tracking bills. Working with President Jim Topie and the Technology Committee, we have been able to keep members updated on legislative activity. The grid of bills on the website has also provided timely information.

We have been discussing the process for getting position papers written in a timely manner, or using the Legislative Platform approach similar to MPHA: <http://www.lpha-mn.org/Advocacy/2015%20LPHA%20State%20Platform%20Final.pdf>

This approach anticipates legislation and documents the position of the organization. Using this format, members can easily determine the logic used to support/not support legislation from a public health perspective. We would like to have this discussed at a board meeting this summer.

Membership – Karen Casale submitted report to Board listserv. James Topie discussed. After the most recent updates we have 407 members. Since the February board meeting we have had 10 (3 active 7 students) new members, however 20 members lapsed in January and February. Getting the membership to update their membership profile is a continuing problem.

The list of members whose membership expired between January 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015 was submitted. Please continue to make personal contacts with as many on the list as possible. We have had a good response to personal contacts and have generated several renewals of lapsed members. We are continuing to develop correspondence to lapsed members to encourage renewal.

Newsletter – No report submitted.

Nominations – No report submitted.

Outreach – No report submitted.

Publicity & Marketing – Jesse Harmon sent report to Board listserv and discussed. Over the past year, MEHA has been actively trying to become more visible to the general public and fellow professionals by providing an understanding of what MEHA is and what Environmental Health is as a profession. MEHA has been involved in some great events and we continue to seek out opportunities to reach out to those who would benefit most by knowing more about us!

Recent activities include:

- Volunteering at Feed My Starving Children (This was a very fun and well attended event by MEHA members, family members and friends)
- Attended the Gustavus Adolphus College Career Fair
- Attended the Gustavus Adolphus College Internship Fair

Future plans include:

- Develop a list of volunteer and marketing events that MEHA and our members can attend.
- Develop a list of “Topic Experts” for fellow professionals to use when they have questions.

Registration – Frank Sedzielarz sent report to Board listserv. Chris Forslund discussed. Our current “year” of RS/REHS study sessions will conclude on April 14, 2014. The Spring RS/REHS exam will be given on April 24th. The current year started in July, 2014, with three study sessions. Later sessions were twice monthly, except for December and January in which only one session was conducted each month. Attendance has been good, with as many as 14 exam candidates participating in a session.

We welcome Hannah Davis, RS, as a new Registration Committee member, since March, 2015. Hannah has led two study sessions, one each in March and April, with co-leader Doug Edson. Joe Hibberd led a pools study sessions in October, 2014, and will lead another in April 2015. We thank Joe for his contributions. Doug Edson and Frank Sedzielarz were co-leaders in the other sessions. Chris Forslund also participated as a co-leader in the December session.

Most session meetings were at the Fridley Community Center in Fridley, MN, until December, 2014, when we changed location to the Hennepin County Environmental Health office, in Hopkins, MN. This was done for convenience of the exam candidates, most of who live or work closer to that office. We expect to change back to the Fridley location later this year.

Of concern with our sessions was the recognition that the sessions were sponsored by MEHA. While this has been mentioned during the sessions, and all study material we distribute has “MEHA” in the header, we have not, apparently, always been recognized. It was reported to the committee that one participant thought the sessions were given by Hennepin County Environmental Health. The committee will be exploring ways to improve MEHA visibility in the future. We hope to start, pending board approval, with the issuance of MEHA shirts for study session leaders. The current plan is to issue one cotton-poly short sleeve shirt with the MEHA name and logo, to be worn at the sessions. There is currently some question about if the MEHA logo will change so we are waiting for logo decision before going any further. The cost of five shirts has been included in the proposed committee budget for 2015.

We have not ordered any new study materials. The old NEHA study guide, of which we have a copy, is identical to the newly published guide. Rather than purchasing expensive supplemental materials from NEHA, we have researched materials referenced in the guide, and related materials, and found excellent study materials at no cost. Directly related to the exam topics, it’s from primary sources like CDC, OSHA, FDA, State agencies, and agencies like the South Central Public Health Partnership which has developed materials specifically for the exam. However, some funds have been budgeted for additional study materials if they become needed.

Following the April RS/REHS exam we plan on starting the new study session “year” with a session in May.

Resolutions – No report submitted.

Scholarship – Jill DeBrito sent report to Board listserv. Nicole Hedeem discussed. The Scholarship Committee is getting ready for the 2015 MEHA Spring Conference golf event, bean bag tournament and raffle. The golf event will be 9 holes, versus 18, with the opportunity to play the additional 9 holes at your own expense. Thanks to the board, the event will only cost \$25/golfer, which is about half price from previous years. As always, there will be prizes for contests on the course, as well as other door prizes. The theme will be “Made in Minnesota” so we’re hoping for some more fun outfits!

We are holding a bean bag tournament again this year, in addition to the golf event. The golf event will be held at its normal time, and the bean bag tournament will be held after dinner. The number of players will be limited, but this will be a great networking/socializing event for everyone, whether participating in the tournament or not. Please note, the “Made in Minnesota” theme applies to the bean bag tournament as well, so make sure you get dressed up and join in the fun! We are accepting donations for the raffle so if you have anything you’d like to donate, please let one of the committee members know.

Student – Laura Suppes sent report to Board listserv indicating there has been no activity by the student committee since the last board meeting.

Technology – Kim Carlton sent report to Board listserv and discussed. Activities since the February Board meeting:

- Changed the events list on the MEHAonline.org webpage to a Google calendar
- Worked with the Legislative committee to place a table of EH-related bills moving through the legislature on the [MEHA website](#)
- Worked with the Conference committee to update the [Spring Conference webpage](#)
- Upgraded the Wild Apricot account to the “Professional” level, which allows 2000 contacts. MEHA had reached the 500-contact capacity under the “Community” plan
- Initiated discussions with Electric Citizen regarding a website facelift. EC recommends that if we make changes, we also convert the pages to be mobile-user friendly.
- Updated the online Library to include a “[Conference materials](#)” page, which includes archived agendas and presentations (when available). Will be working to remove the “conference presentations” section on the “[MEHA Document](#)” library.
- Updated the photo gallery page to include the [2015 winter conference](#).

Google Analytics Summary reports were also submitted. The 3.6.15-4.3.15 report follows the pattern of the previous two reports, but the committee will be changing the reporting structure to a calendar month for simplicity’s sake. January, February, and March were submitted.

Discussions have occurred regarding moving the expenses for Wild Apricot and other basic technological needs out of the technology budget and into the MEHA operating budget. The committee would welcome discussion on this topic at the upcoming meeting.

President-Elect’s Report

Strategic Direction has been updated and sent to Jim Topie. Mission statement has been removed from this years strategic direction. Strategic Direction for next year will review all areas beginning in May, 2015.

Old Business

- **Vote on revised MEHA logo options.**

Amy Zagar presented three additional design options for a new MEHA logo. Discussion on the three additional designs focused primarily on concerns that several of the designs contained too much detail which will be difficult to clearly reproduce when the logo is stitched onto shirts, bags, and other such items. It was suggested that all three of the additional designs be approved and could then be used depending on what the logo is being put on with the least detailed design consisting of an outline of the state of Minnesota containing the words: Minnesota Environmental Health Association. A suggestion was made to change the color of the state border on the logo designs from green to blue from the area of the Twin Cities to the southeast corner of the state to indicate that the border there is formed by the Mississippi River.

M/S/P Carlton/Gamble to approve the three latest logo designs, with a change of the color of the portion of the state border representing the Mississippi River.

- **Discuss Wild Apricot: Next level up is the “Professional” level. It is \$100/month. It will allow us 2,000 contacts. Currently paying \$50/month, capped at 500 contacts. This cap was reached on April 7, 2015, and without going to next level we cannot add anyone else. Currently funded through technology budget. As an operating expense for MEHA, discuss possibility to use a more appropriate budget accounting line.**

New Business

- **Results of Annual Election.**

Kim Carlton reported that 134 ballots were counted. Election results were: Vice-President: Nicole (Koktavy) Hedeem, Secretary: Ryan Lee, Director: Valerie Gamble, Member-At-Large: Greg Abel.

- **Decide NEHA AEC delegate to substitute for Jeff Luedeman.**

M/S/P Carlton/Luedeman to substitute James Topie for Jeff Luedeman as MEHA’s NEHA AEC delegate.

- **Determine MEHA Board of Director’s monetary dollar figure goal for savings/financial drawdown.**

Currently the financial status of MEHA is stable with the financial balance reported by the MEHA treasurer not changing significantly from month to month. There was general agreement that current spending is causing a gradual decrease in the financial balance of the organization and a feeling that this trend will continue. Although there was a suggestion that a goal be set to spend down the financial assets to a certain dollar amount, it was decided not to set such a goal as it could be perceived as a requirement that additional spending must occur to meet the set goal.

- **Decide if MEHA funds are available, so MEHA Committee Chairs/Co-chairs will not be required to pay MEHA spring conference registration fees. P&P 23.12.**

M/S/P Luedeman/Pulk that MEHA pay 2015 spring conference registration fee for committee chairs/co-chairs.

- **Discuss possibility to change P&P, so MEHA would pay expenses of President-Elect and President Delegates to attend MEHA and NEHA Region 4 Educational Conferences. Only if their employer would not pay for these expenses. Similar to paying for them to attend NEHA AEC as in P&P 13.01. This may encourage individuals that are self-employed or working for businesses to run for Vice President. Additionally, some government agencies may not pay for MEHA out-of-state travel expenses, except if an individual is presenting.**

M/S/P Disrud/Toscano to change MEHA Policy and Procedures as follows: MEHA will pay expenses of President-Elect and President Delegates to attend MEHA and NEHA Region 4 Educational

Conferences as provided within their approved budget. This will be similar to paying for them to attend NEHA AEC as in P&P 13.01.

Resolution Committee will determine where in P & P to insert change, possibly in new section 23.13.

- **Discuss possibility to change finance year. October is lighter for agenda items and the focus could be budget with a calendar year being the finance year allowing NEHA AEC expenses to not be held or creep into another budget.**

General discussion occurred regarding changing the MEHA finance year. Various thoughts and opinions were discussed however no motion/vote was taken by the Board concerning changing the MEHA finance year.

- **Vote on 2015-2016 Budget.**

Amended the proposed 2015-2016 MEHA Budget as follows: Changed the proposed budget for the Legislative Committee from \$0 to \$500 and changed the proposed budget for the Scholarship Committee from \$1000 to \$1500.

M/S/P Toscano/Wahl to approve the amended 2015-2016 MEHA budget.

- **Discuss Job Action Sheets: value analysis.**

It was agreed that there is value to having job action sheets and future consideration will be given to possibly posting them on the MEHA web site.

- **Vote on Legislative Committee request for approval to write a position paper on a specific legislative bill or topic area.**

Discussion focused on various thoughts regarding MEHA Legislative Committee writing position papers on specific legislative bills. No request made for the Board to consider/vote on giving the Legislative Committee the authority to write position papers regarding legislation. Discussion concluded that MEHA should not take a position on legislation but instead, provide talking points to MEHA membership.

- **Technology expenses.**

See technology committee report.

- **Reminder – Annual committee reports are due.**

Jim Topie reminded everyone that annual committee reports for the past year are needed to prepare the MEHA annual report prior to the 2015 annual meeting on May 15, 2015. It was requested that all annual committee reports be submitted to George Wahl and Jim Topie by April 24, 2015.

Announcements

Upcoming Meetings

Next Board meeting is May 15, 2015.

Adjourn

M/S/P Smith/Carlton to adjourn at 3:08 pm.