



MEHA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 9, 2014

Ramsey County Office Building

St. Paul-Ramsey County Dept. of Public Health, Conference Room

2785 White Bear Avenue, Maplewood, MN. 55109-1320

Call to Order: Quorum: 6 of 11.

First Past President: Kim Carlton

Second Past President: Dan Disrud

Member at Large: Valerie Gamble

First Year Director: Kris Keller

Vice President: Jeff Luedeman

President Elect: Sadie Pulk

Second Year Director: Sharon Smith

President: Jim Topie

Third Year Director: William Toscano

Treasurer: John Tracy

Secretary: George Wahl

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Topie at 11:35 a.m. The following Board members were present: Jim Topie, Jeff Luedeman, Sadie Pulk, George Wahl, John Tracy, Kim Carlton, Dan Disrud, Sharon Smith, and Kris Keller. The following members were present: Nicole Koktavy, Karen Casale, Jessica Jutz, Lori Green and Eric Freihammer.

Introductions

Jim Topie – Board, MDH Duluth office

Kim Carlton – Board, MDH

Jeff Luedeman – Board, City of Bloomington

George Wahl – Board, MDH

John Tracy – Board, Stearns County

Sharon Smith – Board, MDH Fergus Falls office

Kris Keller – Board, Washington County

Dan Disrud – Board, MDH

Sadie Pulk – Board, Target Corp.

Nicole Koktavy – MDH, Scholarship Committee

Karen Casale – Membership Chair, retired/independent consultant

Lori Green – Ramsey County

Jessica Jutz – City of Bloomington

Eric Freihammer – MDH St. Cloud office

Agenda Approval

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

Secretary's Report

Page 2, change the word paid to filed. Revised minutes to read: John Tracy reported that taxes were recently filed electronically.

Page 5, change “committee members” to co-chairs. Revised minutes to read: After discussion, it was agreed that all co-chairs are considered chairs, thus no change to policy and procedures manual is required.

M/S/P Luedeman/Carlton to approve October 2014 meeting minutes as amended.

Treasurer’s Report

John Tracy provided the treasurer’s report for December 2014. The report showed the activity since the October 2014 report.

Activity for the period between October and December 2014 reflected a net decrease in MEHA funds. Income for the period was from membership dues, interest earned on CDs, conference fees, and income from shirts. Expenses were for caterer for fall conference, Prairie Wood conference rental, President’s budget, annual St. Cloud PO box, and stamps for treasurer.

M/S/P Disrud/Keller to approve the December 2014 Treasurer’s report as submitted.

President’s Report

Thank you to the twenty volunteers (members, family and friends) who participated in our first annual “MEHA Volunteer Community Event” at Feed My Starving Children held on October 22, 2014. A \$200.00 donation (\$10.00/volunteer) was made from the President’s budget. MEHA president recommends doing a similar event at least annually and hopes to have participation from even more MEHA volunteers.

Another jump drive was purchased for the MEHA secretary back-up all MEHA files/records.

Teaming with Committees and Committee Chairs regarding:

Conferences: Winter, Spring, 2016 planning.

History: Updating history documents.

Membership:

Lapsed Active list renewal reminder letters, (68 since January 1, 2014).

James Topie is continuing to send out welcome letters, (64 thus far this year).

Scholarship: New passed REHS/RS, waive membership year fee was sent out.

Student: Working on advancing Mentorship Program

Technology: Various updates to web site have been requested and made.

Planning an after hour social event following the January 2015 Winter Conference. James Topie will contact possible locations (Stouts Pub and Station 280).

Collaboration with NEHA Region 4:

Response received from Nebraska regarding sharing information on scholarships and job postings: “Thanks Jim. If you want us to post an announcement, job opening.....anything at all, let me know.” Sarah Pistillo, Environmental Health Scientist, Office of Drinking Water & Environmental Health, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Region 4 Vice President Keith Johnson: I will continue to forward various E-Blasts to keep him up-to-date.

Committee Reports

Awards – Dan Disrud submitted rewards committee report to Board listserv. Solicitation for award nominations was sent to 79 Minnesota Environmental Health supervisors and managers who were identified in accessible organization charts and directories.

Additional discussion during meeting concerning MEHA By-laws, Article III, Section 9 that states “Life membership may be conferred on any previously active member upon a unanimous vote of the Board.” However, MEHA Policies and Procedures do not contain specific criteria for nomination of an individual to be considered for a “life membership.” Jeff Luedeman will solicit ideas for nominating criteria from the awards, membership and nominations committees and submit them for consideration at the next Boards meeting that is scheduled for February 10th, 2015.

Conference Planning – Jessica Jutz submitted report to Board listserv and discussed. Fall conference was held on October 2nd at the Prairie Wood Environmental Learning Center near Spicer, MN. A list of attendee comments regarding conference evaluation and suggestions for future conference topics was included with the committee’s report.

The winter conference will be held on January 29th, 2015 at the Continuing Education and Conference Center on the U of M’s St. Paul campus. Registration is now open. Agenda was included with the committee’s report.

The committee is soliciting abstracts from members for future presentations. Abstracts will also be solicited for the spring conference that will be held May 13-15, 2015 at Arrowwood Conference Center in Alexandria, MN.

Finance – No written report provided. John Tracy informed the attendees that Committee Chair Lisa Schreifels, Treasurer John Tracy and Treasurer in-training Eric Freihammer met December 08, 2014 with no discrepancies noted.

History – Manny Camilon submitted report to Board listserv. James Topie discussed. The History Committee is in the process of updating the website in three areas:

Awards History.
MEHA History 1961-2011
Board of Directors

If anyone has text or photos to include in the MEHA History Chronology for 2012, 2013 or 2014, please provide items to the History committee so the committee can assemble the information before submitting it to the Technology Committee for posting on the MEHA website.

Legislative – No report.

Membership – Karen Casale submitted report to Board listserv and discussed. As of December 2014, there are 396 members. James Topie, Nathan Kelly and Sadie Pulk continue to contact individuals whose membership has lapsed in an effort to encourage renewal of those memberships.

Newsletter – Lori Green reported she is working on the April newsletter so it will be ready to include information of persons running for MEHA elections. Deadline for submittals is March 01.

Nominations - No report.

Outreach – No report.

Publicity & Marketing – No report.

Registration – Frank Sedzielarz sent report to Board listserv. James Topie discussed. Four of the five regular study session attendees took the REHS/RS exam this past October and passed the exam. We took a break in November with no study sessions conducted. A new series of study sessions begins this December with five exam candidates. Four of the candidates are from Hennepin County so the study sessions will be conducted at their office in Hopkins, MN. The first session will be on December 16th and there will be one session in January (date TBD). After January, we expect to conduct twice monthly sessions beginning in February, 2015.

We are continuing to develop study materials for exam candidates for use in our sessions. The current/new NEHA 4th Edition Study Guide is exactly the same as the 3rd edition except for a new cover so we did not purchase a copy of it. When NEHA releases a new study guide that reflects the content of the new exam, we will purchase a copy of it. The committee does not have any expenses to report at this time.

Resolutions – Joan Peterson sent report to Board listserv. James Topie discussed. The committee is preparing to conduct the annual Policy and Procedure review. A date will be set in the near future. Anyone who is interested in attending, please contact Joan Peterson at jpeterson@nsf.org.

Scholarship – Jill DeBrito sent report to Board listserv. Nicole Koltavy discussed. Activities since the October Board meeting:

The application deadline for the Mary Lauren Olson (MLO) Scholarship and the Northstar Scholarship was December 1, 2014. Ten applications were received for the MLO scholarship. Eight applications were received for the Northstar Scholarship. The recipients will be chosen in early January, 2015 and will be introduced at the Winter conference on January 29, 2015.

A congratulatory email was set to the seven individuals who passed the REHA/RS exam in October. All those who passed were offered a free 1 year MEHA membership.

Student – Laura Suppes sent report to Board listserv. James Topie discussed. The student committee has been working with the conference planning committee to develop a mentorship program between Minnesota's environmental health professionals and public health students at UW - Eau Claire and the University of Minnesota. A PDF explaining the mentorship program was included in the report.

The program has been advertised to professionals in MEHA e-blasts and to students during classes, student organization meetings, and by email at UWEC and the University of Minnesota.

Ideas on how to grow this program are welcome and appreciated. We hope to continue it on an annual basis with the objective of increasing MEHA student membership and facilitating student-professional networking. Twelve people (7 students and 5 professionals) have signed up to participate thus far. Ideally, we will have ~10 students and 10 professionals. Thanks to those board members who volunteered to be mentors.

Technology – Kim Carlton sent report to Board listserv and discussed. Kim Carlton discussed. The committee has been working on the following projects:

- Updating the written *Technology Committee Procedures* document to reflect current vendors, login credentials, etc.
- Developing a step-by-step document to describe how to make changes to the MEHA website and Wild Apricot system.
- Worked with Electric Citizen (the website host) to set up Google Analytics for the MEHA website. Google Analytics is a program that reports website usage. The committee will be working to become familiar with how to use the program.
 - Between November 7 and December 7, there were:
 - 813 users on MEHAonline.org
 - 45.7% were new users
 - 54.3% were return users
 - 1,210 unique browsing sessions
 - 2,404 page views on the MEHA website.
 - 25.58% were the homepage (MEHAonline.org),
 - 20.51% were the Winter Conference page, and

13.69% were job postings.

- Notified Electric Citizen (the website host) of two errors in the system. Both errors were corrected within an hour of being reported.
- Working to update the MEHA photo gallery page. A number of photos were received from Lori Green from conferences over the past few years. Additional photos are welcomed.
- The committee will be starting to look at website hosting options for 2015-2016. Our current hosting contract expires in May 2015. We will need to decide whether we want to stay with Electric Citizen or move to a different host.

President-Elect's Report – Our strategic direction was due to be updated in June. Partially due to being new in role to the MEHA Board, the strategic direction was not completed at that time. I am in the process of removing items from last year's strategic direction that have been accomplished or are existing committee tasks. The document will then focus on 2014 initiatives to meet the 2014 goals. For

2015 we will get to the strategic direction sooner and at the time they are updated, we can decide if we want to refocus our goals in another direction.

Old Business

- **E-Blast: Clarify to what extent we provide member updates? Should these be saved for twice annual newsletter?**

James Topie asked for clarification with regard to which general information member updates to include in E-Blasts versus including certain updates for inclusion in the twice annual newsletters. It was agreed that items that are of a time sensitive nature should be included in E-blasts while those that are of a general information nature should be saved and included in the twice annual newsletters. If something such as a member passes away, notice can be made as an E-Blast.

- **Electronic Voting by Board: Review, discussion and approve E-voting procedures.**

Kim Carlton provided a draft of proposed text for future approval and inclusion in the MEHA By-Laws of Procedures For Conducting MEHA Board Business Electronically Between Regularly Scheduled Meetings.

No voting action took place.

Jeff Luedeman will incorporate revisions to the proposed text and will submit to the Resolutions Committee for future Board approval and inclusion in the MEHA By-Laws.

- **Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Advisory Committee selection.**

We had two applicants. James Topie will submit the names of the individuals jointly selected by Sadie Pulk, Jeff Ludeman and James Topie for consideration as the MEHA liaison to the MPCA Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Advisory Committee. Membership on the committee by one of the individuals submitted for consideration will be at the approval of the SSTS Advisory committee.

- **Proposed Logo vote status.**

Several of the new MEHA logo designs that were presented at the fall MEHA conference are being revised by Amy Zagar. The MEHA Survey Monkey will be used to obtain input from MEHA members as to their preference of the new MEHA logo designs prior to the Board voting on and approving a new logo.

New Business

Legislative Committee:

Seeking ideas for possible changes to committee description.

Two volunteers to help out Chair Bette Packer:

Becky Albrecht REHS, MDH FPLS Mankato District Office

Julia Selleys REHA, Hennepin County Health

James Topie discussed a memo from Bette Packer in which she identified a number of areas of concern regarding the purpose and the function of the Legislative Committee. During the Board meeting we discussed that currently MEHA has not identified an individual to track impending bills during the upcoming Legislative Session. We will pursue having additional persons track bills and inform our members. Bette also expressed concern of a problem in notifying MEHA members of impending legislation when the information is buried in the MEHA newsletter. The Board stated that this should be solved via weekly E-Blast information. When a bill of concern comes before a committee or for a vote, our membership could be notified so the opportunity to have input will not be lost.

The Board discussed that since we meet only every other month, it is difficult to publicly support legislation that we endorse as well as to disagree with legislation we do not support. Even with electronic communication, bills change very quickly. .

The Board indicated that MEHA members should be encouraged to contact their individual legislators. They can do this on their personal time on their personal computers using information from MEHA for reference to either support or not support legislation.

No voting action took place.

Announcements

None

Upcoming Meetings

Next Board meeting is February 10, 2015.

Adjourn

M/S/P Pulk/Carlton to adjourn at 2:43 pm.