

MAEE Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 3, 2011

North Branch Library, 6355 379th St, North Branch, MN 55056



Present: Dan Schutte, John Smith, Stefan Theimer, Scott Alsleben, Ben Bishop, Faith Krogstad, Britt Gangeness, Kristi Pursell, Anna Dutke, Amy Markle. Erin Zoellick and Nicole Pokorney participated by phone.

Absent: None.

Approve Agenda

Ben motioned to approve agenda, Stefan seconded, **motion passed.**

Approve Minutes from November

Kristi made a motion to approve the minutes, Scott seconded. **Passed.**

Review Board Retreat

Britt reviewed acronyms (updated in MAEE documents), board meeting expectations, and priorities for 2011 as generated in the January board retreat. Britt wrote about the priorities in the newsletter and assigned the priorities as high, medium, or low. High priorities are quality conference, expanding membership, strengthening the board. Medium priorities are NCLI and ELP work and awards program. Low priorities were increased professional development opportunities for members and web infrastructure.

Personal Board Commitments

Faith discussed some ideas for improving board member work plans and accountability. First, board members check in with another board member one to two weeks before each meeting to discuss progress on work plans. Board members were matched into pairs at the meeting and the pairs met briefly. At meetings, each person in a pair toasts the progress of the other. Pairs are: Ben & John, Anna & Dan, Amy & Scott, Faith & Stefan, Britt & Nicole, and Erin & Kristi. Secondly, Faith created a document that listed required and potential tasks for board members to add to their work plans. Board members make suggestions of additions to the list. Faith will finalize the document with suggested edits and upload it to the skydrive. Board members will use the document to add tasks to their work plans.

President's Report

Britt shared the Executive Team's Annual Plan. Britt made changes to reflect electronic filing rather than paper filing. MAEE applied to get assistance from Legal Corps in which law students assist the organization in researching legal issues such as personnel issues. Britt will begin working with them next week. Adriane is back to working at MAEE after her leave. MAEE signed on to the Green Ribbon School Award, which came from the Campaign for Environmental Literacy. Minnesota Master Naturalists Conference asked us to sponsor them. Britt sponsored under MAEE's name with her personal money.

Faith applied to represent MAEE at the NAAEE Affiliate Summit but has not yet heard back. It is the same weekend as the conference.

Communications Report

Stefan reported that the online membership application is now on the front page of website. The membership page now has online registration. He emphasized that online membership renewal is best for the organization. All board members should be able to log in to the website and set their passwords (except Scott). Stefan will teach board members how to use the website. Faith asked whether the lapsed members would be added to the database, and Stefan said that the membership team was planning to discuss this issue.

Stefan shared the Communications Annual Plan. Britt suggested that items related to membership should be reflected on the Membership Annual Plan.

Scott reported that he was laying out his first newsletter and it is going well. It will have a financial summary, story on work and volunteering (Erin), website (Stefan), submission from White Earth Land Recovery Project, President's Perspective, individual membership profile (Allison Plute), Back to the Basics article (Scott), MPCA article. Would like to get an article from "Seeds for Success." Scott thought a section could be added to advertise professional development opportunities from members. Kristi suggested doing this via e-Updates to avoid missing deadlines. Britt said that frequently MAEE has avoided doing this to keep from duplicating SEEK's work. Scott would like to add a member's prose or poetry to publish in the newsletter. Faith suggested advertising the benefits of MAEE to prospective members. Scott suggested having newsletter publish dates correlate to equinoxes and solstices.

Membership Report

Kristi is working on updating the organization directory on the website. Have about 11 organizational members and about 166 individual members. Kristi encouraged board members to recruit more organizational and individual members.

2011 Event Annual Plan

Nicole shared the Events Annual Plan. For her personal annual plan, she thought it would be feasible to try webinars. John asked how webinar topics would be decided, and Britt suggested that this topic be addressed after the 2011 conference. Nicole also discussed the evaluation plan for the 2011 conference and the group agreed to have an inclusive overall evaluation rather than piecemeal evaluations at each session plus an overall conference evaluation. If any board member has conference literature to add, let Nicole know by March 21st.

Approve 2011 Annual Plans

Dan moved to approve all annual plans, and John seconded. **Motion passed.**

2011 Midwest Environmental Education Conference

Conference progress update - Britt would like to brainstorm ways to get the word out and do targeted outreach to different audiences. For example, local Rochester schools. Currently have 50 people signed

up and a good goal would be 150. Scott sent out an email and board members could forward. Dan suggested promoting via flyers at co-ops and sending Project Learning Tree emails. Megan Gavin has it in her email signature, and board members could do this. Faith will contact JMHS in Rochester, Kristi will contact Mayo, Amy will contact the School for Environmental Studies. Britt will do early childhood contacts. Anna will contact teachers via the U. Scott will email all RELCs. Amy will email MNA. Phenology conference at Wolf Ridge – John will announce MEEC there. Faith will contact the MN Master Naturalists. Scott will send something out to the Green Schools Network. John created a Facebook event. Amy will find contacts at the U of M in EE and emphasize the student discount. Britt will ask Nicole or Andrea to email all the presenters; Dan will contact the exhibitors to remind them to promote the event. Amy will contact nature centers. John suggested for a future conference that we encourage conference attendees to recruit other attendees for a benefit (discount, recognition, prize).

MAEE Meet the Board Informal Gathering - Britt wondered if anyone was willing to coordinate the food and be in the room from 7-9pm and be the host. Stefan and Kristi volunteered. There is a suite available if MAEE or planning members wanted to share it and chip in money.

Sign up for staffing the MAEE booth - Ben will oversee the MAEE table at the conference. Ben needs people to volunteer one or two hours during key times – registration, breakfast, silent auction, exhibiting times, etc. Ben will make a spreadsheet and will send it out to all. Britt suggested that board members sign up to moderate sessions and support presenters.

Any planning or discussion needed for annual meeting - On the exec committee call, members discussed ways to make the annual meeting fun and appealing. A photo slideshow was suggested. Amy suggested something interactive – time to talk, be in small groups, etc. RWMWD has game show buzzers, U of M profs might have clickers, could show a film afterward (Troubled Waters).

Scholarship Report

Ben reported that MAEE had 8 applicants for 4 \$250 scholarships. Had good diversity of applicants and recipients (professionals, students, interns). Gave 3 \$250 scholarships and 2 partial scholarships. Have \$500 scholarships available for NAAEE.

2012 Conference Theme

From a list of options, the board selected the “Re-create, recreate at the Headwaters” theme. John will add some explanatory sentences and send it to Nicole by Tuesday to present at the conference, especially at the annual meeting. Attendees will have poster paper and markers to write up feedback and ideas, things they want to learn, and suggestions for keynotes. The question will be posed to the membership after the conference. The communications team will suggest questions for this and get feedback from the board. This will happen by April 6.

Treasurer’s Report

Erin likes the plan for a May adjusted budget. She sent a snapshot to Scott for the newsletter. Erin has been looking at patterns in our financials and will be talking with Britt about these. Erin is excited about online registration and membership. Tax forms and documents were submitted

on time. Erin will have more detailed tax information in June. Erin is depositing money for the conference and will soon start writing checks.

Awards Program

Received some interest from membership in the awards program. The committee consists of Amy and Kelley Dinsmore and Pete Cleary. Had first meeting last month to get acquainted and set goals. Amy researched other award programs from organizations of similar size. Illinois was very helpful and shared a lot of information. The group is leaning toward an outstanding/lifetime achievement award, a nonformal educator award of the year and formal educator of the year award. Also discussed innovative ideas award, program award, rookie of the year award but thought that starting small would be better. Some of these ideas could be implemented later or incorporated into the rubric for judges. The award could be a green and sustainable gift with a free year's membership to MAEE. Recognition could include an item that is passed from one awardee to another. Marketing would include the website, e-updates, newsletter and conference (flyer in conference folder, announcement at conference, etc). The group did not discuss a title for the award. Timeline – the group will meet in March to prepare for the MEEC conference. This summer they will develop marketing materials. The nominations will be open for 7 weeks. Amy moved to have three awards in the new awards program (listed above) starting in 2012. Scott seconded. **Passed.**

NCLI and ELP Update

Stefan has made contact with key people related to ELP, and one of them just moved to a position in the Department of Education. There might be a higher chance of making this happen because of this. The plan is to get this group together to talk and then pull MAEE board members into a committee.

Conference Panels

Ben presented the MAEE panel design for the conference. Ideas for edits were: finding photos that depict EE in an urban environment and a classroom environment. Faith, Dan, and Scott will send these by Wednesday, March 9.

Other Announcements

LCCMR (Britt & Stefan)

LCCMR has money from the lottery and legislators and citizen members make funding recommendations for every two years. They make recommendations to the legislature. Funds for 2012 were applied for last April – it's a long process and some projects are large. Recommendations on these were made last year, but the final stamp of approval still needs to be made. Since the last election, legislative leadership on the commission has changed and many projects are being scratched off the list, including EE projects. We have been asked to submit a letter expressing discontent about the decisions and actions at the LCCMR and touting

the value of environmental education. Stefan motioned to submit a letter expressing support of EE as a funding priority. Dan seconded. **Passed.**

Adjourn

Stefan made a motion to adjourn. Kristi seconded. **Passed.**