

Minutes - MAEE Board Meeting Wednesday, May 5, 2010, 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Cloquet Forestry Center
175 University Road
Cloquet, MN 55720-9594

Directions: <http://cfc.cfans.umn.edu/about/maps.html>
Call in number: 605-475-4333, passcode 458153



Present @ meeting: Britt Carlson, Stefan Thiemer, John Geissler, Amy Markle, Erin Zoellick, Kristi Pursell
Call-in: Jen Johansen for website discussion (5:45-6:30) and Nicole Pokorney for 2011 conference update (7:05-7:15).

Action

Approve amended agenda.

Shorten official meeting from 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Amy motioned to approve the agenda as amended. John seconded. Motion passed.

Action

Approve minutes from March and annual meeting

Minutes were passed and reviewed. Not changes.

Erin motioned to approve minutes from March and annual meetings. John seconded. Motion passed.

Discussion

Website (Amy)

Jason is working with Wild Apricot for first time- looking at all the potential. He was using a trial membership on the side, but it is time for us to pay for a full subscription. We are getting a “community subscription” which gives us 500 members w/ tracking how many views, etc. \$540/year. This account can also send email blasts, so eventually we could let Constant contact membership lapse.

The “skeleton” of the website is up. It can only be viewed by logging in to our Wild Apricot account, but will eventually be put on on the same address as our current site: naaee.org/maee. For now, Jason just used the current structure of the MAEE website, but wants to know what we want for this new website. Our goal for this meeting is to decide on the structure and who will revise or write content. Amy will collect the content and pictures from board members and give them to Jason. He will put together the site for us and we can edit in the future. If we don’t have content right away it is fine to put “Coming Soon. “

We pulled up the new site and had a discussion about what primary and secondary tabs we want on the site.

- Wild Apricot automatically does certain tabs, such as “forums” and “blog.” We can decide what we want.
- Britt would love to have a tab for folks who are not members- “What is EE?” that covers a definition of EE and references the GreenPrint. There is a tab like this on the EEinWisconsin.org website.
- Resources tab on current website is not used much...
- Stefan: communications survey some folks want stuff from SEEK, but link to it. Put a SEEK “button” on home page. MAEE News, conference “stuff,” member profiles (from newsletters) to archive, research & tips and ideas. Scholarship awardees? Grants, quotes from Wisconsin site.
- Events: Up-coming, scholarships, past. Power points from speakers from year to year
- Under membership: online sign-up, organizational members, (goal: join us & member profiles!
- You’ve joined us... member benefits space

- ❑ Use the forum/message board for “Notes from the Field.” Let members and board members post photos of EE all over MN, natural history, tips and resources, etc. Don’t have to be a member to post or read.

Looking at budget for Jason: \$1200-\$1500 + \$540/year for software. Jason’s time should be listed under contractual services and we need to add the software costs to our mid-year adjusted budget. John did this while we were talking.

Debate about header, photos, scrolling or in background... etc. Decided on doing a continuation of our logo in background on top of page.

July: how to be a website administrator training at our board meeting.

6:20 Jason Lehmkuhle joins conversation. We asked about header. He thinks doing a version of the logo would be great. Question about blog vs. forum: “blog” allows for comments, but “forum” (or message board) might come from more folks. He thinks we can set it so that all posts have to be reviewed by a moderator. Pictures: Jason can create an animated image box w/ rotating photos, can install program- we want to be able to change photos over time best and easiest.

Jason doesn’t have too many questions now, just wants feedback and we’re going to make skeleton/tabs and sub-pages and get it to him. Board members will get text/photos to Amy, to Jason within next 2 weeks. (Jason hangs up.)

Continued discussion about tabs and pages:

- ❑ Use images and “buttons” within pages to direct people deeper in to the site. For example, on the Advocacy page we could have an NCLI logo and blurb to click for page with more information.
- ❑ Stefan wants roll-overs “that (better Effing) work!” The primary pages (main tabs) would be summary pages and there would be links or clicks on the summary page to the secondary pages. Some summary pages would have substantial info, like on the membership page. Lots of info about membership, links to online registration form, list of org members, etc.
- ❑ Another example of this: MAEE conference page starts with paragraph about the fact that we do an annual conference (the generic info) then roles in to stuff about upcoming conference. Ends with links to deeper pages: various conference pages, past events, scholarships, etc.
- ❑ “Contact us” AT LEAST at bottom!
- ❑ Discussion: **Are the top tabs comprehensive? OR could we have pages that we just link to from the home page via an announcement or picture? Everyone seemed OK with the possibility of some “floating” pages outside the top tabs.
- ❑ Where does the ELM grant go? Do we want past newsletters to go on website as .pdf?
- ❑ Place to solicit for newsletters, etc. Forum page might be good for this.
- ❑ ‘Initiatives’ tab- can add pages as we do new things. Right now we could have an ELM Grant and Environmental Literacy Plan page.
- ❑ Put a downloadable printable brochure under “about us.” “Contact us” NOT as a homepage tab to reduce the number of tabs at top.
- ❑ Not calling “Advocacy” tab advocacy, but “Advancing EE”

Assignments for writing Summary page and secondary pages:

- ❑ Home- Amy
- ❑ What is EE? -John
- ❑ Membership -Kristi
- ❑ Events -Amy (& Nicole later)
- ❑ Advancing EE -Stefan
- ❑ Initiatives –Amy
- ❑ About MAEE – Britt
- ❑ No writing needed for Notes from the Field

Jen will send a CD of pictures to amy.
Erin offered to edit and comb through things at any point. She is a good editor.
People above will need to ask for certain info from other board members.

Information

Presidents report (Britt)

Anna researching e-file options (Stefan's idea: Drop Box?)
June 12- Get Outside Day (will be in our May e-update)
No other problems.

Information

Event update (Nicole)

Nicole updates on MEEC (call-in): Marriot hotel will actually be our site instead of Kahler Hotel. They are next to each other. Both are nice. The hotel sent us a contract to consider and Britt to sign by May 10th. Nicole and Britt need to create a better event budget before we will sign the contract. Britt will examine the contract over the weekend and she and Nicole will talk on Monday. There are 4 break-out rooms (1 large, 3 smaller). Is this enough? We also need to decide on how many blocks or rooms to reserve.

Nicole is working on the food/schedule. She has been replying to speakers, etc. Next steps: budget, details to state liaisons, committee, RFP out, sign Kahler hotel contract, get website up... all before June 1st. Britt suggested prioritizing volunteer recruitment/building the team and having a conference call with "team" in June. Registration cost for MEEC between \$125-\$250?... Nicole and Britt will look at budget. Will examine budget and costs, etc.

Information

Communications report (Sarah through Anna)

Newsletter out! E-mail about articles. Please see Sarah's email.

Information

Membership report (Kristi)

- 272 is our current membership.
- Kristi looked in to conference to table at this fall: Green Schools Conference- costs \$600. Could we share with MNA? This might still be too expensive. We will get a free table at the MNA Conference. Should plan for that. MN Science Teachers conference? Working NAI National Conference is in MN in fall 2011. Think about our involvement in that. Probably also too expensive to table at.
- MNValley Wildlife Refuge: Amy will look into talking with Jean and feeling out Aug 7 grand opening. with Audubon "green schools" instead?
- Working on improving size, format, images, logo for display board.
- Improved member benefits: Kristi is open to ideas!

Action

Approve mid-year adjusted budget

Prior to the meeting, Erin, John, Britt, Kristi and Stefan looked that 2010 event budget and the full MAEE budget. John and Erin started an adjusted budget and the board made a few changes to it. No major changes were needed, though we did reduce or anticipated membership income (because some of that came in under conference registration income). We also corrected the line items for the website work and software. See approved budget for details.

Stefan motion too approve adjusted budget for 2010, Amy seconded motion. Motion passed.

Discussion

EE Leadership in MN (Stefan)

Stefan created a google webpage to post information about the discussion that take place regarding EE leadership in Minnesota and the gap left by the dissolved environmental education advisory task force and board (EEATF and EEAB). Stefan will "invite" all MAEE board to google webpage.

Stefan coordinated a phone call with about 10 people on it to discuss what to do/how to move forward. In the short term, Stefan is going to call or send a letter to the MPCA commissioner thanking him for the response he gave to us and the people who contacted him. We will let him know we are meeting to discuss the future of EE leadership in the state, but leave it vague and broad.

Now we can re-envision EE in Minnesota! (no small task...)

Nate Meyer joined our meeting at this point and partook in the conversation about EE leadership in Minnesota. Our board and the EE community need to talk about goals and objectives first. WHY do we want a governor's board or WHY do we want an ED for MAEE? (whatever the end goal is, the why should come first). In some ways, the MAEE strategic plan is the WHY for our organization. That plan lays out what we want for the EE community.

To move forward we could do a large group, open ended session about EE in Minnesota OR a small number of the movers and shakers of EE in MN could come together. Choice would depend on what is the end goal? Do we want to write a grant for an ED? If we want to decide (informally) we want to push politics... the small group might be OK. It was suggested that the group itself can help define the end goal...rather than MAEE "top-down" decision-making. We want to be inclusive.

From the last phone call Stefan thought it was clear that those people want to push for a Governor's board within state government to take the place of the EEAB. Nate says to paint the plan of action and GO THERE.

Change is forced on us right now, can we improve our profession from these circumstances.

Discussion

2011 board recruitment

Ran out of time. Stefan will send out readings and solicitations for board recruitment.

Discussion

Nate Meyer and Extension

Master Naturalists in Minnesota are growing. They are forming/joining volunteer chapters (regionally). This community is a potential partner for us. Some people to contact if interested in connecting to these people: Beth Girard (North Metro) and Linda Radamke (sp?) (Fort Snelling).

www.minnesotamasternaturalists.org blog and calendar- go to info on website.

Nate is also working on an NSF grant re: how to use citizen science for youth inquiry. Stage one: 10 citizen science research teams, UofM scientist, adult, Environmental Science, and 10 youth: how to make inquiry happen for 2 years- in year 3 have a training "best practices" 2013.

Action

Adjourn

Kristi makes motion to adjourn. Amy seconds: motion passes! Farewell, friends!