

**MWCA Board of Directors  
Fall Board Meeting  
Missoula Garden Hilton  
November 18 & 19, 2009**

**Minutes**

Meeting called to order at 8:05 November 18, 2009

**Board Members Present:** Amy Adler, Debby Barrett, Dave Brink, Pam Converse, Jennifer Cramer, Jack Eddie, Jim Ghekiere, Kenny Kever, Jane Mangold, Danny McIntosh, Kellieann Morris, Gary Olsen, Brian Ostwald, Lisa Surber, Judie Tilman, Morgan Valliant, Paul Wick, Dick Zoanni, Dave Burch, Carla Hoopes, Jim Jacobs, Mike Miller, Dave Schulz, John Simons, and Joe Weigand; staff members Becky Kington and Diana Ericson, and guests Janie Alt, Margie Edsall and John Moody.

**Excused Board Members:** Jim Gordon, Peter Pula, Ellen Simpson, Dan Dobler and Steve Shelly

**Spring Retreat Minutes**

The spring retreat minutes were presented for acceptance. Amy Adler and Jim Ghekiere were the winners of being the first to find purposeful mistakes in the spring minutes, but Becky couldn't remember the errors after seven months, so Jim and Amy received a door prize for their efforts. *A motioned was made to approve the minutes with corrections by Dave Brink and Jennifer Cramer seconded. All were in favor.*

**Review of Financials**

Judie Tilman explained the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year P & L and went over both the balance sheet and the P & L for the current fiscal year. There were no questions. *A motion was made to accept the financials by Gary Olsen and Danny McIntosh seconded the motion. All were in favor.* Becky also added that we were not meeting fundraising goals as set by the board back in March. The only area we did meet with those goals was with our sponsorships, however the calendar and the gun raffle in particular were not meeting the goals as projected. Judy also explained the reserve funds we have in place to match grant funds for weed ID books and for TIPS books. This money really can't be counted towards our bottom line when looking at our bank balance. Several board members offered ideas for the calendar sales and for the raffle. Amy would look into the Stock Growers convention, Lisa would check into Woolgrowers and Carla Hoopes would check into MSU and UM's bookstores to see if there would be an interest in calendar sales.

**2010 convention update**

Paul Wick reported the agenda is pretty much complete and we have been approved for six credits. Aquatic credits were also being offered. Becky was looking into securing private applicator credits as well. Kellieann reported that auction items were being submitted already and several of the western area council members would be hitting the streets of Missoula and surrounding areas to gather donations. Margie Edsall reported that the awards committee had received nominations for every category and they would be meeting that night [November 18] to determine winners. All were welcome to attend and vote on award nominees. Paul also relayed to the board that the Garden Hilton was a really nice facility and he was looking forward to a great conference.

**Fall Coordinator Training Update**

Amy Adler reported on fall coordinator training which was held in Lewistown on Sept 30 – Oct 1, 2009. Over 50 weed managers attended, but the weather was not so great for a tour. The tour bus did not get stuck, but due to snowy conditions, many aspects of the tour were cut short. Overall it was a good training. Lisa Surber mentioned a clicker system as a survey technique and that most extension agents had access to one. Diana would look into it.

## **Review of Spring Board Evaluation**

Jack & Becky reviewed the spring board self evaluation. Amber Burch had produced a report that gave better visuals to the percentages. Becky began to note the dismal numbers in some categories when she was reminded by Morgan Valliant that she was only looking at the five's (a perfect score) and when you compiled fours and fives, the percentages looked much better. Becky agreed that overall, the board evaluation wasn't bad.

## **Review of Staff Evaluations**

Jack reported that Becky was evaluated by 19 board members present at the spring retreat and that her evaluation came out positive. Diana was evaluated by Becky and both evaluations were presented to the board. Becky reiterated that hiring Diana was one of the best moves the organization had made and that it showed in our slow, but steady growth as an organization in tough economic times. We had also increased our partnerships and Jack reported that Becky, Diana and him had recently visited with the new regional Forest Service weed man, Steve Shelly, who took over Jim Olivarez' duties. It was a very positive meeting and Jack relayed that it was especially exciting to see actual forest service budgets for each ranger district.

## **Review of approved strategic plan and yearly objectives**

Jack relayed that while the executive committee had been looking at some possible board changes, he felt that the current term of one year for the president makes it extremely hard to accomplish any goals. Other past presidents who were present agreed. Many board members felt that we needed to be working to increase private landowner membership, but that is the one demographic that we have lost membership with. Jack requested that a workgroup be created to address a plan to pull in private landowners to the MWCA. *The work group will consist of Dave Brink, Margie Edsall, Mike Miller and Gary Olsen with Diana Ericson as chair and the group has been asked to present ideas at the winter board of directors meeting in January.* Jane Mangold mentioned that home owner associations should be addressed and it was suggested that we give landowners free materials. Jane Mangold recommended that counties be encouraged to add extension agents to their group memberships and John Moodry suggested that all WMA's be approached for memberships and any trust fund grant applications suggest MWCA memberships. Dave Burch wasn't sure that would be possible.

## **Current Grants Update**

Becky reported that the final phase of Zero Spread grant was closed out: \$50,000 went towards spring advertising and \$30,000 went towards the updating of the website. The 2010 Calendar grant was closed out- too many calendars were ordered and we were struggling to get rid of the remaining 10,000 on hand. Joe Weigand wanted another 2,000 to give out for block management. The Weed Board & Commissioner Training grant had closed out and all seven areas had received training. Evaluations had come back positive and attendance was pretty good with a better showing by commissioners. Weather and timing played a part in the lack of attendance at the eastern trainings. The Weed ID book grant was closed out and only five boxes of books were left to sell. 30,000 books were distributed over the course of two years. Kenny Kever reported on the Integrated Weed Management grant and that the Natural Heritage Program who is heading up this mapping project will be presenting at spring coordinator training in 2010.

## **MWCA Legislative Public Policy Proposal**

At the spring board retreat, John Moodry was asked to chair a work group to address MWCA public policy and come up with a proposal. He submitted a proposal to the board for review. He stated we were right on the cusp of being a large enough organization to stay where we are, with a lack of policy or that we are getting big enough that public policy is needed. Among the work group, John reviewed the results of where everyone ranked specific areas including organizational commitment, a defined public policy, relationships with non-profits and agencies, and technical expertise related to public policy within the organization. John presented his draft policy for the MWCA and board

members commented in favor of the policy as well as stated concerns. ***Jack asked John to draft a flow chart of how public policy would work and to have some of the concerns addressed by the January board of directors' meeting.***

#### Area Council Review

Amy Adler reported that at the area council meeting on November 17, the area representatives reviewed job descriptions and discussed the purpose of area councils. Area council representatives are elected by the general membership at the MWCA conference, and the following job description for area representatives was drafted:

##### *“Area Member Job Description*

*Area members will be elected biannually at the MWCA Annual Convention and must be a member upon election.*

*Area member should make all reasonable effort to attend MWCA board meetings and submit area news for MWCA publications as requested and as information is available from the area. The area member is a liaison between their area council and the MWCA.*

*The responsibility of the area member is to facilitate education and networking in the area, to promote the MWCA through encouragement of membership and participation at trainings and to seek commonality among all weed managers. It is left up to the area member and the area council to determine how best to reach these responsibilities in their respective area.”*

***Amy Adler motioned to accept the above job description for area representatives and Pam Converse seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

#### Staff Updates

There were no questions for Becky and Diana

#### Scheduling 2010 board meetings

Seven months have passed since the spring board retreat and the fall board of directors meeting. Becky asked the executive committee to look at a more frequent meeting structure for 2010. ***Dick Zoanni motioned we hold a regular board meeting at the annual conference in January, provide a board orientation session in February for new board members, staff and executive committee, and hold the spring retreat and the fall board meetings in conjunction with spring and fall coordinator trainings if possible. Morgan Valliant seconded the motion and all were in favor.*** At the January meeting, Paul would set dates for 2010.

#### MWCA Committees VS. Work Groups

Becky had also requested that the executive committee look into the value of continuing with the education and IWM committees vs. making those committees into workgroups. Most board members agreed that committees (other than Executive/Finance & Coordinator Support) weren't really functioning well. John Moodry reminded the board that committees are outlined in bylaws and any changes would require a bylaw change. Paul brought up that because our voting board numbered 21, it was hard to get people to run for office and with term limits, and we were losing some good board members. No changes were recommended at this time to the committee structure. Jack asked that a workgroup be formed to consider looking at changes in the current board structure. ***Paul would have something in place by the spring meeting for consideration.***

#### MDA weed listings

Dave Burch reported the board that MDA was changing the state noxious weed list from categories to priorities. Three new invaders would be added and common crupina would be removed. The Director was looking over the draft proposal at this time and then it would go out for a 30-day public comment period. Dave stressed that this new system

empowered weed coordinators to determine the best management plan for their county. If anyone had questions or concerns, Dave encouraged folks to contact him.

### **Day Planners**

Kelliann presented the new 2010 planners for sale by Ravalli County and let everyone know that Melissa was there to deliver planners that had been ordered.

### **Proposed Spring Coordinator Training**

Amy Adler reported that she had come up with an agenda that was more professional in nature than the MWCA has ever had for spring coordinator training in 2010. The training would be held in Helena at the L & C Fairgrounds and she was looking for attendance of 100 and increasing registration rates to accommodate this three day event. Becky reported that she would be producing a four page brochure for this event ready for display by the annual conference.

### **Weed Act Legislative Review**

Dave Schulz reported that the county weed act was being proposed for legislative review. Harold Blattie with MACo had suggested the MWCA approach the Environmental Quality Council to request a legislative review/audit of the 24 year old county weed act. Many issues are starting to arise with the act including the constitutionality of the act, city and municipality issues, compliance of state and federal agencies, addressing organic producers, and the fact that approximately half of the counties in Montana are even engaged in a non-compliance program. On December 9<sup>th</sup>, a planning group of Scott Bockness, Dave Schulz, Dave Burch, Jed Fitch, Becky Kington and Jack Eddie would be gathering to formulate the speaking points for the January 7<sup>th</sup> hearing in Helena. Becky encouraged board members to send questions or concerns to any of those involved in the planning of this request. Debby suggested that the League of Cities & Municipalities be invited to participate and she offered to propose any rule changes at

### **MACo & Weed Management Plans and Gravel Pits**

Dave Schulz talked with Harold Blattie of MACo and Harold has been working on trying to come up with one weed management plan for gravel pits. There are currently several plans out there, some up to 30 pages long, and MACo would be requesting help from the MWCA to draft a simple plan that would address all aspects of legality regarding gravel pits.

### **MACo Weed Program Survey**

Becky reported the results of the MACo and MWCA Weed Program Survey were available for board members who may not have seen them. Most of the weed coordinators had received a copy and MACo had the survey on file as does the MWCA. Thanks to Amber Burch for helping put the survey into a great, readable format.

### **MACo Insurance Joint Powers Insurance Authority**

Dave Schulz served on the MACo JPIA group that was working on liability, property, and casualty issues. This group has been reviewing on liability issues included discussion about rental agreements for sprayers. Dave wanted everyone know that the group was there to help and to send any questions or comments his way. Dave Burch asked the group to give a hand and recognize Dave for all of his work with the organization- his transition from weed coordinator to commissioner did not cause him to lose a passion for the fight against noxious weeds. Gary appreciated Dave's presentation at the weed board and commissioner training and that it really helped elevate his program in Wheatland County.

### **Board donations for Auction**

*Kelliann Morris reminded all board members that we are asking for auction donations from all board members, voting and advisory, to help with MWCA fundraising efforts.* Every board member should be able to contribute something and Becky threw out some out-of-the-box ideas for members to consider.

## **Zone 4 Magazine**

Becky showed the board a new magazine for the region on gardening and landscaping called Zone 4. The sales department of this magazine had put in our ad for free for one issue in 2009 and Becky had purchased \$400 worth of advertising in three of four issues in 2010.

## **MSU Business School Opportunity**

Diana had come across an ad for organizations to receive free marketing and business experience in the form of projects for senior marketing and business students. Becky was putting in for a student team to help the MWCA with branding and marketing for the spring semester in 2010. Amy Adler reported that this program was being used with engineering students in Forsyth. The board agreed this was a good opportunity for us to gain some knowledge in this area.

## **Annual Report**

Becky and Diana felt that maybe it was time for the MWCA to complete an annual report. She showed the MNA annual report, which is a glossy, full color magazine. *Jack asked Becky to bring cost estimates back to the board in January and then the board would determine if this was a project we would pursue and if so, when the best time for distribution would be.*

## **MWCA Directory Changes**

Becky asked the board with some reservation if the MWCA directory should be expanded to be a weed professional directory rather than produced solely for county weed coordinators? The directory would be expanded to include as many agencies as possible who were involved in weed management. *Amy Adler motioned that we expand the MWCA Directory to include more agency weed professionals and Jack seconded the motion. All were in favor. A workgroup for reviewing the directory was designated with Kellieann Morris, Pam Converse, Dave Burch, Jack Eddie and Carla Hoopes volunteering their time.*

## **Trust fund Grants**

*Missoula Posters* – Lindsay Bona & Stephanie Rogge of Missoula County Weed District presented a poster series of new invaders, Montana natives and the ten least wanted plants with bio-control agents all produced by a professional graphic designer. These posters would be distributed across the state and at trailheads. Some material would be used for the kNOweeds Curriculum as well. The posters would cost \$.60 each and were about 18 x 24 in size. The current grant was for the creation of the poster designs, and Jim Ghekiere felt that some grant funds should be used to provide a finish printed product as well. Judie Tilman asked the board to remember that the organization needed to be fiscally careful when providing match dollars for any grants. *Amy Adler motioned that the MWCA write a letter of support for the project and Kellieann seconded the motion. All were in favor.* While Stephanie and Lindsey were present, the board asked about the status of the kNOweeds curriculum. The goal of the project was to provide a traveling trunk that schools could use at their discretion. In the Missoula area, the Missoula County Weed District personnel would help provide training for teachers. Lesson plans were being used in Teton County and Glacier Park. Becky asked if this final curriculum was going to be run by the Office of Public Instruction, as she believed that was one of the goals early on. Lindsey didn't know if that was an original part of the grant and Dave Burch asked her to check into that.

## **Reprint of Noxious weed booklet**

Becky reviewed the grant for a reprint of the MSU Weed ID books. She would be asking for a reprint of 30,000 books with new priorities and new weeds listed. The MWCA would match funds taken in from the first sales. Burch said that because the MDA changed the state weed list, the grant was justified, but that funds taken in were to be used for a reprint and the reprinting should be a self sustaining process. Becky was asked to get a bid from ColorWorld as well.

*Judie Tilman motioned the MWCA put in for the Reprint grant and Jim Ghekiere seconded the motion. All were in favor.*

### ***Weed Board & Commissioner Training***

Becky reviewed the grant for another round of weed board and commissioner trainings in 2011. This time only three trainings would be held instead of seven and they would be held in November of 2011. The board felt travel expenses should be included for hardship cases to help get board members to the trainings. Debby Barrett suggested that video conferencing be available for these trainings. *Dave Brink made a motion to amend the grant to include \$5,000 for travel expenses and Danny McIntosh seconded the motion. All were in favor. Amy Adler motioned the MWCA put in for the 2011 Weed Board and Commissioner Training grant and Danny McIntosh seconded the motion. All were in favor.*

### **Success Stories Intern**

Becky asked the board for permission to submit a trust fund grant for an intern or journalism student or free lance writer to compile 5 – 10 success stories. She explained to the board that these success stories, whether on DVD or in writing, would help weed managers at all levels promote their programs and help secure funding. The MWCA and MDA staff did not have time to complete interviews and write the stories. This grant would ask for \$5,000 to contract with a writer to obtain interviews and photos and then write up success stories. Several board members asked about contacting the universities for intern possibilities and if other opportunities came to light before the trust fund hearings, the grant could be pulled. These stories would be posted on the MWCA website for all to use. *Gary Olsen motioned the MWCA put in for a success story intern grant and Pam Converse seconded the motion. Dave Brink was in opposition and the rest of the board was in favor. The motion passed.*

### **Big Sky Small Acres Magazine**

Lisa Surber called MSU to inquire about what happened with the BSSA magazine and the staff at MSU reported that a summer issue was not produced, but they were in the process of getting a new editor and a fall issue was out. Rick Jackson was the contact person to inquire about subscriptions. Due to no summer issue, the Coordinator Support Committee did not receive a year's worth of subscriptions as promised and Becky would contact him regarding this issue.

Jim Ghekiere motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> and it was seconded by Amy Adler. All were in favor.