

MACD Education Committee Notes  
June 23, 2021 at 10 am  
Via Zoom Conferencing

**Committee Members:** Elisha Dempsey, Tony Barone, Rick Van Dyken, Bill Naegeli, Bob Petermann, Pam Liggett, Tom Dobberstein, and Greg Jergeson

**Committee Members present:** Pam Liggett, Greg Jergeson, Elisha Dempsey, Bob Petermann, Rick Van Dyken.

**Others in attendance:** Rebecca Boslough, Renee Nelson, Heidi Fleury, Mary Hendrix, Jason Garber, Ethan Kunard, Eric Rannestad, Tahnee Benson, Heidi Anderson-Folnagy, Audra Bell, Tom Watson, Kyle Tackett, Brandee Fladstol, David Martin, Chris Evans. Autumn Coleman joined the meeting at 10:27.

**Approval of May 2021 Meeting Notes**-Greg Jergeson asked for one correction in the last sentence for the time. Motion to approve as corrected, second by Liggett; motion carried.

**Training collaboration/calendar**-Becca brought this idea to a recent Education Committee meeting, and it revolves around the idea of creation of a training hub. The 3-legged stool serves CDs, but there are outside organizations that also provide funds for training or training itself. In terms of logistics, MACD is working on the private page that they're considering rolling out prior to the full new website rollout.

Heidi Fleury said that MWCC's website has a great section for training events around the state. Their model works well and she likes the idea of having a statewide resource for training/education for CDs.

Mary Hendrix likes the idea of linking to other pages since the information wouldn't have to be updated in multiple locations.

Because the page will be privately faced, zoom meeting links could even be placed on that page.

Elisha asked how the current events page works, she thought it was something that people could add to. Becca screen shared the current calendar which is sorted by category and tags. There is a way to upload things through a google calendar but it's not housed on the website.

Bob Petermann asked if the website is available to all employees, and Becca said that it is, and the new planned private page will be shared to all Districts too.

Eric Rannestad said that his opinion is that having two different calendars would be confusing. Evans asked if the calendar events could have a clickable link to the private page. Rannestad said that we don't need to figure out all of the mechanics of it today, but that we mainly we want to maintain a public facing calendar of events. If we have zoom links, we'll want those on a private facing page. Eric asked if we want to make it so that CDs can add things to the main event calendar. Becca said that ideally, we would want to do that.

Tom Watson said that one of the things that the core partners are working on as part of one of the challenges of the National Conservation Planning partnership, is rolling out a plan to coordinate NRCS training opportunities that Districts can take advantage of. They are trying to work with the Employee Organization to offer CD Employee training to support activities for

MFC, development of TIPs and technical or other training. They want to look at doing an investment with the CD employees.

Dave Martin asked Tom about the true availability of training. Watson said that there are a number of different opportunities, not just Boot Camp, but facilitator training among others. With the number of new NRCS employees, they'll be doing a lot of training and should have the opportunity to incorporate non-NRCS employees in that training.

Elisha asked Heidi Fleury as the EO chair how she thinks they should move forward. Heidi said that the EO will likely be meeting about that pretty soon. She has a draft agenda put together for that meeting. Heidi said she will be providing updates and looking for input as things develop. The Statewide Employee's training is being planned and more can be discussed at that event.

Becca said that she's talked to Kyle Tackett about the NRCS/EO plans and thinks it's a good starting point to start pulling things together and to identify gaps in training. She's heard that there's a desire for facilitation training for districts too.

Heidi says that doing this, and doing it right, is going to take some time. It could start with a small meeting to nail down specifics with NRCS and then DNRC. In terms of the timeline, having a draft annual training calendar pulled together for 2022 is reasonable. Tom Watson said that he would appreciate having something to share by the November Convention. On the inter-office collaboration concerns, Evans shared what the Helena Field Office is doing to work on that office/agency collaborative effort and also said it might be ideal if we can have the framework for this effort ready to discuss at the November Convention, with the draft training plan ready in January. Tom Watson said that he will have the majority of DCs at the convention this year. He'd like to be a partner to discuss this topic at the convention. Tom has asked to be kept in the loop on this effort. Becca said they're still working on the convention agenda but there is still room to move things around. Becca said that one of the panels already on the agenda is about the future of Conservation Districts or we could add another one. Bob Petermann asked if some of this could all be put in outline form so that the Area Directors could share it at Area Meetings with the CD Supervisors and Employees to get their feedback. Becca said they could work on something. Becca said that the main purpose of this is to focus on resources for Conservation Districts, employees and supervisors.

Autumn Coleman, Mary Hendrix and Heidi Anderson Fohnagy were on to talk DRNC training. A lot of their grant application and reporting training is targeted at Conservation Districts. She'd like to make sure that those are included with the rest of the training information. They met last week with the PDC which does a lot of training on general office skills. She was curious if they shared that catalog (which is set every 6 months) and the Districts could take a look at that and some of the DNRC budget might be able to be used to offset the expenses of those training events. She would like to see that incorporated as well. Dave Martin said that one of the most useful PDC training he's heard about was the Meaningful Minutes. He had heard that the PDC had been dissolved at the last legislature. Apparently they were de-funded, but it's unclear as to the final direction they'll take. Mary Hendrix said that they do forward the emails from the PDC and have recently had some Districts take advantage of that using the Education Funding grant that Lewis and Clark CD is sponsoring from DNRC.

Ethan Kunard at MWCC said that they have a new website. The goal for the redesign on the website was to provide a better layout for the opportunities that they offer. One thing they haven't yet completed is a resource library. That library will be broken into core competency skills, resources for project and program-oriented things. Webinar recordings,

existing templates, examples of policies and other things will also be on that site. The other thing they're working on is some training. Future West is doing capacity training in November. One of the things they're focusing on is succession planning, as well as fundraising and other topics. They'll have some capacity funding available later this fall. It's been used in the past for program and project development, strategic planning and creating budgets. Ethan showed us the new website and their training calendar. He reminded the group about their Watershed Partner Funds that CDs and other groups can utilize as needed for training.

Heidi Anderson Fohnagy said that if there's anything that we want to share with her to just let her know.

**Outreach Work Group Report**-Dave Martin said that the group made a presentation at the Spring Board meeting. He had several people tell him afterward that they were pretty happy about that. Tom Watson had asked him about measurable goals. One of the most interesting things that Jim Simpson asked was why CDs should do outreach. It's a question that seems like a no-brainer, but the Outreach Work Group will be working on that to be able to answer that question from multiple view points. The Group will be meeting this afternoon, and will be trying to get the administrative part of it turned over to someone who might be interested. The job description for work group members will be ready by the area meetings. In the fall the Outreach Work Group will be participating in the Employee Fall Training.

**Education Funding**-Request from MACD-MACD has made a request to utilize some of the Education Funding for upcoming needs. Becca will elaborate on that at the next meeting.

### **Training upcoming**

Mary Hendrix said that she'd looked at meeting minutes from last month and the water reservation training that had been planned has been postponed.

Autumn said that they've just hired a MEPA person. She asked about someone from our group to set things up and get things going. Evans has a new RRGL with DNRC and so volunteered to participate in that. Dave Martin asked if this was just a broad overview of MEPA and how it might impact contracting.

### **Training reports**

Becca said that the Spring Board meeting leadership training centered around personality types, how people work differently, communication and conflict training. She gave a shout out to DNRC for providing funding for that training.

Elisha asked about the in-person QuickBooks training. Heidi said it's too much to cram into the planned fall SET in October, but that she's working on that.

Subgroup (?) of committee for:

Elisha said she wonders if that will be a part of the Outreach Work Group to put together the documents that the employees need to reach out to the schools easily. Evans said that between the calendar/collaborative training effort and the outreach work group, this topic could easily be covered.

### **Other Business**

Rick mentioned that at the Spring Board meeting the question came up about the possibility to move the Education Committees to a different time, either 8 am or 1 pm. Greg Jergeson said that he would like to defer to the supervisors who aren't retired. He doesn't want to do 6 am.

Pam Liggett said any time is good for her. Evans will reach out to the rest of the committee members to find out if another time works better.

The next meeting will be July 28, 2021 10 am .

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.