

Montana Association of Conservation Districts Employees Organization

Executive Committee Meeting May 29 and 30, 1997, Lupine Inn, Red Lodge, Montana

The MACDEO Executive Committee meeting was conducted at the Lupine Inn, Red Lodge, Montana on Thursday, May 29 and Friday, May 30, 1997. President Debby Wiggers called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Diane Stephenson took minutes in Secretary Patty Winchell's absence.

Members Present: Debby Wiggers, Pat Johnson, LaVerne Ivie, Gayla Hall, Diane Stephenson, Marlene Moon, Sandy Brown, and Donna Burns. Advisors present: Dan Runnels, NRCS, and Laurie Zeller, DNRC-CDB.

Gayla Hall moved to approve the November 13, 1996, annual MACDEO meeting minutes. Pat Johnson seconded and the motion carried.

Debby read a letter submitted by Patty Winchell resigning her position on the Executive Committee, the Training Committee, and Secretary/Treasurer. Following a brief discussion on issues surrounding the resignation, Diane Stephenson moved, seconded by Gayla Hall, to accept Patty's resignation as Secretary/Treasurer. Motion carried. Diane also moved not to accept Patty's resignation from the Executive Committee; Gayla seconded and the motion carried. Patty will be notified of the action.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Pat Johnson moved to approve two Treasurer's reports for the period covering November 8, 1996, through May 28, 1997 (attached). Diane seconded and the motion carried.

MACDEO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION: Diane Stephenson provided results of the Executive Committee 1977 election. Areas III, IV and VI are for three year terms, the other area elections were necessary to fill vacated positions or appointed positions. Executive Committee Members are as follows, with explanations:

MACD Area I:	Thelma Williams, Sheridan County CD Pat Johnson, Valley County CD Two year terms, appointed positions last year.
MACD Area II:	Sandy Brown, Prairie County CD Patty Winchell, Dawson County Two year terms, Patty will complete her term; Sandy is filling a position vacated by Jan Lovec.
MACD Area III:	Julia Bitz, Chouteau County CD Marlene Moon, Liberty County CD
MACD Area IV:	Diane Stephenson, Rosebud CD LaVerne Ivie, Yellowstone CD
MACD Area V:	Susan Antonioli, Granite CD, two year Marily McWilliams, Green Mountain CD, two year term Two year terms, appointed positions last year.
MACD Area VI:	Gayla Hall, Lewis & Clark CD Donna Burns, Meagher County CD

OFFICER ELECTIONS: Debby opened nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. LaVerne Ivie nominated Pat Johnson, seconded by Gayla Hall. Gayla moved, seconded by LaVerne, to close the nominations; motion carried. Pat Johnson was elected Secretary/Treasurer by unanimous ballot.

LaVerne nominated Gayla Hall for Vice President, seconded by Pat Johnson. Marlene Moon moved nominations cease; seconded by Sandy Brown, motion carried. An unanimous ballot was cast for Gayla as Vice President.

Pat Johnson nominated Diane Stephenson for President, seconded by LaVerne Ivie. Gayla Hall moved, seconded by Marlene Moon, to close nominations. Diane was elected President by unanimous ballot. Officers become effective immediately following the MACDEO meeting.

BY-LAW AMENDMENTS/CORRECTIONS:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION TIE-BREAKING: Diane reported this year two MACD Areas were tied for the Executive Committee. Debby and Diane contacted those areas and asked members who had not yet voted to please do so in order to break the tie. Written policy on tie-breaking is necessary for future elections. No action taken, the issue will be discussed at the annual meeting in November.

ADVISOR: The NRCS Advisor position must be filled as Dan Runnels has accepted an appointment in Texas. The group discussed who might best serve in this capacity. Dan provided insight on the background and knowledge necessary to serve as an MACDEO Advisor. Donna Burns moved that President-elect Diane Stephenson request in writing to Shirley Gammon, NRCS State Conservationist, the advisor position be filled by either Shirley Elliott or Chris Peterson and to praise Dan Runnels' commitment and dedication to MACDEO. Seconded by Pat. The motion was amended to write two separate letters; motion carried. MACDEO will request the letter of commendation be placed in Dan's personnel file.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: The by-laws state only conservation district employees or past employees may be MACDEO members. Since other individuals support MACDEO through membership, the by-laws should be amended in order to accept their dues. No action was taken. Gayla agreed to work on the appropriate wording and the issue will be discussed at the annual meeting.

HONORARY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Gayla brought up the issue of requesting a MACD Director attend MACDEO meetings so that MACD is more aware of what the organization does, that person could take MACDEO concerns directly to the Board, and provide assistance to both MACDEO and MACD Board of Directors. It was pointed out that the meetings are held at the same time and it would be difficult to get a representative to attend our meeting. During the MACDEO report to the MACD Board, Diane will ask for the Board's input on the matter.

MACDEO ELECTION TERMS: Gayla questioned the possibility of changing MACDEO Executive Committee terms so that both area representatives are not up for election at the same time, which would provide a mentor-type atmosphere. This year even though three MACD Areas were up for term elections, all six were on the ballot due to changes in membership or vacated and appointed positions. High employee turn-over was also discussed. The group felt changing the elections may not prevent two new area representatives being elected in the same year and that all Executive Committee members need to work together, beyond the respective MACD area, to make the organization work. Conference calls may be scheduled, with the assistance of NRCS, to promote better communications among the Executive Committee members and to cut travel expenses.

MACDEO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES: Diane passed out a draft checklist for preparing MACDEO workshops and/or training sessions (attached). The duty of organizing training sessions must be shared by all MACDEO Executive Committee members, as well as members. In order to make the task as easy as possible, a list was developed by Diane Stephenson and Patty Winchell, Training Committee. Communication is vital for a successful workshop or training session. Comments and suggestions on the checklist are to be submitted to Diane by June 30; the final version will be distributed thereafter.

DUES DEADLINE: In Patty Winchell's absence, Diane reported on problems with our unending dues payment period. While April 1st is the deadline for dues, we have encouraged employees to become members throughout the year. This creates a problem for the Secretary/Treasurer to keep track of who paid and when they paid. Marlene Moon moved to amend the by-laws to state when dues are paid by either the individual or the conservation district, the membership is valid until the next dues deadline. Sandy seconded and the motion carried. The amendment must be ratified at the annual meeting. Pat Johnson moved that dues paid after April 1st are \$25.00, with the exception when the member is a new district employee; seconded by Marlene Moon. The group discussed that some employees may choose not to become members because they are being penalized by not

paying the dues on time. MACDEO does not want to take the chance of offending anyone. Upon a call for vote, the motion failed. Membership reminders will be mailed by the Secretary on January 1 of each year stating the MACDEO dues are payable by April 1st.

TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT: Diane reported on behalf of the Training Committee and the Training Plan was quickly reviewed. Stress management training was not held in May and will be reassigned to another time. According to Dan Runnels, NRCS will offer stress management training during the "USDA Service Center" training, which each field office will receive. All district employees are invited and encouraged to attend the session. Two more training sessions are scheduled for 1997, in July and in September. Members were asked to volunteer to organize the sessions and take responsibility to oversee the activities. LaVerne Ivie and Debby Wiggers will be responsible for the July sessions; Gayla Hall and Marlene Moon will be responsible for the September session. MACDEO members may be asked to assist, however, Executive Committee members are ultimately responsible for the sessions. Also the persons responsible do not have to be from the MACD area where the sessions are held, they simply must take responsibility for the session. It was agreed to conduct an Executive Committee conference call in January 1998 to assign duties for next year's training sessions.

CONVENTION: Gayla Hall discussed Area VI's plans for the MACD Convention to be held in Bozeman on November 12 – 14. With the understanding that the convention schedule is tentative and subject to change from MACD, the group discussed possible training sessions or workshop ideas for the first day. Grant Management and Project WET were discussed. Sandy Brown moved, seconded by Marlene Moon, to conduct a Grant Management session on day one. Motion carried. Gayla reviewed the schedule, which allows a one hour business meeting followed by an hour luncheon and three hours for a workshop. The workshop would run at the same time as the MACD standing committees or a Supervisors Workshop, which could potentially be a problem in getting district employees to the session. Diane will ask MACD to obtain assistance from other agencies to take committee meeting minutes. Pat moved, seconded by Gayla, MACDEO host a dance on the first evening of the convention; motion carried. By majority vote a beach party theme will be used. Donna, Gayla, and Diane will help Area VI organize and coordinate the dance. Questions were asked regarding the Project WET workshop. Gayla explained WET stand for "water education training". The hands-on activities are ice-breakers and promote working together as a group to solve a problem. The session takes at least three hours and would be most beneficial if held at the beginning of the convention. Administrators would get to know each other by working together on a "project". Following discussion, Gayla moved to hold a Project WET workshop on the first day and move the Grant Management to a concurrent session. Pat Johnson seconded and the motion carried. Following discussion, motion made, seconded and carried not to conduct a play. The MACDEO luncheon will be held separately from the business meeting. Executive Committee members are encouraged to mingle with new members during the luncheon and make them feel welcome.

It was agreed that a raffle would be held, with the item to be decided upon by LaVerne Ivie, fund raiser organizer. Debby donated the Montana Silversmith jewelry she won last year as a raffle item, as she was uncomfortable accepting it.

The pros and cons of the Scholarship program were discussed. MACD was not completely pleased with the program. However, MACDEO feels that if the scholarship recipients had a list of duties that they are responsible for, rather than being on call throughout the convention, the program would work. LaVerne moved, seconded by Pat, to continue the scholarship program with the understanding that MACD establish a list of duties for the recipients. The motion carried. Donna Burns moved that the Executive Officers form a Scholarship Committee to make the final decision on who receives the scholarships. Seconded by Gayla, the motion carried.

SCRAPBOOK DEVELOPMENT: Diane suggested putting together a scrapbook with activities or events that MACDEO has sponsored or been involved in. At the November annual meeting, the members will be asked if anyone is interested in being the Organizational Historian.

NCDEA NEWS: Debby presented a challenge from the National Conservation Districts Employees Association to donate \$250, to be matched by NCDEA, to send a representative to all conservation district involved meetings. Motion made, seconded and carried not to meet NCDEA's challenge.

Gayla moved to recess the meeting until Friday, May 30 at 8:00 a.m.; seconded by Pat, the motion carried.

MAY 30, 1997

Debby Wiggers called the meeting to order at 8:20 a.m. Members present: Debby Wiggers, Pat Johnson, LaVerne Ivie, Gayla Hall, Diane Stephenson, Marlene Moon, and Donna Burns. Advisors present: Dan Runnels, NRCS, and Laurie Zeller, DNRC-CDB.

NAME BADGES: MACDEO will continue to supply name badges to new members. Gayla Hall suggested MACDEO purchase ribbons to attach to the name badges for the MACDEO Executive Committee and Officers. LaVerne Ivie agreed to purchase the ribbons through the badge supplier and will continue to coordinate the name badge program.

NEWSLETTER: The MACDEO newsletter was discussed briefly. Diane Stephenson, editor, will assign articles or members may submit articles to her. The next newsletter will be published as soon as possible and when "newsworthy" items are available. In the past "summer" and "winter" issues have been published.

FUTURE FUND RAISERS: No ideas were forthcoming, however, funds may be available through private companies. Members will be asked for input.

OTHER BUSINESS: SUPERVISORS HANDBOOK: Some time ago MACDEO looked into publishing a pocket-sized Supervisors Handbook, similar to those available through other states. Unfortunately, the cost of publishing the books was beyond our budget.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE: Laurie Zeller was asked if MACDEO could apply for a 223 grant to help with mileage, room, etc., for members to attend training sessions or executive committee meetings. Laurie thought it was a worthwhile idea, if a conservation district would sponsor the application. Donna Burns offered her district as a sponsor and LaVerne will help write the grant.

TRAINING COMMITTEE: Of the original Training Committee members, Diane is the only one left. One member resigned and one is currently not a member. Donna offered to talk to Carrie Leu, Gallatin CD Administrator, about serving. Marily McWilliams was also suggested.

BY-LAWS: Additional by-law changes necessary are: deleting Article IV, #9. Sponsor the Employees Award Program; change all references of secretary and treasurer to secretary/treasurer. These will be discussed at the annual meeting. References to SCS will be changed to NRCS.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by,

Diane Stephenson, Acting Secretary
Rosebud Conservation District