



Michigan Chapter

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, November 1, 2017
Shanty Creek Resort, Bellaire, Michigan

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to Order: 11:15 a.m. by President Jon Bartholic

Roll Call: Secretary Kesselring stated that 4 officers and 4 members who were not officers were present on-site; and 1 officer and 1 member who was not an officer were attending remotely; and that, based on the Bylaws, a quorum was present.

Officers Attending On Site: Jon Bartholic, President; Dan Kesselring, Secretary; Kelly Goward, Treasurer; Gerald Miller, Region 3 Director.

Officers Attending Remotely: Tim Harrigan, Region 4 Director.

Members Attending On Site: Martin Arford, Rebecca Bender, Elaine Brown and Hugh Brown.

Members Attending Remotely: Laura Young.

Agenda: Jon asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda as presented. Hearing none, Jon declared the agenda approved.

2/3/17 Minutes: Jon asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the 2016 Annual Meeting. Moved by Gerald Miller, supported by Hugh Brown, to approve the minutes as printed and distributed on the website. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Jon asked for a motion to approve the 2017 Treasurer's Report. Moved by Hugh Brown, supported by Elaine Brown, to approve the Treasurer's Report as printed and distributed on the website. Motion passed.

Committee Reports:

ANR Seminar: Tim Harrigan, Committee Chair, reported that the 2018 ANR Seminar will be held on Friday, March 2, at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing. The program description and registration has been submitted to MSU, and the search for speakers is underway.

Awards: Dan Kesselring briefly described the Chapter's Awards Program, emphasizing that award nominations must be submitted by a Chapter member, but anyone can assist or recommend potential nominations. The Awards information is on the Chapter's website.

Membership: Hugh brown reported that Rebecca Bender has agreed to Chair the Membership Committee. Hugh encouraged members to use the gift membership option to introduce prospective members to the Society. Hugh said that membership has been in a slow decline, but that new members are coming on at a rate that almost matches membership losses through attrition. Hugh mentioned that Grand Valley State University Student Chapter President Mary Parr is also a member of the Michigan Chapter and has accepted serving on the Executive Council as a non-voting Student Chapter representative. **More in Appendix A.**

Policy: Hugh Brown, current Chair of the Chapter Policy Committee, reported that the Committee has been considering the possibility of realigning the Chapter's Regions to better represent the membership distribution in the State. Past President Jon Bartholic will become the Committee Chair in 2018. **More in Appendix A.**

Scholarship: Hugh Brown, Committee Chair, reported that Kelly Goward and Martin Arford have agreed to serve on the Committee, but that he would like one or two more members on the committee. Some suggestions from the audience included expanding the Scholarship Program to include students at Community Colleges, and to lower the grade level eligibility to include the Freshmen class. **More in Appendix A.**

Election results: Dan Kesselring reported that 18 ballots had been received, that all Nominees had been elected, and that there were no write-in votes. Chapter members Sarah Ehinger and James Klang had served on the Elections Committee and did the actual count. The results are new officers Rebecca Bender, Region 1 Director; Hugh Brown, President; John Freeland, President-elect; David Lehnert, Vice President. In addition, Gerald Miller was elected to serve a second term as Region 3 Director.

Outgoing President's Report: Jon Bartholic's outgoing report follows as **Appendix B.**

Incoming President's Outlook: Hugh Brown's vision and goals for 2018 follows as **Appendix C.**

Member Comments: Kelly Goward said that she and Rebecca Bender now had editor roles on the Chapter's Facebook page and wondered if there should be any guidance as to content to be placed on that page. Hugh said that might be something for the Policy Committee to consider.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel F. Kesselring, Secretary

Appendix A

Report for Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Meeting, November 1, 2017 From Hugh Brown, Committee Chair

Membership

According to the International Society's website, there are currently 60 members in the Michigan Chapter which is down two from the beginning of the year tally. We have obtained several new members, but lost more than we gained. We are a sponsor of the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts meeting and are providing registrants with the International Society's membership form. Current members are encouraged to make individual contact with prospective members and can use the information in the brochure to highlight the benefits of joining. We should also accomplish the action items in the Chapter's 2014-2019 Strategic Plan that relate to membership.

Rebecca Bender will serve as the Membership Chairperson beginning on November 1 and Katelyn Walters (current scholarship recipient) has agreed to help out with communications on Facebook.

The Grand Valley Student Chapter is active on campus, but not in the International Society. Mary Parr is serving as a student liaison to the Michigan Chapter.

Policy

The Executive Council and the Policy Committee have been considering a reorganization of the chapter's regions that involves the merger of Regions 1 and 2 and adding an at-large director. The main justification for the proposed bylaws change is to provide more equitable representation on the Executive Council. Current numbers in the Regions are 1=3, 2=8, 3=24, and 4=29. The at-large Director would provide geographical flexibility to the Nominating Committee (for example in a case where two good candidates are from the same region).

A draft of the Chapter Bylaws revision (see below) proposes combining regions 1 and 2 (along with a shift of Bay, Isabella, and Midland Counties from existing region 4) and providing for an at-large regional director. If this is approved, we would need to have a transition to a three-region configuration after a future election.

In the Executive Council's Sept. 9 teleconference, authorization to proceed with the merger proposal was granted. We would like to obtain feedback on the bylaw revision from the membership prior to putting the bylaw revision proposal to a vote. Note: the current bylaws are on the chapter's website.

New Article IV Officers

Section 3 - The President-Elect and Vice-President shall be elected annually as hereinafter provided. The current year President-Elect shall automatically assume the position of President the following year. However, if the President-Elect is unable to assume the position of President, then the position of President shall be elected to fill the vacancy. The four regional directors shall be elected for a term

of 2 years hereinafter provided. Regional directors of regions 1 and 3 shall be elected in odd-numbered calendar years. Regional directors of regions 2 and the at-large director (4) shall be elected in even-numbered calendar years.

New Article VII Regions

a) To give the membership the greater opportunity to participate in Chapter affairs, the Chapter will be divided into three regions. A member's voting region shall be the area in which is based on the member's address of record at SWCS Headquarters is located.

The regions of the Chapter are:

- 1. Northern Region - Comprising all the upper peninsula of Michigan Comprising and the counties of Alcona, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Bay, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Clare, Crawford, Emmet, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Iosco, Isabella, Kalkaska, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Midland, Missaukee, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, and Wexford.*
- 2. Southwestern Region - Comprising the counties of Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Clinton, Eaton, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren.*
- 3. Southeastern Region - Comprising the counties of Genesee, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Huron, Ingham, Jackson, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, Tuscola, Washtenaw, and Wayne.*

b) A fourth Regional Representative to serve on the Executive Council shall be chosen at large from any of the three regions listed above. This bylaw change will go into effect at a time that will allow the current Regional Representative in either 1 or 2 (whichever one's term expires earlier) to become the at-large member.

Scholarship

The Executive Council decided to give a Five Hundred Dollar Michigan Scholarships in Conservation Award for the 2017-2018 school year. Dan has sent out an announcement for the scholarship and I will follow up with my contacts. Kelly Goward and Martin Alford have agreed to serve on the Scholarship Committee but I need one or two additional persons to serve on the committee.

The chapter's scholarship funds have been invested in two certificates of deposit at the Marshall Community Credit Union and in two Vanguard funds (High Dividend Yield Index and Long Term Investment-Grade Fund). The first Vanguard fund is equities and the second is in bonds. Collectively, these investments should generate income to help cover the cost of the scholarship in years to come.

Appendix B

Presidents Annual Report

Jon Bartholic, Chapter President

This is a very good year. There has been extensive involvement with our members, particularly Committees and the Executive Council have been very active. We have together been reinvigorated by realizing the need to develop, disseminate and enhance the adoption of new approaches to soil and water conservation practices within the integrated food and watershed system. By having a significant commitment to work together in close cooperation and integration with other related organizations, activities and individuals, important progress is being made. Additional potentials for aiding the accomplishment of our goals are enhanced by incorporating new information technologies, extensive detailed spatial databases and ongoing enhanced measurements of environmental and soil qualities all to help sustain and enhance a productive and environmentally sustainable system. All of these needs have even greater priority with the realization that population goes from seven to at least 9 billion people by mid-century. I feel our Michigan Chapter SWCS is aware of the needs, potential new knowledge and thoughtful adoption approaches to help deploy a sustaining system in which we live.

Our first major event of the year was the Michigan Chapter Soil Water Conservation Society Seminar held during Agricultural and Natural Resources Week on MSU campus. This year's title of the seminar was "A Matter of Balance: Feeding Our Crops, Protecting the Waters of the Great Lakes." Speakers had a variety of backgrounds and were from both Michigan and out-of-state. The speakers were sometimes scientists', sometimes environmentalists and sometimes practitioners including a Tuscola County Farmer. Students attended as well as a wide variety of professionals. Awards and scholarships were presented. Maureen Stine nominated the Award winners who were from The Little Traverse Conservancy's Education Department (Melissa Hansen and Sarah Mayhew). Our Chapter's Scholarship was awarded to Katelyn Walters, a student at Michigan State University.

The outstanding and effective activities of our chapter were recognized nationally by the Soil and Water Conservation Society at their July International Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. Chapter member Adam Reimer accepted the award on behalf of the Chapter.

A mini retreat was held July 25 at the Manly Miles Bldg. in East Lansing, Michigan. The meeting was facilitated by Zachary Curtis, a PhD student at MSU, and was attended by nearly all Executive Council members. The agenda included: first - broad introductions and background discussion, second - strategic planning updates and improving partner relationships and collaboration, and third - to increase

involvement in the MACD fall meeting and discussion of strategic planning. Then at the September 8 Executive Council teleconference Gerry Miller summarized the progress already accomplished. First, we had together formulated a letter to Clara Lindahl, President of the Iowa Chapter and newly appointed CEO of SWCS. The

letter congratulated her, invited her to our seminar in March 2018, and to visit with us the day before the seminar to help us further develop our strategies. Second, we have improved our relationship with MACD through a number of contacts and will have significant activities at their fall conference. Through these activities we will also develop and/or enhance relationships with other partners or potential partners. Fourth, Executive Council members are developing Michigan oriented articles for dissemination through our monthly newsletter. These activities/efforts are creating much more solid connections across Michigan and nationally.

Next a sequence of brief items: 1) We provided a supporting commitment letter to cooperate with the MSU Institute of Water Research on a new NRCS RCPP proposal. The project proposal, titled "Maple River Watershed Fish Habitat Improvement", would be funded for five years. 2) We now have 3 new editors on our Facebook page (Kelly Goward, Rebecca Bender and Katelyn Walters), and we have put Google Analytics links on our website so that we can get a better idea of who is accessing our website. 3) Our Nominating Committee did an excellent job of obtaining candidates for each open position. We very much appreciated their efforts. 4) Our Policy Committee has been looking at reorganizing/redefining our regions to better reflect membership numbers in different parts of the state. This will be discussed at our November meeting. 5) Last are our activities at this MACD Fall meeting. First is our Annual Meeting. Second is a tour with about 50 participants planning to attend to look at the development of the Hops industry and related activities. Third is a session entitled "Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), Precision Agriculture and Water Resources". Fourth is a live demonstration on Friday at noon which will show UAV flights. And Fifth, we are sponsoring a Break at the MACD Conference.

Appendix C

Incoming President's Remarks

By Hugh Brown

Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Meeting

Nov. 1, 2017

President Jon Bartholic provided an excellent review of the past year's activities in his report. Notably, Michigan received a Chapter Achievement Award at the International Society's Annual Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, this summer. The Chapter also received a Sustained Performance Award in 2016. Our successes have come because of the talents and efforts of our Executive Council and members. I would like to recognize some of those contributions:

President Jon Bartholic brought a wealth of natural resource understanding and worked diligently to accomplish the Society's mission: *to foster the science and art of natural resource conservation.*

Vice President Tim Cattron chaired the Legislative Committee and provided expertise on Robert's Rules of Order.

Region 2 Representative Dan Busby organized a great tour of the MI Local Hops facilities attended by approximately 50 people as part of the MACD Conference.

Region 3 Representative Gerald Miller demonstrated and promoted professionalism and was reelected to second term.

Region 4 Representative Tim Harrigan organized a stellar ANR Week Seminar in 2017 and is leading the planning for the 2018 event.

Treasurer Kelly Goward stewarded the Chapter's assets and provided regular reports of our financial activities.

Secretary Dan Kesselring has ensured that the Chapter's business was conducted in an effective manner and his work has been vital to our accomplishments.

Incoming Officers

President Elect John Freeland has extensive resource experience, and his consulting background will be helpful in moving the Chapter forward.

Vice President Dave Lehnert will provide an NRCS perspective to our activities.

Region 1 Representative Rebecca Bender will serve as Membership Chair and will assist with social media communications.

My goals for the year are:

1. Accomplish as many of the Goals and Objectives of our Strategic Plan as possible.
2. Involve more members in committee work and chapter activities.

3. Enhance our communications and networking efforts.

I appreciate being elected to serve as President of the Michigan Chapter of SWCS and will endeavor to build on the accomplishments of the organization. I look forward to working with the Executive Council, members and conservation partners to provide educational opportunities and improve natural resource management in Michigan.