

APPROVED

MeWEA Executive Board Meeting
VIRTUAL
July 19, 2024

MINUTES

Virtual Attendance: Terry Tucker, Emily Prescott, Stacy Thompson, Jeff McBurnie, Rob Pontau, Paula Drouin, Phil Tucker, Gregg Wood, Andy Begin, Peter Zaykoski, Tim Wade, Bryanna Denis.

Call to Order: President Emily Prescott called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Quorum: It was determined there was a Quorum.

Minutes: Motion made by Rob Pontau, seconded by Tim Wade, all approved the June 21, 2024, minutes. Andy Begin had a question, and his question was answered.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff McBurnie reported on the June 2024 financial report and submitted a report. (SEE ATTACHED)

Jeff reiterated that we are still not in a good place financially and we should have a meeting to reevaluate our spending priorities as well as discuss ways of making our revenue stream more robust.

Emily will schedule a meeting to discuss further and invite Travis Peaslee as Deputy Treasurer to also sit in on that meeting.

He did mention that Ops Challenge is being covered by sponsorships and NEWEA and Rob has been putting in a lot of effort getting that done.

Old Business:

Utility Manager Committee report: Rob Pontau reported the following:

- Nothing to report. They will meet up at the Convention in September. People are still utilizing the list and chat which is helpful.

Planners & Wastewater Utilities Event Update: Emily Prescott reported the following:

- Planning meeting for next Friday to go over details.
- They have a target date for September and once they have the meeting, she will send out her report on this.

REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

DEP REPORT: Gregg Wood reported the following:

- Has been working on permits and getting them sent out.

- He has compliance positions open that they are trying to fill. He is hoping to have every opening filled in a month and a half.
- He mentioned due to a situation that they came across he would like to reiterate to facilities that they please make sure they have accurate records for their sampling and testing.
- Convention in September: He noted that MeWEA has put the Government Affairs session to meet first thing Thursday a.m, and to have a Meet & Greet sometime that day. He has asked staff from DEP to be in attendance there. He wants everyone to encourage people from their facilities to be there. He feels this is a good idea. He understands that there are staffing issues, and some facilities cannot send operators.
- Comments are due for the draft MS4 permit. He drafted the modification and put it together.
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JETCC-NEIWPCC: Peter Zaykoski submitted a report (see attached).

He added to his report the following:

- Awards nominations open for another few weeks.
- He reached out to a few MeWEA committee chairs

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE: Emily reported the following:

Emily & Phil Tucker had a meeting with Jim Cohen. They discussed the following with him:

- Talked to him about breaking up some of his time.
- Got a draft contract from Jim Cohen. Phil will be reviewing the contract.
- Will only have a couple of point people to reach out to him when needed.
- MeWEA will still be engaged with him as he is a huge asset and resource. We just need him to strategically use his time.

MWUA: Andy Begin reported the following:

- Past week had a strategic planning meeting.
- Highlights were on training & legislative things.
- There is a need for operators. Focused on how to train them for Operator 1 & 2.
- Improve communications to stay active with the membership
- Create networking opportunity
- People want to see the Executive Director at the facilities.
- Improving on what they are doing already.
- Golf Tournament is August 7th, at Val Hala, and the Summer outing is August 8 at Cumberland Fair Grounds.

NEBRA UPDATE: Phil Tucker gave a brief update on NEBRA.

- Going to try and help get together with other states to talk about PFAS bills, they will also include EPA and state regulators in that same meeting.
- NEBRA is going to have a session at the Fall Convention on communicating on the PFAS issues. Rob, Tim, Scott and Phil will be participating.

NEWEA STATE DIRECTORS REPORT -: Paula Drouin had nothing really to report for State Director other than that operator exchange is coming up.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Joan reported the following:

- Been working on the Exhibitors for the upcoming Convention
- Have all but 3 signed up and confirmed.
- Also working on the attendee packet.
- If vendors sell out at the convention, she can market sponsorship for Operators Challenge & Cornhole event.

COUNCIL DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

OUTREACH COUNCIL: Phil Tucker, Director reported the following:

Communications – Bryanna Denis & Phil Tucker & Emily & Terry reported the following:

- Lengthy discussion on the status of the newsletter
- MWUA wants to move away from the current newsletter because of the expense.
- Emily indicated she talked with Mike Cummons from MWUA. She wants to talk to him about at least doing one more newsletter. MWUA wants to simplify the newsletter and do it as a hot topics/brief via email. This came out of their Strategic Planning Session. She feels we should do one more the way the newsletter is and communicate the future change to the members. She feels this is an easy solution. Mike indicated he would be talking to his board to get a definite answer on the newsletter at their next meeting.
- Terry agrees with Emily on having one more newsletter and communicating to the members that the format will be changing.
- Bryanna agreed also with Terry & Emily. She mentioned that \$23,500 was taken in on sponsorship for the newsletter. She is confused to why the numbers aren't working for MWUA. She thinks it should be a net positive.
- Rob thinks we can still get the sponsorship money and put it to other use. He noted that the message from the membership is that the newsletter is too long.
- Bryanna was curious about the newsletter getting lost in email if they don't mail it out. Rob agrees it is a concern. Bryanna had a lot of questions about links and other things that might work or might not. She also is questioning the Platinum level and how this would work with a centerfold ad. This would have to be discussed.
- Emily recommends that they get a coordination meeting to address these issues. Bryanna thinks we can do the last newsletter in late fall.

Government Affairs- Dan Marks & Amanda Smith

Phil reported the following:

- Nothing this time of year at the state level for Government Affairs.
There is a bill that came out in the US Senate. This would make special districts, water districts & sewer districts eligible for all the same federal funding money. Not sure how municipalities would be willing to share. This came out on July 11th and has been referred to the committee on homeland security & government services.

Membership – Jen Nicholson

- Nothing to report.

Public Relations – Evan Pereira

Evan submitted a report.

- Finalized next hyperlocal press release highlighting Biddeford’s piloting of green technology.
- Continued holding biweekly coordination meetings with Diana and GA representative, also begun connecting with Nicki Pellenz and MWUA on identifying ways to share PR resources going forward.
- Identified earned media opportunity via The Public Works Podcast. Phil Tucker and Amanda Smith will be interviewed individually as representatives.

Phil reported the following:

- Black Fly Media: They have exhausted what the Utilities funded this year. Not sure if a decision was made to whether they would continue with Diana. Emily doesn’t think we should drop them mid-month. Possible finish up this year. Phil noted that NEWEA & NEBRA is interested in sponsoring this. He will reach out to both organizations. Jeff stated that funding wise we would need to have some sponsors. They want Joan to ask some vendors to sponsor the PR committee if she has filled the vendor area. Jeff thinks that a brief newsletter could be advertising for the sponsors.

Treatment Systems Operation Council Director – Paula Drouin

Paula talked about what was submitted in her report. (SEE ATTACHED)

PERSONNEL ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL: Stacy Thompson, Director (SEE ATTACHED)

She added to her report the following:

- Looking forward to the DEP meet & greet.
- New Professionals: She attended the Sea Dogs game and stated it was a great event.
- Tim Wade mentioned he would welcome a replacement on the convention committee if someone were interested.
- Prepping for the fall convention

OFFICER’S REPORTS

Presidents Report: Emily reported on the following:

- Had a meeting with DEP last week and will be putting together a follow-up. Still a lot more questions than action. DEP is looking at potential funding. Will meet again on August 8th.
- Juniper Ridge is up for review – Emily will submit a comment on behalf of MEWEA on overall management of biosolids.
- MMA Contract: Emily stated her, and Terry will be meeting with MMA next week to review and over the draft contract and what needs to be done to transition over.
- Planners Event Still working on this event - Looking to do in the fall
- Emily mentioned that she will be signing on to continue our partnership with the Bio Hub.

President-Elect Report: Terry Tucker reported the following:

- Meeting with MMA next week to go over the new contract and she will be teaching a class on August 14th for NEIWPC on how to create, maintain and enforce a FOG program.

Vice President Report: Rob Pontau reported the following:

- Operators Challenge: They have brought in \$3,000 so far
- He would be willing to sit on the Convention committee.

Immediate Past President: Tim Wade reported the following:

- Tim spoke about workforce development and how we can help more.
- Tim will put together a power point presentation for the upcoming convention.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Phil Tucker, seconded by Tim Wade, all approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:18 AM

UPCOMING EVENTS

MeWEA

Fall Convention –September 18,19,20, 2024, Sunday River.

JETCC

North Country Convention – April 2 & 3, 2025. Presque Isle

REPRESENTATIVES/COUNCIL CHAIRS/COMMITTEES REPORTS

TREASURER NAME: Jeff McBurnie

ACCOUNT/BUDGET STATUS: I've reviewed and reconciled the Association's financials up to the end of June. Year to date, we had \$69,085 in our accounts (check of the on-line banking says we now have \$63,500 as of 7/15). Our situation is not improving and so we continue to head in a direction that the Association cannot sustain. Although we are seeing more revenue coming in as we approach the Fall Convention, we still need to reevaluate our spending priorities as well as investigate ways of making our revenue stream more robust. We will need to consider substantive steps to right the financial ship before we are completely underwater. I have expectations that the Fall Conference will help in improving our resources, but we need to start focusing on how we will reign in spending or increase revenue.

REMINDER: As always, if you spot errors, have questions, or just want to discuss the Association's general financial status, please don't hesitate to contact me.

COMMITTEE NAME: JETCC: Peter Zaykoski

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: June 5, 2024

RECENT ACTIVITIES: Our spring semester finished up with a final class on June 27, a repeat of the Pipe Location and Leak Detection class we held in March. This was offered at F.W. Webb in Hampden, ME. Planning for the fall schedule is now underway with classes expected to begin in late September or early October.

Management Candidate School continues with operator exchanges occurring over the summer and one more regular class before graduation at the Fall Convention.

The 2025 North Country Convention will be on April 2-3, 2025 at Northern Maine Community College.

DECISIONS MADE:

The Committee has not met since the last EC meeting. The Committee is still seeking an At-Large representative and welcomes suggestions broadly on individuals who may be a good fit.

JETCC's calls for nominations for its Founder's Award and the Hanson Excellence in Management Award are currently open. The deadline to submit nominations for both awards is August 2.

ACTION PLAN COMMITTEE/OFFICER ASSIGNMENTS:

NEXT MEETING/OTHER IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES: The next JETCC meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2024 in the Bangor area; specific venue is to be determined.

TREATMENT SYSTEMS OPERATION COUNCIL DIRECTOR – Paula Thompson

Treatment Plant Operators Committee - The committee reported: They are looking to schedule a meeting in August.

Residuals Management committee reported: Andre, Emily, and Travis met with the DEP commissioner on July 11 to discuss state biosolids efforts, Brown & Caldwell study, and possible funding and/or legislative efforts. Emily will report on that in her report.

Laboratory Committee – Paula Drouin reported that she is working on helping get the Lab Committee off the ground again. She met with Alana Dougherty from PWD who is interested in being on the committee, and possibly chairing it. Paula reached out to members on the current committee email list to determine who is still around and interested in setting up a meeting; however, response was very low. Wondering if EC leaders have folks at their facilities?

Stormwater Committee – The stormwater committee’s last meeting was cancelled and there is not another one until the Stormwater Conference 9/6. Comments on the MS4 permits are due 7/22. Emily is drafting comments and will send them to the committee for review and additional comments, as well as to determine if we want to submit comments at all.

Pretreatment Committee – The Pretreatment Committee had no report.

Collection Systems Committee – Paula Drouin reported that she attended the Collection Systems committee meeting on June 25th. A lot of the conversation was about the affordability of cornhole tournament at the fall convention as well as sponsorship needs. For this year, the committee will solicit their own sponsorships as usual, but Paula discussed with them that the EC will be managing all sponsorships for MEWEA as a whole starting next year. The committee was also supportive of having a donations jar at the event since there is no charge to play or to eat the food provided. The committee was against charging for food through the registration process.

There was a lengthy discussion on the food & alcohol in 2023

PERSONNEL ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL DIRECTOR- Stacy Thompson

Convention Committee – Vendor packet has gone out and golf registration is open. Booths are just about sold out: I believe we had 8 left as of yesterday (7/15). The attendee registration packet hopefully will be out at the end of the July 22nd week. Still meeting biweekly with Justin and Tim.

Personnel Advancement Committee – Charlene is just about wrapped up with the session map! Will incorporate into the attendee registration packet.

New Professionals Committee – Nothing to report.

Awards Committee – Need to check in with Mike to see how nominations are going. TBD.