

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting
North Dakota Section of the AWWA
January 30th, 2025 2:00 pm - Hybrid [Zoom](#)
DEQ 4201 Normandy St, Bismarck, Room 208

The winter meeting of the North Dakota Section of the American Water Works Association was held on January 30th 2025. Present at the meeting were Chair, Alan Kemmet; Chair-Elect, Dan Overmoe; Trustees, Mark Paddock, Jared Huibregtse, and Adam Thomas; Secretary-Treasurer, Maggie Sahr; Section Staff, Linda Fisher; Heather Schumacher, Marisha Lunde, Dean Sletten, Miranda Kleven, Selah Mueller; Jim Lennington, Greg Wavra, Jake Schafer.

I. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by Chair Kemmet at 2:02 PM with introductions.

II. Secretary's Report – Draft minutes of the October 2024 meeting had a correction which led to a clarification of the May 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Sletten noted Surface Water Treatment Workshop planning had begun prior to the spring board meeting on May 20, 2024. Ms. Lunde did not have the actual dates or list of attendees readily available at the October meeting, but later clarified at the 1-30-25 board meeting that a planning meeting regarding hotel pricing packages had occurred May 16th. Invitees included Maggie Sahr, Tyler Fode, Greg Wavra, Jacob Henne, Casey Danielson, Lisa Volbrecht, Meredith Quinn, Alan Kemmet, Erin Steever, Zac Ranisate, and Linda Fisher. Attendance could not be confirmed. Mr. Sletten indicated that in July of 2024, Maggie Sahr provided him with a list of invitees for the May 22, 2024 meeting which included Linda Fisher, Maggie Sahr, Casey Danielson, Jacob Henne, Tyler Fode, Dawn Rognerud, Greg Wavra, Erin Steever, and Chris Myers from Sioux Falls. However, attendees could not be confirmed.

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected (Overmoe/Huibregtse, Carried)

III. Treasurer's Report – 2024 gross profit was \$47,730.39. Total expenditures were \$37,940.99 at the end of 2024. A \$10,000 donation for Water for People was made in January of 2025. Because of a \$15,000 overpayment of our association allotment in 2024, those funds were invested in a 6 month CD last year, which matured, then automatically was reinvested in December. The 15,000 plus interest is available prior to the next maturity date in June only if needed for 2025 expenses.

Mr. Sletten reminded the board that the Investment Committee advises to get between 4 and 6% interest on investments, and that CDs are appropriate right now. There is a student support CD at only 2.5% that the committee can try get a better interest rate when that come due.

Motion to approve the treasurer's report (Overmoe/Paddock, Carried)

IV. Committee Reports

a. **Membership Committee** – Ms. Schumacher introduced herself as the new Membership chair. Membership was at 231 members, with 15 of those being new members as of December 2024.

Mr. Sletten revealed Ms. Schumacher was unaware of the committee members. The membership has traditionally consisted of the board plus any other volunteers appointed

as appropriate. He noted new trustees and new committee chairs have not received orientation regarding bylaws or policies and procedures. Mr. Wavra suggested meetings be held in person again, with orientation the day prior to the January meeting, as was done in the past.

Chair Kemmet requested a list of all committee chairs and members be sent out for everybody's awareness.

- b. Public Relations** – Chair Kemmet is hoping to fill the vacant committee chair position. The association did send some guidance to work on kicking off social media activity.
- c. Education and Research** – Ms. Lunde requested Maggie Sahr and Zac Ranisate as committee members, with Mr. Paddock and Chair Kemmet as board representatives. Regional and state science fairs are coming up. The last couple of years the section provided Visa gift cards and certificates for the winners of the junior and senior divisions for each of the four regional science fairs, and to the winners of the state science fair.
- d. Water for People** – Ms. Kleven recapped the report distributed to the board prior to the meeting: \$8,850 was raised between mailings and money raised at the conference, including a \$1000 pledge from PKG. The section rounded up the total to \$10,000 for our annual donation, which has an impact of \$107,450 for WFP. She requested Jim Lennington, Greg Wavra, Linda Fisher, and Brenda from the AE2S Grand Forks office for the committee, as well as Chair Kemmet and Jared Huibregtse as board representatives.
- e. Young Professionals** – No report submitted.
- f. Student Chapters** – Ms. Mueller announced the NDSU joint chapter is sending a competitive team to the Canadian National Water Treatment Competition and will be presenting posters at the Surface Water Treatment Workshop in April. The chapter is determining feasibility of sending somebody to WEFTEC in the fall. Mr. Sletten inquired if they would be doing a design team or just a poster. However, she indicated that was yet to be determined. Mr. Sletten reminded the board the student chapters are joint AWWA/WEF chapters that are an independent entity of the section, and that the student advisors should be the ones attending board meetings for the sake of continuation as students graduate. Ms. Mueller indicated she will pass on this information to Dr. Jiale Xu and Dr. Chun Li. He also emphasized the liaisons to the school be someone local. Currently, Mr. Ranisate had been meeting with them. However, Mr. Sletten recommended Ms. Schumacher take over that position. She is willing to help out and be involved in YP activities. He reminded the board to maintain a variety of engineering companies involved with the student chapters. It was noted contact should be made with UND to establish a liaison. Ms. Mueller indicated there are approximately 21 or 24 registered NDSU students, with roughly half regularly attending meetings.
- g. Policies and Procedures** – Ms. Sahr submitted a proposed Expense Reimbursement policy to the board with the meeting announcement on behalf of the committee, and asked for any changes.

Mr. Sletten inquired who was on the committee. Chair Kemmet indicated it had been himself, Mr. Hall, Mr. Kershaw, and Ms. Sahr. He indicated that Mr. Sletten will be appointed to the committee, and Ms. Sahr is stepping down. It was noted that the chair of the committee has traditionally been the section chair. At a meeting with himself, former Chair Kershaw, and Ms. Sahr in June, he had requested to be on the committee. Mr. Kershaw had asked how he was to get him appointed, and it was noted only two of the four committee members were present. However, communication regarding the request had not been made following the meeting.

- h. Investments** – Mr. Sletten reported there had been no meetings due to CD interest rates being decent. However, he would touch base with Mike Berg and Greg Wavra.
- i. Water Utility Council** – No report submitted. Ms. Sahr expressed interest in serving on the committee.

V. Director's Report – No director's report submitted. Mr. Berg is attending ND Legislative Sessions

VI. Section Staff Report – Ms. Fisher reported she has been working with Ms. Lunde on Surface Water Treatment Workshop, with Mr. Wavra on preparing the budget, and on the proposed section logos from the association.

VII. Business

- a. Taste Test** – In 2024 the association firmly stated that winners of local taste tests may only be sponsored to submit their water sample to the national ACE taste tests if they are AWWA utility members, and a utility representative must be present if they do submit a sample. The city of Lisbon won the 2024 local contest, but are not AWWA members. There was discussion whether or not the section should either pay their utility membership or recruit their membership so they can go to ACE. Ms. Sahr indicated the operator in Lisbon had not said if they would be interested or not.
Mr. Sletten asked if there had been a press release for Lisbon winning the taste test in October, and stated the E&R committee had been handling the press releases for several years, as it is good PR for the water industry. Ms. Lunde indicated to her knowledge, a press release had been written up and submitted.
Mr. Wavra suggested for future local contests to leave the entry open to any utility, and if the winner is not an AWWA, they are excluded from the national contest due to their conditions. This can be stated in the rules that a utility membership is required.
Mr. Sletten suggest the director, Mike Berg, protest the rule as it is not good PR.
- b. 2025 Events**
 - i. Membership Summit – past
 - ii. YP Summit – past
 - iii. Science Fair – NDSSEF, March 31-April 1 Grand Forks, ND –Ms. Lunde indicated Peter Sykora will likely send an email that can be distributed for judge

volunteers once online registration is live. They are always in need of more volunteers.

- iv. RMSO –Regions 1&3 May 2-3 2025, Detroit, MI –Ms. Sahr verified the dates are intended to be a Friday-Saturday meeting. Mr. Sletten indicated RMSO is open to all board members, but typically first year or second year trustees go. It is not required for a section to send representatives. Mr. Thomas expressed interest, but will confirm later. Ms. Fisher will send an email solicitation, followed by an email vote to approve travel for volunteers.
- v. Fly-In April 8-9, Washington DC – Ms. Sahr volunteered to attend this year. Mr. Sletten indicated it is always recommended that at least one person that has gone before go. Chair Kemmet noted at least one utility member is encouraged to attend. He also expressed interest, but will confirm later. Mr. Huibregtse requested an email be circulated well ahead of time for all activities to ensure ample time to plan scheduling. Ms. Fisher will also include a deadline prior to registration and lodging deadlines set by the association.
- vi. Surface Water Treatment Workshop April 22-24th Fargo, ND DoubleTree –Ms. Lunde reported an email had been circulated between MN, SD, and ND sections for approval of speakers. Dr. Johnny Johnson, noted supporter of drinking water fluoridation, will be the keynote and a slot speaker, with a cost of \$2500 for travel, room, and board. At the time, the SD board chair had not responded, and MN had approved. Chair Kemmet indicated that being so close to the workshop, if SD does not respond, the majority vote would be deemed sufficient for approval.

Due to proposed legislation in ND to make fluoridation illegal, there was discussion if the section wants to have Jim Kershaw testify on behalf of the section. The stance of the association was uncertain at the time of the meeting. Mr. Wavra stated DEQ is neutral on the position of fluoridation. Mr. Sletten stated fluoridization of drinking water is the law in MN. It was decided to stay neutral regarding the legislation, and there would not be a conflict to have Dr. Johnson speak at the workshop, even if the legislation passes because MN and SD will also be at the training.

Mr. Sletten inquired who planning committee members were from SD and MN. Chair Kemmet reported their section chairs had been asked to provide the names of committee chairs and their members. There had not been a formal response at the time of the board meeting. Ms. Lunde stated that from MN, George Kraynick and Kris Knutson were participating in the abstract review committee. Mr. Sletten raised the board's awareness that the December 2nd 2024 call for abstracts had not been distributed to the MN membership. The abstracts had been sent from Ms. Fisher to Maggie Sahr, Mona Cavalcoli, Rob Kittay and the SDAWWA email for distribution. Mr. Sletten indicated Liz Wahlen must also be contacted and considered the primary contact for MN. Chair Kemmet requested that Mr. Sletten

email all the contacts for actual officers from the sections with their positions listed. He indicated George Kraynick is the Surface Water Treatment Committee chair for MN, and stated we cannot be having planning meetings without representation.

Chair Kemmet reminded the board that the memorandum of understanding between the sections expires after this workshop. The rotation order for registration responsibilities was unknown at the time of the meeting.

Mr. Sletten requested for the record that he has been pushing to formalize the planning committee for two years as of May, and that Liz Wahlen be the primary go-to for information. Chair Kemmet reiterated efforts were being made to obtain volunteer names from other sections. In December 2024, Ms. Fisher sent to a list of members for confirmation to Kathryn Jones, Kevin Newman, Mona Cavalcolli, Liz Wahlen, Rob Kittay, Brian Hoellein, and Erin Steever. At that time there had not been any response confirming if the list was current or accurate. Mr. Sletten indicated the list was not current nor accurate.

Mr. Huibregste volunteered to reach out with any specific questions the group may have to Mr. Hoellein and Ms. Steever as fellow employees at Bartlett and West.

Chair Kemmet called for ND volunteers for an ad hoc planning committee. Mr. Thomas volunteered. Mr. Sletten volunteered for either the ND or MN sections, and to reach out to the MN section to find out what's going on, who's been contacted, and who's been not. Ms. Lunde stepped down from the SWTW committee chair position.

Chair Kemmet requested Ms. Fisher send out an email to the board soliciting general committee participation for all committee opportunities.

It was decided registration could go live as soon as possible.

Chair Kemmet requested Ms. Lunde to send an email to the board regarding the hotel contract's go/no-go dates, hotel room and meal guarantees. He also suggested to discuss the rotation of section registration at the end of the workshop.

Ms. Lunde suggested impartial volunteers slot speakers into the workshop agenda to avoid conflicts between consultants. Ms. Fisher scheduled a meeting with Chair Kemmet, Mr. Sletten and Mr. Thomas to complete the agenda. Ms. Lunde offered to prepare the scores and rankings of the abstracts for them.

Ms. Lunde requested Jake Schafer's assistance to create barcodes for ND operators to scan in and out of workshop sessions for CECs. He is able to sort all master scan data for registrants based on daily events. NDDEQ grants one continuing education credit for every two hours of applicable content. He requested the final agenda be sent to him containing the presentation title, speaker, and length of time, then he could forward that on to the new operator certification officer.

- vii. ACE June 8-11th Denver –Mr. Overmoe volunteered to attend. There were no poster winners from the conference to send this year. Chair Kemmet entertained a motion to send Dan Overmoe to ACE this year. (Huibregtse/Paddock, carried)
- viii. Summer Workshop (likely 3rd week of July) Denver –Chair Kemmet requested Ms. Fisher to add the Summer Workshop to the event volunteer email along with RMSO and the Fly-In. Mr. Overmoe volunteered to attend. Ms. Fisher will be in Denver at that time, and may also be available to attend.
- ix. ND State Fair Water Day July 24th Minot ND – Chair Kemmet indicated he may be available to help. Mr. Sletten also volunteered. Mr. Thomas has ideas for the demonstration.
- x. NDWPCC October 14th-16th Fargo –Conference will be at the Holiday Inn.

- c. **Committee appointments** – Chair Kemmet noted the PR committee chair position is vacant, and called for volunteers for any other committees. He also requested to add the Surface Water Treatment Workshop committee be added ad hoc to include himself, Mr. Sletten and Mr. Thomas. The chair position of that committee will be advertised as vacant. Mr. Overmoe moved to approve Chair Kemmet’s slate of appointments. Mr. Huibregtse seconded. Carried. Chair Kemmet indicated any other changes to the roster can be submitted and voted on by email.
- d. **Budget** – Ms. Fisher discussed the proposed expense and income budget. The major difference from 2024 would be expenses and revenue projected from the Surface Water Treatment Workshop. The small systems workshop was added in as a revenue source, however Section Services has not yet clarified if or when the RCAP grant program would be returning. Chair Kemmet asked Ms. Fisher to have information available regarding fixed costs anticipated for the workshop, and confirmation of registration prices and associated late fees. Mr. Paddock made a motion to approve the budget. Mr. Huibregtse seconded. Motion carried.
- e. **Section Logo** – Ms. Fisher presented the slate of logo options provided by the association incorporating the section’s suggestions. Mr. Huibregtse moved to approve the suite of logos, and allow staff, or whoever is writing correspondence to choose the logo that is most appropriate. Mr. Paddock seconded. Carried.
- f. **SWTW** –No further discussion.
- g. **Expense Reimbursement Policy** – Prior to the meeting, draft policy was circulated for review. Mr. Paddock noted a discrepancy between section 6a and the instruction sheet that accompanies the reimbursement request form. Chair Kemmet requested to remove the “GSA daily standard” reference for meal expenses from the form, and clarify gratuity may include up to 18% in section 6a. The form will be available in an excel format, with a note that it is “acceptable and encouraged to submit requests to section staff” in the second paragraph of the instructions. Mr. Paddock moved to approve the expense reimbursement policy and form as amended. Mr. Overmoe seconded. Motion carried.
- h. **Spring Training**- Mr. Schafer noted the dates for training are listed on the agenda. They are looking for both drinking water and wastewater presentations. He requested to board

to talk with their respective organizations and firms about providing content, and to send it to Shawn Heinle.

VIII. Other Business/Announcements – none

IX. Adjournment

Chair Kemmet called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Huibregtse moved, Mr. Overmoe seconded, motion carried. 4:06 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Maggie Sahr
Secretary/Treasurer