



**Meeting Minutes of the MAPSS 2019 Annual Meeting  
Unity College Center for the Performing Arts  
Unity, ME  
March 13, 2019**

Meeting began at 8:40a.m.

**INTRODUCTION/WELCOME:**

Erika Libby, Unity College Chief Academic Officer and professor of Botany, welcomed MAPSS. MAPSS President, Dave Marceau, also welcomed attendees and gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda.

**BUSINESS MEETING, TREASURERS REPORT:**

Since Corrine Knapp, treasurer, had not arrived for the meeting (she did arrive later in the morning) Gary Fullerton filled in to present the 2018 treasurer's report (available in the Winter 2018 MAPSS newsletter) and stated his concern about lower income in part due to declining membership. There used to be a relatively consistent group of about 40 to 45 full members, however it has dropped considerably in the last 4 to 5 years. In 2018 there were 28 full members and 9 associate members. Gary also expressed concern for lower income amounts in the past two years from workshops (which have been more focused on soil science which tend to bring in a smaller number of attendees). We may need to watch spending a bit. Income from 2018 was roughly \$2600 and expenses about \$4300. The good news is that we started the year with over \$10,000 (down to a bit over \$8100 at end of 2018). Dave Rocque is planning another Natural Resources Workshop for 2019 which will likely provide higher income for this year.

Dave Rocque made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded. Motion passed with no nay votes.

**BUSINESS MEETING, SECRETARY REPORT:**

Amy Jones, secretary, asked if anyone had any questions or comments regarding the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes which were posted in the MAPSS 2018 Winter Newsletter. No one had any questions/comments. Glenn Angell made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report. It was seconded by Chris Dorion. Motion passed with no nay votes.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, NRCS UPDATE**

Tony Jenkins (NRCS State Soil Scientist) and Nick Butler (NRCS Soil Survey Office Leader) provided an update regarding the latest happenings at the NRCS. Nick stated there had been a reorganization of the Soils Division which has become the Soil and Plant Science Division. Soils positions have been shrinking and vacated positions are not being filled. Matt Dorman will be leaving and going to Connecticut. Nick now has an office of 2 (himself and an ecologist). Carl is now a Soil Conservationist in the state office. There are only 2 staff members at the regional level (the Regional Director and the Ecological Sciences Specialist in Amherst). Nick is the only one doing soil survey tasks now and covers parts of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut.

Dave Marceau asked if Web Soil Survey is being updated regularly and Nick replied that it is.

Tony, on his part, is pushing for the agency to do a data call to request how HSG's are used in any code or guidance throughout the state. He would also like to revise Chapter 7 in the Engineering Handbook regarding HSG's. Tony is trying to get some traction to start the process to address the HSG problems. Concurrently, Tony is promoting the MAPSS Connotative Legend approach for consideration in national high intensity soil survey guidance. Maine NRCS is continuing with an interesting project looking at mercury distributions within and among catenas in a project with the Passamaquoddy Tribe.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, UNIVERSITY OF MAINE UPDATE**

Cheryl Spencer, filling in for Ivan Fernandez, gave a brief report regarding the state of the soils program at the University of Maine. There has not been much change at all from the last couple of years. There are still 3 soils faculty and though there are thoughts of retirement (any of the three) there are no concrete plans for the near future. There is concern over the fate or direction of the soils program when that happens, but as for now it is status quo.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, JANET E. CORMIER SCHOLARSHIP**

Though this topic was initially missed in the morning business meeting discussions, it was brought up in the afternoon for discussion and vote. It was noted that last scholarship was for \$1000 for a 2019 award. Ken Gardner made a motion to award \$1000 for a scholarship to be awarded in 2020. Dave Moyse seconded the motion. The motion passed with no nay votes.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, 2019 WORKSHOP**

Dave Rocque is planning another Natural Resources Workshop to be held on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019. It will be a joint MAPSS/MASE/MAWS workshop with MAPSS as the primary group.

The workshop will be held at Reid State Park. MAWS has agreed to work on a wetland functional assessment and vernal pool monitoring. Dave would like to find a deep enough soil, that is not clay, to have an HSG component. He would also like to include a stream i.d. component.

Chris Dorion asked about how we might go about dividing up the revenue with MAWS and MASE, as this has been a sticky point in the past and he would like to have a process for this. Dave Rocque said that MASE doesn't ask for any of the income as they have a larger coffer and gain income from other workshops, but MAWS has low a coffer like MAPSS and they do take a significant role in the workshop, so feels they should get something. Some back and forth discussion ensued regarding various ideas. It was ultimately agreed upon that the Executive Committee would work with the MAWS Executive Committee on how to apportion the proceeds fairly.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, ENVIROTHON**

Dave Rocque spoke to the importance of the Envirothon especially with the changes/decline in the number of people in the soil science field and the need to educate youth on the importance of soil. Dave mentioned some big donors have dropped out and the Envirothon Program was at risk of discontinuing this year but managed to scratch enough funds together to keep it going.

Dave Marceau asked Corinne, treasurer, what she thought MAPSS could provide given our recent decline in income the last couple of years. She thought \$1000 seemed appropriate. Others agreed. This is a decline from \$1500 last year.

Gary Fullerton made a motion to donate \$1000 to the Envirothon. Dave Moyse made a second. The motion passed with no nay votes.

Lee Burman made a comment that aside from monetary donations another way to give to the Envirothon is to volunteer to "man" a station.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Don Phillips proposed having college students attend the Natural Resources Workshop (as opposed to an Annual Meeting) to get exposure to the role/importance of soil science. Someone mentioned it could be problematic it being at the very beginning of the semester, one may have to miss an entire day of classes or labs, and that students may not want to go if no credit was given (getting credit at UMaine would require going through many hoops). Kevin Spigel from Unity College said that it may be possible to get extra credit at Unity and though Wednesdays are difficult due to it being a lab day, if it was known in advance, students would be likely to go if they see a professional benefit.

Chris Dorion said he didn't buy the argument of missing classes and referred to Geology field days where students missed regular classes to attend. Chris said the focus is on a big opportunity for real world experience. Cheryl Spencer echoed Chris and said that at UMaine if a professor knows in advance it is typically not a problem and that also professors can be a communication link to providing information to and encouraging students to attend. Glenn Angell said that the key is getting the word out now before students leave campus in the spring.

Dave Rocque said he would be willing to take students through the workshop on another day if Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> was problematic. Kevin stated that he might be able to arrange a Unity College van on that day for students interested in attending since he now has plenty of notice to do so.

## **BUSINESS MEETING, EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Mike Jakubowski, Education Committee Chair talked about the 2019 recipient of the Janet E. Cormier scholarship, Jack Ferrara from the University of Maine Ecology and Environmental Sciences Program. Mike said that Jack would like to work in the Environmental Consulting field and read two recommendation letters that accompanied Jake's scholarship application. According to Mike, Jack really stood out. There was only one other application, which came in late.

Mike also proposed that MAPSS consider widening the scope of providing funding by offering money as grant dollars instead of a scholarship. A grant could go to a group or organization, which, Mike felt, could provide more visibility for MAPSS via acknowledgements in professional publications. Mike wrote an article in the MAPSS 2019 Winter Newsletter outlining his case for grants.

Chris Dorion agreed it could potentially allow for reaching a wider audience. Glenn Angell suggested the money might be used for funding to get the credit hours needed for Soil Science certification.

Matt Dorman mentioned it could be a limitation on what we have in the budget if the amount had to stay the same every year.

Dave Moyse thought that MAPSS exposure was more likely to get lost in administration.

Lee Burman mentioned that MAWS provides a research stipend and part of the requirement is to come back to a meeting to present research.

Mike agreed there were many logistical questions to be answered and would like to pursue it further over the next year.

On other Education Committee news Mike said that it was likely that he would limit our efforts at the Common Ground Fair to just having a soil test pit and dropping the table as very few people visit the table.

Dave Moyse agreed to join the Education Committee (Mike is the only other one currently on it).

## **BUSINESS MEETING, AD HOC AFFILIATION COMMITTEE**

In effort to find ways to affiliate and/or collaborate with like-minded organizations, Chris Dorion, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, formed an ad hoc committee to facilitate such discussions. In February of this year, Chris, along with some of the MAPSS executive committee and Dave Rocque, met with some of the executive committee members of the Society of Soil Scientists of Northern New England (SSSNNE). The meeting started around a discussion of MAPSS possible joining with SSSNNE. It was soon realized that this wasn't going to work for various reasons (Chris has minutes from the meeting if anyone wants to read about the reasons; the minutes are posted on the MAPSS website).

The discussion moved on to why membership numbers were dwindling and to working with regulators to change statutes. It was SSSNNE's experience that to try to change regulations through the regulators doesn't work and the only way to change anything is to go through the legislature. If something

becomes law the regulators are then required to make those laws effective. SSSNNE made it clear that to make a case for legislation we must prove our relevance by making a case that there are big benefits to health, safety, and welfare for things such as stormwater or erosion and sedimentation control among others.

At the end of the meeting it was proposed that it would be beneficial to both organizations to have some joint workshops. The ad hoc committee, had not, yet, talked with MAWS about more collaboration.

After Chris presented this information some discussion ensued. Dave Rocque suggested pooling efforts by working with other organizations (such as the Maine Lakes Association) to convince others of the value of proposed requirements so that they can help in the lobbying. Dave Moyse stated that it comes down to the end user. If something is not required [by law] it won't be done. Cheryl Spencer suggested using citizen rule change with a citizen petition to go to the legislature with for rule-making.

Glenn Angell shared that though time consuming, attempting to make change through a bill in the legislature is much less onerous than trying to get regulators to go through rule-making (something that is always met with a great degree of reluctance).

### **BUSINESS MEETING, GENERAL**

A question was posed to the membership: Can a New Hampshire Certified Soil Scientist become a full member of MAPSS? Dave Moyse pointed out that the MAPSS constitutions states "certified in Maine" soil scientists. Gary Fullerton mentioned that they can become associate members, who cannot vote. Dave Rocque felt New Hampshire soil scientists should not be voting on Maine Rules. Dave Moyse and Gary agreed, noting that because they do not practice in Maine, they are not stake holders in Maine related soil matters. Dave Marceau asked for a show of hands in favor of allowing NH soil scientists to become full members. No one raised a hand. No further discussion was had.

### **BUSINESS MEETING, ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

A slate of officers was put forth by Dave Marceau as follows:

- Chris Dorion, President
- Roger St. Amand, Vice President
- Secretary, Sean Donohue
- Treasurer, Gary Fullerton
- Greg Perkins, Director

No other nominations were made from the floor. Dale Knapp made a motion to accept the slate of officers. Dave Rocque seconded. The motion passed with no nay votes.

## **BUSINESS MEETING, TECHNICAL COMMITTEE, PROPOSAL FOR NEW METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING HSG'S**

Tony Jenkins, chair of the Technical Committee presented a proposal for a new methodology for identifying/assigning hydric soil groups (HSG's) to a specific site or high intensity soil survey (HISS) based on observed soil properties and representative pedons. MAPSS had previously adopted a modified version of the Rhode Island triangle as an option for HSG determinations. It was found that this method was not working very well, largely because it uses texture as a proxy for Ksat and ultimately is not sufficiently scientifically defensible. The committee is proposing using a National Engineering Handbook (NEH) Ch 7 based methodology. Tony went through the proposed methodology. A copy of the method was provided in a handout at the meeting and is on the MAPSS website.

Dave Rocque made a motion to adopt the methodology as presented as an option for use. Don Phillips seconded the motion. Some discussion followed.

Dave Moyse thought the method shouldn't be an option as he felt it didn't set a standard of practice. Others disagreed. The option allows for a trial run to see how well it works -- as we did with the Rhode Island triangle-- which Gary Fullerton stated that since we had adopted the Rhode Island triangle as an option and it did not appear to be working, should we repeal that option?

Dave Rocque amended his motion, moving that the proposed method for assigning HSG's be adopted, as presented, as an option for use, and that the Rhode Island Triangle Method be repealed. Don seconded the amended motion. The motion carried with no nay votes.

### **THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS PORTION OF THE MEETING.**

#### **The meeting continued with several speakers/discussions:**

- Maine Geo Library Update from the executive director (Claire Keidroski) report as presented by a member of the Geo Library board.
- Cheryl Spencer gave a presentation based on the thesis research of Greg McDonald: Controls on Phosphorus Export from an Agricultural Watershed: Amsden Brook, Fort Fairfield, ME.
- Dave Rocque presented on a New Approach to Evaluation and Design of Vegetated Stormwater Buffers. As a note Dave asked the attendees for a show of hands for who was in favor of the new approach. Nearly everyone raised a hand.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Jones, Secretary