

Minnesota Dragonfly Society

Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2017

I. Call to order

Angela Isackson called to order the regular meeting of the Minnesota Dragonfly Society at 6:30pm on March 14, 2017 at Tamarack Nature Center.

II. Roll call

Kiah Brasch conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

- Mitch Haag
- Kiah Brasch
- Ami Thompson
- Curt Oien
- Alon Coppens
- Ron Lawrenz
- John Arthur
- Mike Sweet
- Jacki Morrison
- Barb Anderson
- Maia Crews-Erjavee
- Crystal Boyd
- Jeff Fischer
- Troy Howard
- Mark Wheeler

Approval of minutes from last meeting

Kiah Brasch The minutes were approved as reviewed. Jeff moved, Crystal seconded.

Passed (both meeting minutes).

III. Open issues

a) Treasurer Report

- Payments to contractors going out soon, will be reimbursed from grant
- Jeff moved, John seconded to accept treasurer's report
- looking into making a budget, taxes committee → having it done by an outside source provides transparency
- cost of taxes might be \$400-\$600; sources through Crystal
- Crystal moved to approve a payment of up to \$600 for professional tax preparer this year. Seconded by John Arthur. Passed.
- look into a tax preparer doing this work pro bono
- Ron Lawrenz knows a tax preparer who has experience with non-profits we could get in touch with

b) Grant Updates

- Quarterly report due tomorrow

- research + workshop reports included
- Mike Sweet asked if Enbridge has asked to see our data yet or check in on progress besides quarterly reports
- Mitch: what we learned: St. Louis County 46 spp., 2 county records, learned a lot nymph habitat, Sand Lake peatland was interesting and would like more investigation. Red Lake county records --- 60 county records submitted total for the two counties. Identified range extensions for some species. Species of special concern
- May 31st-June 4th will be the first survey this year
- 4 workshops coming up this summer –Kannabec(?), Aitkin, Red Lake, Pennington counties
- 61 ppl reached, 700+ volunteer hours
- this year partnering with local youth organizations to encourage better turnout
- getting ideas from botanists about habitats/plant communities to look into
- buck bean importance for certain species is something we'd like to explore
- New grant coordinator Maia introduced; working on a project on Canada Darners
- Data Management - \$5000 from Ecofootprint grant but that hasn't covered it; applying for Historical Society matching grant. Put out RFP for database coordinator; Crystal has applied. Applicants will be reviewed
- Ami: did a lot of outreach to get a wide applicant pool but only got 2 proposals. Timeline didn't work for some potential applicants.

c) Events (Jacki)

- ENCOURAGE signing up for volunteers!!!
- continuing to use Wiggio
- Facebook page created for recruitment
- Kits: Jacki, Crystal, Curt coordinate + get new containers when needed
- Dragonfly Gathering: we need people!!!
- event emails – currently going to Jacki's personal email – it should be one designated “events” email – Jeff and Jacki will work on that
- St. Croix BioBlitz? Can't find any info online by either Jacki or Ron—maybe they're not doing it?
- FOR SAKE OF TIME, THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS WILL BE PUSHED TO A LATER MEETING: event payments, invoices, reimbursements
- invoices being figured out by Angela
- got \$75 check from Anoka Garden Club program – Crystal will deliver check to Jenn
- MarsCon: Batman came to the presentation! Lots of 4/5/6th grade students; anecdotally have received positive feedback

- d) Communication Committee
 - deadline: tomorrow
 - APRIL 1ST is next due date for articles
 - website review in progress
- e) Ecofootprint Enbridge Discussion
 - Brief Background: value: 45,000-60,000 depending on if we use Enbridge's helicopter (but not sure if their helicopter pilot can do the skilled landings we need);
 - Angela: everyone is welcome and we want people to feel that their opinions are heard and valued; always open to phone conversations in particular
 - Code of ethics:
 - Each member allotted equal time, interruption free: 3 minutes per person
 - copies of all previous discussions provided so everyone has all the information
 - Bylaws: Jeff brought up bylaws that state that people who have a personal/financial interest in the voting outcome they need to remove themselves from voting process
 - Response by Angela: looked into this and we are not voting on RFPs, so there is no conflict of interest
 - Ami: we can assume that everyone is acting ethically here; two people objected to that statement
 - is there a conflict of interest if it's not for financial gain? Jeff argued yes. Ami and Angela said no; the "personal gain" clause would be non-monetary payment
 - Crystal will abstain from voting but would like to participate in discussion
 - If you don't abstain now, that doesn't disqualify you from applying for positions – there's no way to know the future
 - Barb – there's no way to know what someone might want to do in 2018, so how can that be a factor in voting?
 - Mike Sweet: even people who have the intention to apply for a position that might change
 - Alon proposed we vote on Crystal participating in the discussion. Jeff seconded. Passed.
 - White board discussion (Ami)
 - Arne (not present, ideas presented via email to Angela, who then read them to the group with permission): good corporate neighbor – everything is a trade-off; power is in consumers' hands; perceived damage to MDS is acceptable
 - Mitch: other projects in Red Lake are funded by timber sales; echoed Arne's point about trade-offs. Couldn't accomplish our goals without this money –

can't get into the places we're going; access is dependent on the grant. 500+ sq. mi survey

- Kiah: discussion on whether or not to accept a grant from a source like this should happen *before* board members spend precious time writing the grant proposal. What is the intent behind Enbridge giving us this money? Is it part of a mitigation plan, or is it just to make them look more environmentally friendly? Where else would this money come from?
- Mark: how does it align with purpose to ensure conservation through research and education? Public support for funding science is diminishing. Where else would we get the funding? Social responsibility vs. citizen science. Glad we have this possibility.
- Troy: passed
- Jeff: grant came out of nowhere—why didn't we approve going for the grant before we started the application process. Goal of first grant round is agreed with, what we're trying to do is worthwhile, problem is the source. I do use petrol products but they don't pay me. Try to responsibly buy from ethical companies. Issue of conscience and perspective and credibility. We tell people how to help preserve habitat. Does this affect our work with other environmental groups when we have this sponsorship? What happens if something goes wrong – another oil spill. Are we going to have protesters here from DAPL?
- Crystal: in favor of grant; going to abstain from voting. Need to change process—make a decision and vote before we apply. Worried about losing members through conflict – concern over losing volunteers. Willing to help look for other funding- legacy or state lottery taxpayer dollars, but these are more difficult to administer—take more time. Haven't seen impact on credibility at workshops. Already have an open avenue of communication with Enbridge to discuss topics like a spill; knowledge is power → baseline data in preparation for future
- Maia: passed
- Barbara: Feels worried about having made a commitment that maybe isn't what she thought it was. Experience with volunteer groups and orgs; echoes concern about losing people. Analogy to archaeological digs—they go in if someone is going to put in a road or building and survey the area for things of archaeological value. They use education and knowledge – nobody blames the archaeologists because they built a road or something.
- Jacki: feels that this vote came out of nowhere this time. Didn't have enough discussion next time. Positive work: creating baseline studies that are very important for the state. It's not uncommon to orgs like ours to take money of this kind. Political concerns with Trump administration stripping water

protection. New Enbridge focus on MN, used to be in Dakotas. We should plan ahead for potential conflicts. Enbridge giving money because of “greenwashing” → there’s information on this practice

- Mike: Appreciate this type of discussion. Opportunity to provide education to Enbridge about odonates.
- John: Enbridge doesn’t have a good environmental record-- \$\$ to make them feel good. Shares concerns about greenwashing. People may point at us and say “well you took \$ from Enbridge”. We haven’t let that money influence us for or against Enbridge.
- Ron: Same opinion as original post. Oil spill from Enbridge happened in his childhood river, hard to forgive. Keeps distance from Enbridge projects as a personal choice. Worried about the future of MDS. We’ve done an excellent job on the first grant. If we continue to get these grants, we need to diversify our funding sources. Has gotten questions about why we take \$ from Enbridge. Answer → “we are doing good work” but maybe not sure of that personally. How are THEY going to use US? How would that end up affecting us? Ron has contributed to this discussion a lot in past emails.
- Alon: reading through emails, thought same thing then as he does now. There are ethical concerns. He doesn’t think 3 days is enough—maybe take 1 month to do it (suggestion). Not a board member, thank you for including me in discussions and making me feel listened to and welcome. Alternatives: voting between something and nothing right now. Without the Enbridge grant we don’t have a vision we have a problem. Put clause into vote that says eventually we will divest from Enbridge.

Blood money; it’s a bargain with the devil. Taking their money was a forgivable sin a few years ago but not now. Continuing to take this money has ramifications we haven’t yet discussed. Problem with archaeology analogy – if one place is found unsuitable by archaeologist, the project is moved and adversely affects someone else.

Need to survey most vulnerable places to spills. Matter of if not when spills will happen.

-Curt: when we acknowledge Enbridge we should leave it at that—no comments/endorsements. Short notice because we found out late. We did try for LCCMR money (gambling money) and they said we didn’t have enough experience handling that kind of money. Agrees that after this one we shouldn’t take \$ from Enbridge. Need to learn what dragonflies are rare, then we can prioritize what habitats need to be protected.

-Angela: I feel conflicted and sense of responsibility to have everyone feel informed and ok with decisions moving forward. Process is huge. Deadlines come up fast but there’s always room for improvement. For this grant; had hesitation in the beginning but it’s

been working for us—Enbridge has been hands-off and letting us do our own thing and meeting our own objectives. Good foundation for us to prove ourselves as a new organization dealing with \$50,000 and doing good things with it. It has allowed us to have difficult conversations and grow from it → glass half full. Ducks Untld., USFWS work with Enbridge. Growing opportunity, good and bad.

-Perk: Rick Steves example— we've lost touch between fear and risk→ relates to Enbridge issue → risks also if we don't take the money→ not a lot of other sources of money. We are dependent on fossil fuels – investment in it is very intricate. While they are not the perfect partner, I am in agreement with accepting the grant money.

-Ami: Agree with all of process discussions. I take responsibility for short notice—ran it by research committee and then I ran with it so we wouldn't miss the deadline and the opportunity completely. I agree with “feels”. I've looked a lot into where we can get funding – our short and shallow fiscal history stops us from being competitive with those larger Legacy and LCCMR grants and the like. I don't feel great about our oil energy based economy in general. It's integrated into our culture. I am however comforted by past experiences with Enbridge Ecofootprint funding - they didn't ask to control our work or data. They probably are using us for greenwashing but we also get significant benefits from the funding and experience with executing grant work. Benefits outweigh the risks. Propose that we consider after this that MDS sets up a non-profit panel discussion on funding ethics. Villainizing and polarizing society in general is not beneficial for us. Most funding sources have ethical challenges, discuss how do we navigate this? Developing personal connections to Enbridge employees may pay off – if someone knows about the value of calcareous fens they may make personal/work decisions that reflect that. This experience positions us as leaders in having these hard discussions. I will vote yes.

Photos of Ami's whiteboard notes:

Process

- Making everyone feel heard
- Have discussion before apply for grant
- Losing Members through Conflict
- Engage All Stakeholders
 - ↳ including Funders
 - ↳ possible impact?
- Division in board members
- Personal choice → team player
- More time to discuss + process

Feels

- "What have I gotten into?"
- worried
- personal connection to space destroyed by funder
- conflicted
- responsibility ← president

USFWS DU others also embrace \$

Dialect Partner MJO Land Trust San Con District Schools

Archaeology - Dip the \$ opportunity

↳ no Name Archaeologist

↳ funding case allow

Not uncommon for organization to take "this kind of \$"

"We need to diversify funding in the future"

• So much \$ USA \$ invested in oil/energy

• Tax w/ Enbridge

Corporate Neighbors ↳ trade offs

Other research funding * ↳ Timber Sale

Why Enbridge giving us this money?

Where else \$ come from?

Fear vs Risk

↳ created about opportunity

worried for future

apply

already noted base grant

possible impact?

worried for future

Funding Origin

- "Corporate Neighbors" ↳ trade offs
- Other research funding * ↳ Timber Sale
- Why Enbridge giving us this money? ↳ commercial charges
- Where else \$ come from?
- Archaeology - Dip the \$ sure out of situation
- ↳ no Name Archaeologist
- ↳ funding case allow
- Not uncommon for organization to take "this kind of \$"
- "We need to diversify funding in the future"
- So much \$ USA \$ invested in oil/energy
- Tax w/ Enbridge

USFWS DU others also embrace \$

Dialect Partner MJO Land Trust San Con District Schools

Archaeology - Dip the \$ sure out of situation

↳ no Name Archaeologist

↳ funding case allow

Not uncommon for organization to take "this kind of \$"

"We need to diversify funding in the future"

• So much \$ USA \$ invested in oil/energy

• Tax w/ Enbridge

Corporate Neighbors ↳ trade offs

Other research funding * ↳ Timber Sale

Why Enbridge giving us this money? ↳ commercial charges

Where else \$ come from?

Challenges Leading us to Next Steps

• Need \$ to cover base costs

• Time to reach point where we can

• Mission Support (Person + Education)

• Education

• Knowledge is power - base line

• \$ base: about revenue we spend on base + org costs

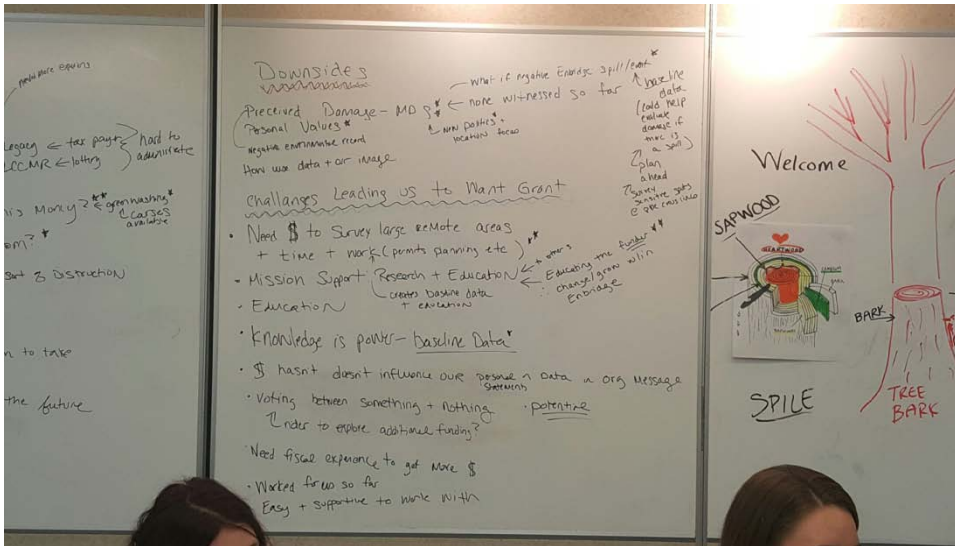
• Money goes towards a variety of things

↳ to operate, capital costs

• Most fiscal support is of base \$

• We're going to have to be

• Easy to operate to have to be



-Moving forward, what is the next step?

f) Follow-up discussion: Mike: maybe in the future meet face-to-face with Enbridge

-New things in this grant/why we asked for more \$: cover expenses we didn't anticipate the first time around; helicopter included

IV. Adjournment

Angela Isackson adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm. Mike motioned, John seconded passed

Minutes submitted by: Kiah Brasch

Minutes approved by: Angela Isackson