

## **MAEAP ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING NOTES**

March 12, 2012

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sturges-Young Civic Center and Auditorium, Sturgis, MI

### **Present:**

Tom Coon, Scott Piggott, Jim Johnson, Paul Zuger, Max Benne, Dean Letter, Melissa Higbee, Jim Scott, and Ken Blight

### **Resource Staff:**

Elaine Brown, Joe Kelpinski, Josh Appleby, Emily Ries and Heather Casteel (Scribe)

### **Welcome, Review/Approval of Past Minutes and Around the Horn**

- Meeting began at 12:51 p.m.
- Tom Coon began the meeting thanking everyone, with special thanks to Max Benne for hosting this meeting.

### **Review Approval of Past Minutes**

- Tom Coon asked for any changes to minutes from last meeting.
- Motion was received to approve meeting minutes, was seconded and approved.

### **Around the Horn**

- Emily reported that MFB is working with all MFB county boards.
  - Nine counties reported with an expected number of 188 verifications.
  - Partnership Agreements are due April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Elaine reported that Conservation District boards have huge interest in MAEAP, will be a great resource.
- Paul Zuger reported that MUCC has filled out the commitment form, and will provide MUCC incentives to their members. They are still brainstorming.
- Scott Piggott reported that he is spending time with Congresswoman Miller
  - Miller wanted to write a congressional bill for MAEAP verified farms, with an amendment to the Farm Bill in the Western Lake Erie Basin area.
  - Federal agencies will provide more techs in the field.
  - This may create a special pool of money, possibly up to 30 million dollars.
  - MFB has a flyer featuring Swislane Dairy, who had a visit by Director Creagh. They are verified in two systems, with intent of getting third system verification. They do have a problem with the setback distance from wells and are looking for a variance.
- Tom Coon reported that the new MSU Dean will be announced in the next two months.
  - There are four candidates invited to interview.
- Jim Johnson stated that the Governor's budget update addresses two pinch points – Technicians and Verifiers.
  - MDARD added four techs in December, with an additional eight scheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup>, adding two more verifiers, moving us from three to five verifiers, and an engineer who will focus on agricultural engineered practices.
  - This will also allow a full time MAEAP secretary.

- Melissa Higbee reported Shiawassee Conservation District's Annual Meeting coming up.
  - They plan to acknowledge the producers that were verified this year, will do a write up, and send them a letter from the board.
- James Scott noted that Kevin Wickey will be acting State Conservationist for Michigan.
  - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative allocation for FY12/FY13 year will be announced.
  - Saginaw Bay and Flint River are working on phosphorus reduction.
  - NRCS is changing the CNMP writer's criteria.
  - Currently sixteen CNMP writers work in Michigan, one has transitioned already and fifteen others have indicated the desire to transition to the new criteria.
- Ken Blight stated that MMP resources are available and that he could use a point person from MDARD to help.

### **Task Force/Committee Reports**

- Livestock
  - Dean Letter reported new co-chairs.
  - Kevin Gould took place of Dale Rozeboom and Dean Letter fills Gary Trimner's position.
  - 2012 committee meetings are scheduled and the parking lot issues will be worked on through the fall.
- Cropping
  - Josh provided a report for Allen Krizek.
  - The sub-committee met on Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> and brought recommendations as a hand-out.
  - If the AC agrees, then recommendations will go to Ag Commission in September.
  - The group did discuss the importance of needing coordination with GAAMPs revisions so both sets of documents reflect any new standard.
- Farmstead
  - Due to time constraints, Tom Coon asked for approval to hold off on the Farmstead report until the May meeting.
  - Tom's suggestion was moved, supported and passed.
- Communications
  - 200 window clings were provided in the 'Ag Day at the Capitol' baskets for legislators.
  - Elaine, Josh and Joe will be representing MAEAP at the MAEAP exhibit.
  - The next Communications meeting is at Greenstone, Thursday, March 15.
- Verification Numbers
  - Current verification numbers were provided in a handout.
  - Tom Coon read the totals.
- Water Quality Monitoring
  - Paul Zuger reported that Lauri Elbing has been doing a great job moving this committee forward.
  - The committee has focused on education and understanding what's being done.

- Guiding principles have been developed and they are working on outlining some areas to bring to the Advisory Council.
- **Partner Commitment Drive Update**
  - Fifty different commodity groups received a copy of the partner commitment form and letter from the Director.
  - Follow up's are being done by Jan Wilford, Scott Piggott, Jim Johnson and Keith Creagh.
  - Three groups have returned the agreement prior to the April 1st deadline.
  - NRCS created their own.
  - There has been a healthy discussion with groups that feel they have no way to contribute.
  - Discussion should be an interactive process with what works for partners.
  - Tom Coon said MSU is ready to send out their commitment agreement.

#### **Annual Report Requirements of 2011 Legislation**

- MAEAP Legislation required an annual report.
- Motion to provide annual report on a fiscal year basis, with the first one completed by Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012.
- Initial draft to be developed by Jan, or appointed staff.
- The language also requires total program accomplishments by 2014.
- Motion was made to provide a fiscal year 2012 report to the Ag Commission by September 30, 2012.
- The motion was seconded and passed.

#### **Public Comment and New Business**

- No public comments were offered.

2:51 P.M. Adjourn