

MACD EDUCATION COMMITTEE

March 24, 2021 at 10 am

Via Zoom Conferencing

Committee Members: Elisha Dempsey, Melissa Downing, Tony Barone, Rick Van Dyken, Bill Naegeli, Bob Petermann, Pam Liggett, Tom Dobberstein, and Greg Jergeson

Call to order: the meeting was called to order by Chair Elisha Dempsey.

Committee Members in Attendance: Rick Van Dyken, Elisha Dempsey, Pam Liggett.

Others in attendance: David Martin, Chris Evans, Andrew Kretschmer, Robbie Savelkoul, Jeff Pattison, Gene Granada, Audra Bell, Eric Rannestad, Sarah Bowman, Rebecca Boslough, Connor Mertz, Tahnee Benson, Tenlee Atchison, Samantha Tappenbeck, Jeff Torano, Stacey Barta, Heidi Fleury, Mark Bostrom, Kay Webb, Autumn Coleman and David Laufenberg.

Approval of December, January and February meeting notes-this was tabled

Outreach and Marketing Effort

David Martin gave a summary of the last 2 meeting presentations on the outreach and marketing effort. The common message between the 2 presentations was the process/strategy that leads to products, and measurable/smart goals. At the end of the Montana history of marketing the question remains "why don't people know about us?". Some of the main things we learned was to not use the shotgun approach to marketing. We've spent a lot of money over the years bringing in presenters and attempting video spots etc. with some great ideas, that pretty much never went far because there was no strategic plan in place.

Establishing the brand is the hard part. FWP has a dedicated infrastructure and a good budget. What has been missing in the process of trying to market Montana CDs has been the strategic planning process. Clear purpose, clear message, specific target audience, marketing goals, and a good delivery system are the main steps in the planning process.

Washington State's Conservation Commission has shown us their process and the toolkit they prepared, as well as their strategy. Elevator speeches and word banks are one of the most interesting tools they have. There are 3 ways: we as individual CDs could develop an elevator speech or create the ability for individual CD board and staff members to customize their speech, we could also have an expanded elevator speech that the entire state could pull from. While Dave was watching testimony during the legislative session, he saw that at one point when asked if CDs could use more money, the response wasn't ready.

Smart Communication is an Investment (Laura Johnson)--only as valuable as the effort we put in. She also said to use their model as a base, not a cut and paste. It goes back to the process. Their Communication, Partnership and Outreach Group meets

monthly virtually. Their CDs set the priorities, their CPO does the general planning and they form subcommittees to work on projects.

We need to build the CD Brand instead of continuing to do shotgun marketing with no strategic marketing; we need to have smart goals and consistent effort.

Our planning needs to be based on CD outreach needs with CD involvement (CDs currently have survey fatigue), have the ability to work with different resources, since CDs don't have a big marketing budget. We'll need to work with other MACD committees and our partner organizations.

Montana's version is really going to depend on active participation. Everyone is welcome, but we're looking especially for those with a passion for this effort, to have good representation across the state and to make sure that all CDs have good access. The amount of work that we can get done and the speed we can do it depends on how many participate and how willing they are to devote time to this effort.

There was discussion about unity of message, and being ready for the questions like those we get at the legislative session. Rick Van Dyken feels like it's a bit difficult to implement at the committee level and is concerned that we might need at least a part time employee. Dave said that there are a couple of different ways this could be "staffed" but the committee/work group would need to lead that. Jeff Pattison said that a key component is that we're not a solo organization and we have great partners in NRCS and DNRC.

Eric Rannestad said that a lot of the work that he will be doing for CDs would be well informed by a workgroup like this, to provide direction from the overall CD community. Mark Bostrom interjected that he likes the idea of a committee that would do this. One of the signals he's getting from the new governor's office is that they would like to see an empowerment of associations like MACD. Mark meets with Becca 3 or 4 times per week and so as the ideas come along, they help inform DNRC's strategic planning too. A marketing arm in the association would help with keeping the unity of message.

So what's next? Rebecca Boslough said that the group really could be a subcommittee of the Education Committee. David went back to a conversation that he had with Laura Johnson about the history of the Washington CPO. First step would be to develop the infrastructure in the smaller group and talk more with Laura about the steps they took at the beginning to build trust with the CDs.

Pattison asked about the funding that he'd heard about for the committee. Evans clarified that the grant was for education purposes and the Education Committee gives the approval for how it's spent. That funding could be utilized in this effort.

Elisha said that in the next meeting we'll be doing some research about what's out there already and what CDs need. Tenlee Atchison said that the Convention Committee has left enough time during the convention to work on their business but to present what they've been working on to the rest of the body. By Convention we are hoping that we can do a well thought out presentation to the attendees. Rebecca said that there's time for training or other things on the first day at the Convention. This

presentation would probably be that first day. David Martin said that he is willing to be the chair for the subcommittee.

Scholarship review

Elisha wanted to have a brief discussion about the current applications and asked if the other supervisors had gotten the email on the scholarship applications. Liggett and Van Dyken have both received them and have their favorites. At the April meeting, the committee will review and make their choices for the scholarships.

Resolutions discussion

Chris Evans has been contacted by all CDs with Education Committee resolutions except Lake. Heidi Fleury was on the call, and she will follow up with Evans about their resolutions.

Committee recommendations will be finalized to MACD at the next meeting.

Upcoming Training

DNRC wasn't on the call, but there will be a module 2 of the New Supervisor Training at some point.

For employee training, the Statewide Employee Training (SET) will be held in October. The training committee will begin working on that event. The Employee Roundtable is scheduled monthly on the 3rd Wednesday at 10 am and topics have been selected for the rest of the year.

New funding applications for Education Funding sponsored by LCCD

Reports on DNRC, MACD, EO etc. on Education Efforts

Supervisor Training modules-The first module was pretty well attended, but no one from DNRC was on to give a report on numbers or on survey feedback.

Records Disposal training-Chris Evans recently did 2 of the same training for Records Disposal information for Conservation Districts. About 17 people attended the 2 training sessions, and feedback is still coming in.

QuickBooks Training-The online training had around 25 people on, and survey results are still coming in from that.

The surveys that have been sent out on the Records training and QuickBooks training have requested feedback on needed follow up as well as desired training topics.

[Supervisor Training Module 1](#)

Passcode: Yi1AEA*m

Links to past training for the Employees have been posted on the [EO page](#).

For April-Elisha would like an NACD person to discuss the Stewardship Week activities. Becca will send Elisha the new person's contact information. Elisha would also like Ariel to come on and talk about the UNC webinars. She also brought up the

idea of having someone from NRCS and DNRC talk about their websites and resources available on them.

Elisha said that all the committees for MACD met last week and will probably meet again soon. They'll likely be discussing the current and former work and operations plans.

Elisha wanted to know who would like to review the MACD Strategic Plan for Education Committee Related Components--Elisha asked what Rebecca's feelings are on the strategic and operations plan. Becca said they need review but it will probably be a Spring Board Meeting topic. David Martin took a look at the posted workplan and saw only one thing that was really related to the Education Committee. There were places with possible crossover. He believes that document wasn't really completed.

Next meeting April 28, 2021 10 am

Motion to adjourn 11:30 am