

## **OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

### **MAELC Board Meeting September 21, 2023 Zoom Virtual Meeting**

*The September 21, 2023 MAELC board meeting was called to order by Chris Ovrebo at 9:05 a.m.*

*\*Ovrebo assumed duties as chair because Rep. Tabke requested a substitute and Sen. Putnam was unable to attend the meeting*

**Members Present:** Rep. Paul Anderson, Lindsey Brockberg, Brian Buhr, Pat Dingels, Nikki Flaaen, Sen. Heather Gustafson, Michelle Kamenov, Keith Olander (on behalf of Terry Gaalswyk), Steve Olson, Chris Ovrebo, Rep. Kristi Pursell, Dr. Amy Smith, Rep. Brad Tabke

**Members Not Present:** Patrice Bailey, Sen. Gary Dahms, Sen. Aric Putnam

*Quorum was established.*

#### **Staff:**

Sarah Dornink and Kari Schwab

#### **Guests:**

Val Aarsvold (MN FFA Foundation), Winona Anderson (MN Farmers Union), Amy Durand (South Central College), Lavyne Rada (MN FFA), Sally Reynolds (MN Department of Education), Dr. Laura Rice (UMN), Dr. Gerald Toland (SMSU)

#### **Welcome**

Ovrebo welcomed everyone to the virtual MAELC board meeting.

#### **Approval of Agenda & Minutes**

*Rep. Anderson moved to approve the agenda and minutes. Olson seconded. Motion prevailed.*

#### **Financial Report**

Dornink provided an overview of the three budgets.

#### **Operating Budget**

The June board meeting expenses showed up on the new fiscal year including the per diems, mileage reimbursement and food. The largest expenses in this new fiscal year include the Teach Ag promotional items (line 16) and travel (lines 31 & 33). The travel includes expenses for meetings or conferences held in June (listed in July), and the MAAE Summer Conference and the USDA stakeholder meeting (listed in August).

Undergraduate scholarships have been paid out, with half paid out this fall and half going out in January. Dornink noted the expenses are not perfectly split in half due to receiving a \$500 donation

from Agribank, which was utilized as part of a scholarship payment this Fall; \$7,500 will go out in the spring semester (line 36). The final \$2,000 payment under the graduate scholarship for 2023 has been paid out (line 38). Applications are due in November for the 2024 program.

There are at least two more payments expected to come out of the 2023 Internship Program (line 40). Next year's internship program already has enough funding for five interns between sponsorship dollars and the increase in legislative funding over the next biennium.

There is a small amount of carryover from FY23; Dornink proposed to use these funds in General Operating category.

#### MDA/Special Project Budget

Contracts were sent out for the grants approved during the June meeting (Round 26-2) and individuals have started to request their first 75% of funding (line 8 and line 41). There were seven grants in Round 25-2 that were underspent, returned, or did not claim their remaining amounts. MAELC is no longer able to roll these dollars over and nearly \$30,000 dollars will be returned to or not requested for reimbursement from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (line 56). Dornink thanked Schwab for obtaining final reports and being able to include their data in grant reporting, even if they did not spend the full grant award. Dornink and Schwab have discussed strategies to try and encourage grant recipients to reach out with questions or adjustments, including adding a halfway touchpoint and moving up the timeline for when reminder of upcoming deadline letters are sent. They also hope to emphasize budgets can be adjusted, as some of those returning dollars were not aware MAELC can approve budget adjustments if it fits the intent of the grant.

The \$300,000 listed on line 53 will be split between two rounds (November & April) for Common Fund and Strategic Initiative grants. The additional projects that were approved at the June board meeting, including the Teach Ag contract position and the internship program, have been added to the budget (line 54 & 55). Finally, Dornink has submitted the paperwork to the MDA for the new biennium.

It was asked if there is a chance to carryover returned grant funds for MAELC projects. Dornink explained it currently is not allowable to carry over funds from each fiscal year due to how the legislative language is written. There may be an opportunity to adjust this to allow for carrying forward during the biennium with a legislative language change next biennium.

#### FBM Budget

Dornink will be submitting the final report and invoice for the remaining \$400,000 payment from the past biennium by September 30. She has also submitted the paperwork and contract for the next biennium to the MDA and is waiting to receive the first payment, totaling \$2,250,000.

All colleges submitted their final reports by early July for the FBM Challenge Grants and the FBM Targeted Additional Instructor grants. All colleges met at least five of the eight required grant parameters and received their final payments. Dornink provided an update to all instructors at the MAAE Summer Conference in July about the new FBM grant program that was approved at the June meeting. She also spoke at the FBM Fall conference in early September about some of the Challenge Grant data from the previous biennium.

All colleges submitted their new biennium FBM Challenge Grants by September 1; grant contracts have gone out and are due September 29. They have also received the FBM Instructor Capacity Building grant application, however, that has a rolling deadline open from September 1, 2023 through September 1, 2024.

Mentor programs have submitted their reports and invoices for the final 25% payments, and those dollars have been sent out, except the Teacher Induction Program whose materials have been received but not processed (line 26-28). Applications for the next fiscal year have gone out and are due October 1. The professional development programs approved in June have been added to the budget (line 29); applications have also gone out and are due October 1.

Doris Mold will again be hired to evaluate the FBM grant programs. Mold submitted a proposal in August with her project scope, including a longitudinal study of the previous Challenge Grants, and has submitted an invoice for payment (line 37). She will also receive the final payment for previous biennium work upon completion of the final report (line 39). Mold plans to present her findings to the board at the December 2023 meeting.

#### FY23 Carryover

Dornink provided an overview of the FY23 budget carryover, which totals \$1,381.90, and proposed using it under the General Operating Funds category.

*Smith moved to approve the financial report and carryover proposal as presented. Olson seconded. Motion prevailed.*

#### **Executive Director Report**

Dornink thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and welcomed Nikki Flaaen, President-Elect of the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE), who is replacing Christa Williamson as a MAAE representative to MAELC.

Today is “National Teach Ag Day!” On behalf of MAELC, a thank you note along with a “Teach Ag” lanyard, stickers and postcards to “tag” a future teacher and a Pathways to Licensure poster were sent to every secondary agriculture teacher in the state. Governor Walz also officially declared it “Teach Ag Day in Minnesota” with a proclamation from his office. Nominations are currently open to recommend a future agriculture teacher, with five nominees being selected to win a “Tagged to Teach Ag” kit.

A few highlights since the last board meeting include attending the Association for Career & Technical Educators (ACTE) Teach CTE summit, where Dornink and Schwab presented a workshop on Minnesota’s Agricultural Education internship program and the MAAE Summer Conference where they co-presented a workshop about “The legislature and you.” Dornink recently spoke at the National FFA Alumni Regional Development Conference Meet Up where she was able to share about Minnesota’s efforts around the FFA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion State Collaborative. Dornink and Schwab both attended Minnesota Ag in the Classroom Virtual Annual Meeting. Dornink also attended the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Advocacy committee meeting, the USDA Stakeholder meeting, and presented at the Farm Business Management Fall Professional Development Conference. She brought greetings on behalf of the MAELC board at the FBM 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, held

September 11, 2023. Beyond events, a lot of time has been spent with FBM reporting, developing the new programming related to increased legislative allocations, and completing a lot of grant and financial paperwork. Dornink also served on the Southern Agriculture Center of Excellence search committee.

MAELC coordinates the recruitment and retention strategies with the State Teach Ag Results (STAR) program; the committee recently met and began planning the 2024 strategies. The 2023 Agricultural Education Internship program has been completed with four interns placed across the state. Applications will be posted soon for both students and hosting locations. MAELC staff are also currently working on the request for proposals for the Teach Ag contract position that was approved at the June board meeting.

Dornink and Schwab continue to prepare for Schwab's upcoming maternity leave, with the plan she will be out from approximately mid-October through mid-January. A second student worker has been hired – Meredith Taylor. She and the current student worker, Kelsey Biel, will overlap this fall to help cover Schwab's leave and to transition as Biel will be student teaching in the spring. The Teach Ag intern, Karli Knopf, will be on staff through December, as she will also be student teaching in the spring. Once the contracted Teach Ag person has been finalized, it will be determined if another intern needs to be hired.

### **Scholarship Committee Report**

Smith provided an overview of the three 2023-2024 scholarship programs – Undergraduate, Graduate and Diversity. The committee met in late August to review and update the applications. It was decided a letter of recommendation should no longer be required for the Graduate scholarship as candidates will be interviewed before any funds are awarded. The eligibility for the Diversity scholarship was expanded to allow Graduate students to either be in their first year or be a current student, which is a new component. This is mainly due to graduate students spreading out their coursework over a few years for the master's program, so they are not eligible for the Graduate scholarship right away. Questions were also updated across all three applications to better match each program.

*Olson moved to approve applications as presented. Olander seconded. Motion prevailed.*

### **University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Agricultural Education Update**

Smith provided an update about the Agricultural Education, Communication and Marketing (AECM) program. Their program includes two majors – Agricultural Education and Agricultural Communication and Marketing. They now have two minors available for students, including Agriculture and Food Education and Agriculture and Environmental Science Communication. They have expanded the master's program offerings to now offer a professional study option, which includes more communication components.

Upcoming events include fall and winter invitationals for high school agriculture, food and natural resources (AFNR) education students. An AECM ambassador program has been developed to help address some recruitment needs.

The Teacher Induction Program (TIP) held two kick-off events recently, hosting just over 20 teachers (there are more participating, but they were unable to attend the in-person events).

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

### **Grant Committee Report**

Brockberg provided an overview of both the 2023-2024 Common Fund grant application and the Strategic Initiatives grant application. A minor change was made to the Strategic Initiative program, which took out the matching requirement related to technology as it has not been as big of a request lately and the committee is diligent in reviewing applications for outside funders and/or funding matches.

*Brockberg moved to approve the Common Fund and Strategic Initiatives grant applications as presented. Smith seconded. Motion prevailed.*

### **Grant Program Impact Presentation**

Schwab presented a “MAELC Program Grant Impact Update,” detailing the data collected through grant final reports from Round 24-2 (FY21), Round 25 & 25-2 (FY22), and FY2022 Common Fund projects (both rounds). These reports were chosen for analysis as they were new between the last grant update (September 2022) through the most recent deadline of June 30, 2023. Fifty-one reports were analyzed, totaling \$324,550 in project funding. The largest category of funded grant projects is for Classroom Equipment (61%), followed by Greenhouse/Garden (11%); everything else was split fairly evenly. Direct grant impact totaled 18,323 people, with the highest category being Middle/High School students. Indirectly, 58,204 people have been impacted (those impacted by project but not directly participating), with the highest category again being Middle/High School Students. All final report data is self-reported by the grant recipient.

*\*See presentation for more information (included in board packet).*

### **Minnesota Department of Education – Secondary Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) Education Update**

Michelle Kamenov, Supervisor of Career and Technical Education at the Minnesota Department of Education, presented about Minnesota AFNR education. MDE has education specialists in five Career and Technical Education (CTE) categories. The AFNR Specialist position is currently open; it has been posted and applications are coming in. They hope to conduct interviews starting in October.

Kamenov provided an overview of Perkins 5 as it relates to Minnesota, legislative changes and updates from the 2023 session, and additional information on legislation for frameworks alignment (elective standards, etc.)

Personal finance is a new graduation standard requirement. A teacher holding an agricultural education, business, family and consumer science, social studies or math license may teach this course. There are several initiatives to help support developing and supporting the teacher workforce, including a new Educator Workforce and Development Center. Summer agriculture grants received continued funding with a goal of the grant application being available in early 2024. There has also

been a change to state art standards. They were previously developed locally; however, there are now statewide standards starting in the 2024-2025 school year. Some districts were meeting local art standards through CTE programs. This may continue as long as the standards meet the new statewide requirements.

### AFNR Education in 2022-2023

Kamenov noted this data is provided by PELSB. Districts will report to PELSB in mid-October, so updated information will be available soon.

In FY22, there were 326 teachers holding an AFNR license; 351 in FY23 (14% are Tier 1 or 2). Gender (self-reported) is split 61% female, 39% male. For AFNR program enrollment, Kamenov explained all data is provided by school districts. In FY22 there were 43,465 students enrolled in an AFNR course (16% of AFNR students relative to all 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade students). In FY22, there were increases in participants in almost all categories of ethnicity, except Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The largest enrollment by pathway is still Power, Structural, and Technical Systems, however they are seeing large increases in participation in Agribusiness, Plant Natural Resources and Food Products and Processing systems. 209 districts offer AFNR programs; this does not count each program so districts with multiple schools with approved AFNR programs (ex: St. Paul) are only listed once. 2,644 courses were offered in school-year 2023.

Several questions were asked related to filling the AFNR Specialist role. Kamenov confirmed it will be an internal search, which means no stakeholders will be invited to participate on the search committee. It was also asked how the MDE has been covering the position while it is open. Kamenov explained that other CTE Program Specialists have been helping. They will also be hiring Joel Larsen, former AFNR Specialist who retired from that position, to fill in on a very limited basis to assist with a few components of the role under an “emergency status.”

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

### **Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) Update**

*\*no written report was available; Assistant Commissioner Bailey was unable to attend the meeting.*

### **Minnesota State & Farm Business Management (FBM) Update**

Olander filled in on behalf of President Gaalswyk. Olander highlighted a few pieces from the report, including the new Minnesota State Chancellor starting in August. FBM just celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. He expressed how important the FBM Challenge Grant program has been to support FBM and helping it survive over the last decade.

The Southern Agricultural Center of Excellence (SACE) has been awarded a two-year contract through the MDA to continue to provide farm succession and transfer coaching. Tina Lebrun has been named as the new Executive Director of SACE, starting in mid-October.

AgCentric has been awarded a \$50,000 grant for emerging farmers and urban agriculture from the MDA. This is a new development, so more details are to come.

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

## **University of Minnesota – College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS) Update**

Buhr provided an overview of CFANS initiatives. The University of Minnesota has had a transition in leadership with President Gabel leaving in early summer. Jeff Ettinger has been named as the Interim President. CFANS has 26 new faculty (about 10% of total faculty in the college). Undergraduate enrollment across CFANS has increased about 1-2% for this year. Buhr noted there has been a rapid increase in interest related to natural resources and the environment, as well as forestry and conservation. Students want to address climate change and how to improve water quality.

## **University Agricultural Education Updates**

### Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU)

SMSU submitted a written report. Dr. Gerry Toland highlighted a few components, including SMSU working on a strategic plan. He expressed appreciation of MAELC's support of this project through a Strategic Initiative grant. There are eight students currently enrolled in the Agricultural Education licensure program. During her sabbatical last year, Dr. Kovar worked to update the Agricultural Education curriculum, including changing the curriculum to qualify for work-based learning licensure. The new curriculum and WBL components have been approved at the college level, and they are now awaiting PELSB approval. Finally, Dr. Toland noted SMSU has seen about a 5% increase in student enrollment from last year.

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

### University of Minnesota-Crookston (UMC)

UMC submitted a written report.

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

## **Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE) Update**

Brockberg provided an update about MAAE, and the current status of Minnesota AFNR teachers and students. There are about 50 AFNR teachers who hold a Tier 1 or 2 or Out-of-Field (OFP) license. Overall, Minnesota AFNR has 335 teachers in 232 schools, with 214 FFA chapters. 12 positions are currently not filled with two or three schools not having any agriculture teacher. There are 42 first-year teachers, with one starting next semester (this data was provided by Dr. Lavyne Rada, TIP co-director/MN FFA Executive Director).

MAAE's concerns include finding balance to avoid burnout, supporting new instructors especially those that are coming into the profession through a non-traditional path, ensuring they are meeting the needs of post-secondary and FBM members, and continuing to work with MDE and the new AFNR Specialist.

Flaen briefly introduced herself and expressed she is happy to be joining the board and to learn more about MAELC's work.

*\*See handout for more information (included in board packet).*

## **Other Business/Announcements**

Upcoming dates of events and activities were highlighted (included on the back of agenda). The next board meeting will be held in-person in December 2023 in the metro area. Dornink thanked Ovrebo for filling as chair on short notice.

*Olander moved to adjourn the meeting. Olson seconded. Motion prevailed.*

*Ovrebo adjourned the meeting at 11:16 a.m.*