

OFFICERS

Chair  
Marc Rosso • 531-207-3244

Chair-Elect  
John Keith • 402-441-1622

Vice-Chair  
Ryan Hurst • 402-443-3222

Secretary  
Brian Gongol • 515-223-4144

Treasurer  
Mike Koenig • 402-504-7487

Director  
Ben Day • 402-570-6843

Past Chair  
Craig Reinsch • 402-458-5671

Trustees  
Chris Miller • 308-234-6456  
Angel Lowery • 402-970-2338  
Adam Darbro • 402-694-6992  
Tom Menke • 308-432-0522

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STANDING COMMITTEES

Archives & History  
Rob Pierce • 402-432-9172

Audit  
Marc Rosso • 531-207-3244  
Mike Koenig • 402-504-7487

Awards  
Rob Pierce • 402-432-9172

Budget  
Mike Koenig • 402-504-7487

Cross Connection  
Rich Koenig • 402-649-6243

Education  
John Keith • 402-441-1622

Fall Conference  
John Keith • 402-441-1622

Fuller Award  
Teresa Konda • 402-926-7063

Manufacturers/Associates Council  
Lee Dunn • 531-200-5983

Membership Engagement  
Chuck Seuferer • 402-443-7440

Nominations  
Craig Reinsch • 402-458-5671

One Water  
Dale Jacobson • 402-203-4921

Philanthropy  
Joe Roberts • 402-321-8726

Public Information  
Mary Poe • 402-471-1003

Publications  
Brian Gongol • 515-223-4144

Scholarship  
Angel Lowery • 402-970-2338

Small Systems  
Adam Darbro • 402-694-6992

Top Ops  
Mike Wentink • 308-535-8135

Water Utility Council  
Chad Roberts • 402-844-2210

YP & Student Activities  
Hayden Delay • 402-926-7075  
Abhijeet Saraf • 402-392-6986

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AD-HOC COMMITTEES

Community Engineering Corps  
Dr. Bruce Dvorak • 402-326-8391



American Water Works Association  
Nebraska Section

PO Box 83742  
Lincoln, NE 68501-3742  
aawwa.org

# Preliminary

01-27-2023 5:37:48 PM

## Board Meeting Minutes

**Date** January 24, 2023

**Time** The meeting was called to order by Marc Rosso at 10:04 am.

**Location** Olsson  
601 P Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

<b>Roll call</b>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Marc Rosso	Lincoln	
John Keith	Lincoln	
Ryan Hurst	Videoconference	
Brian Gongol	Videoconference	
Mike Koenig	Lincoln	
Ben Day	Lincoln	
Craig Reinsch	Lincoln	
Chris Miller		Absent (excused)
Angel Lowery	Videoconference	
Adam Darbro	Videoconference	
Tom Menke	Videoconference	
<b>Guests:</b>	Mary Poe Maggie Vulman Tessa Yackley (Olsson)	

**Approval of agenda** The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

**Approval of minutes** Approval of the November 2022 meeting minutes (moved by Day, seconded by Keith, approved by voice vote)

**Chair's report (Marc Rosso)** Marc Rosso is asking the trustees to form an ad-hoc committee to address the SOPs for the Fall Conference meeting. Angel Lowery volunteered to lead the effort. Rosso is asking each committee chair to review their own SOPs and advance some element of the strategic plan through their committee work.

Rosso is working with Maggie Vulman of AWWA to work through necessary updates to the bylaws.

Rosso asks the members of the board to review the

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membership lists to consider whether there are any individuals they could reach personally to try to retain membership between now and March.

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**Director's report  
(Ben Day)**

Ben Day attended the winter board meeting in New Mexico. Elected directors-at-large, vice presidents, and president-elect for the association.

The association is making efforts to improve its DEI and young professional outreach. Day is pleased to see that the membership committee has been charged with carrying out the section's DEI effort. Day will accept feedback on his draft DEI memo for the next week before forwarding comments to the association for review.

The association board is going to make room for two YP members as standing seats at the association level, and Day encourages the board to consider making a similar provision for a permanent YP seat on the Nebraska Section board.

Day notes that he participated in a "pop-up" meeting on the Water 2050 effort yesterday. It is an association-level effort with five areas of focus, and the association is looking for feedback from the section level by May 1st.

The Washington fly-in date has moved to March 22nd and 23rd.

The association surpassed its goal of 50,000 members last year, but many sections still encountered membership decline (including Nebraska). Mike Koenig had indicated that MUD will be adding five individual members soon.

Day notes that the association's budget is strong, with sound cash reserves.

Rosso asked for detail regarding the addition of a YP board representative via the bylaws. Day indicated that he believes the existing bylaws already make room for additional seats not presently used on the board.

Approval of the director's report was moved by Craig Reinsch and seconded by John Keith. Motion was approved via voice vote.

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## Treasurer's report (Mike Koenig)

Mike Koenig reported that the savings account was drawn down to zero and closed in December. The preponderance of those funds were moved to the Stifel investment account, with approximately \$10,000 retained in the ordinary checking account.

Outflows went to scholarships and Fall Conference-related expenses in November, while revenues came from the sporting clays event.

Koenig receives a monthly newsletter from Stifel regarding market activity, and he will share those periodically with the board.

Koenig reported that there were some funds received via the fundraising events that had not yet been posted as expenses to the philanthropy committee. There were two reported expenditures in 2022 because of a delay in issuing the 2021 donations.

Koenig reported that the small firm that the section had been using for tax preparation is no longer in operation, and the migration to a new service provider was bumpy, in part due to late submission of materials on the section's part. The filings were completed in time and we anticipate receipt of documentation soon. The section will make efforts to complete the taxes sooner in the future. Day indicated that the section has filed late in the past due to the timing of receipts from the Fall Conference and the filing deadline (November 15th). The new process for managing the Fall Conference may help us to expedite those filings without the need for extensions.

Angel Lowery left the meeting at 10:31 am.

Approval of the treasurer's report was moved by Ben Day and seconded by Brian Gongol. Approved by voice vote.

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## Committee reports

**Archives:**  
No report.

**Audit:**  
John Keith reported verbally that the firm we use for tax filings is not prepared to conduct an audit, but we have access to a different trustworthy firm in Lincoln which we can use instead.

**Awards:**

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No report.

**Budget:**

Mike Koenig indicated that developing the 2023 budget was the biggest objective.

John Keith indicated that the process used in the past probably needs to be updated so that the budget process starts in September or October so that the discussion can be performed at the annual meeting.

Poe asked if the annual committee reports included budget requests. Hurst noted that few of the reports included specific budget requests.

Keith noted that the budget file had been kept on OneDrive and could be edited by individual members.

Koenig said that many of the activities related to the section anniversary would come off the books for the 2023 budget, which would streamline the budget for the year.

Angel Lowery returned to the meeting at 10:39 am.

Reinsch indicated that he was reviewing the reports from the annual meeting and found lots of budget requests in the reports. Koenig said he could review the individual reports with a goal of incorporating those into a proposed 2023 budget. Keith indicated that a March deadline would be achievable under that process.

Keith indicated that we are using 80% of the free OneDrive account, and that upgrading to a larger drive would cost a trivial amount per month. Day said that without a central repository for other section information, the OneDrive account is highly useful. Koenig commended Keith for his very well-organized use of the OneDrive account for leaving behind treasurer's information.

Keith said he found the OneDrive account useful for centralization and the cost was minimal.

**Cross connection:**

No report.

**Education:**

John Keith reported that he was able to conduct a fall RCAP round 7 meeting thanks to generous grant

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funding. The event had 75 attendees, which was a nice coincidence with the section's 75th anniversary. The Nebraska Section is one of the top three performers in terms of attendance at these events per member.

Keith is planning to use funds from RCAP round 8 to fund a preconference event at the Fall Conference in 2023. MAP attendees had their fees comped to attend the 2022 Fall Conference, and he would like to do the same in 2023, since their participation facilitates the training event.

**Fall Conference:**

John Keith has been in contact already with Brittany Travers (acting in her capacity with NWEA) to begin the planning for the conference.

**Fuller Award:**

No report.

**MAC:**

No report.

**Membership:**

Chuck Seuferer submitted a report on membership. Rosso asks the board members to review the individuals listed to see which members they might know. Day reviewed the dropped membership list and believes many have simply retired. Poe asked if there was a retiree-level membership; Rosso said he believed there was a low-level retiree membership option available.

**Nominations:**

No report.

**One Water:**

No report.

**Philanthropy:**

No report.

**Public Information:**

Mary Poe reported on the outcomes of the water-tasting contest from the Fall Conference. The scores were tightly clustered this year (more so than usual). Poe suggests that in the future, the judges be reminded that they can go back and change scores, particularly after the first round or two.

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Drinking Water Week 2023 will be held May 7-13. Poe said she could continue to coordinate the proclamation, even though she is no longer on the board. With the week being held later, we have more choices as to the date of the public proclamation. Reinsch recommended requesting the May 1st proclamation date. Poe will make that request and report back when more is known.

Reinsch asked about coordinating with members to get information out sooner about Drinking Water Week. Poe indicated that she believes utility members already receive information from the association, but she can follow up to find out more information.

Reinsch asked if any of the utility members present had preferences about the best way to get information to them for dissemination to the public. Menke said that two weeks or more would be the preferred lead time; Hurst concurred. Hurst advised that time is needed to get the event onto the municipal council's agenda, as well as into local publications.

Reinsch suggested that there are mayoral proclamation templates available that could enhance the event's local impact. Hurst said that his utility focuses more on World Water Day, but could see using Drinking Water Week events and materials, if sufficiently different from the World Water Day content.

Poe said that she would coordinate with the association to find out what resources are available and will attempt to disseminate those to the membership in March. Reinsch asked Vaulman if any materials are available; Vaulman shared a link for more information<sup>1</sup>.

**Publications:**  
Report submitted.

**Scholarship:**  
No report.

**Small Systems:**  
No report.

**Top Ops:**

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1 <https://www.awwa.org/Events-Education/Drinking-Water-Week/DWW-Materials#7602521-childrens-activities>

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Report submitted. The committee needs to determine what team to send to ACE, based upon qualifications and competition requirements. Discussion ensued regarding the location and timing of the event. Due to limited space in the facility, it may be hard to separate the water-tasting and Top Ops events. Poe indicated that there was a smaller crowd than usual for the water-tasting contest.

**Water Utility Council:**

Report submitted.

**Young Professionals:**

No report.

**Community Engineering Corps:**

No report. Rosso asked whether the committee is still considered active. There was no resolution of the question.

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**Membership report**

Marc Rosso dismissed the report, the subject having been discussed previously during the meeting.

Maggie Vaulman requested (via the meeting chat session) that the section advise her of any deceased members listed in our reports so they can be removed from the automated reports.

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**Old business**

No new business was entertained.

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**New business**

**1. Appointment of a nominating committee:**

Marc Rosso asked Craig Reinsch to form a nominating committee. Tom Menke volunteered to assist. Ben Day asked the committee to integrate the DEI memo in its process.

Reinsch commented that the nominations committee in the past has developed a pool of prospective members that it might want to develop for future leadership opportunities, both at the committee and board level. Reinsch said his committee would need further guidance from the board in this regard. Mary Poe noted that many of the committee chairs are already seasoned board members and past members, and that it may be worthwhile to consider whether that would require cycling members out of those committee roles. Hurst advised that he became more involved in AWWA specifically because he was asked to become involved at the board level.

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## **2. SOP update:**

Marc Rosso asked Angel Lowery to confirm that she would lead the effort to update the SOPs. Lowery confirmed her willingness to participate.

## **3. Bylaws:**

Marc Rosso asked Maggie Vulman to summarize their activity so far. Vulman noted that the current Nebraska Section bylaws are more restrictive than necessary to satisfy the state's legal requirements, and more restrictive than the association's approach. Vulman said that the current rules require a vote via hard copy, but that the proposed changes could be distributed electronically. A 30-day voting period is required subsequent to the announcement. If approved, the executive committee can review those proposed changes. This means the proposed updates can be approved via the executive committee's consent agenda at ACE, then re-approved (as required) at the Fall Conference.

Craig Reinsch asked whether the duties of the chair should include assigning board liaisons to individual committees. Vulman recommended following the "freedom within the framework" approach advocated by David LaFrance, meaning to limit the number of formal restrictions on local behavior within the bylaws.

Reinsch asked about the requirement to conduct the business meeting at the Fall Conference. Vulman advised that the maximum flexibility possible was best, particularly in light of the experiences of 2020. A business meeting should be required, and in practice may always be conducted at the Fall Conference, but should not be required by the bylaws.

Reinsch asked if the bylaws were the appropriate place to locate requirements for voting; Vulman suggested that the best approach is to defer in the bylaws to the laws of the state.

Ben Day moved to approve the proposed amendments to the bylaws and the process for approval, seconded by John Keith. The motion was approved by voice vote.

## **4. Water 2050 Nebraska:**

Marc Rosso suggested that the Water 2050 questions raised by Ben Day could be shared via OneDrive, or that an ad-hoc committee could be

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formed for the purpose of reviewing them. Day indicated that the process could be ad-hoc, but that he would like to know the preferred way of soliciting and collecting feedback from the membership. The process should begin soon, since the report is requested by May 1st.

Day will gather feedback and report back at the March board meeting for board approval of the final report before it is returned to the association.

**5. Retreat:**

Ryan Hurst recalled the 2021 board retreat, and said he would look into sites available for a meeting in July. Hurst asked whether anyone had particular site preferences; none were offered. Reinsch recalled that the 2021 retreat was held on June 30th, and that the agenda included SWOT analysis of the section's activities and a review of the Fall Conference activities. Hurst will proceed with an early-July plan in mind.

**6. Training certificates:**

Marc Rosso spoke with Steve Kelley about the process of collecting and disseminating training certificates. Reinsch noted that a template exists. Keith asked if a different process is necessary from the automatic system used by Mike Wentink.

Rosso asked if a printed certificate is necessary to indicate participation. Day noted that with an all-volunteer section, it's not necessary to add more paperwork to a process already being tracked automatically. Hurst noted that the state does tell operators to keep a physical copy of participation certificates to ensure that they have a backup in case the issue comes up at the time of license renewal. Keith said they consider it a job responsibility for operators to track their own hours. Poe noted that the rural water association furnishes printed certificates, which may contribute to some of the uncertainty.

**7. AWWA/RCAP/EPA small systems training:**

An online vote was conducted to authorize John Keith to apply for a grant applicable to a pre-conference event in November.

**Votes as recorded by e-mail**

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Rosso	x		
Keith	Motion		

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Hurst	Second
Gongol	x
Koenig	x
Day	x
Reinsch	x
Miller	x
Lowery	x
Darbro	x
Menke	

Marc Rosso moved, seconded by Ryan Hurst, to ratify the results of the online vote. The motion was approved by voice vote.

**8. Fuller Award at ACE:**

Marc Rosso asked that Brian Gongol submit a distilled 40-word biography for the Fuller Award at ACE.

**9. Washington Fly-In:**

The Water Utility Council had requested board approval to send Alex Evans, Tom Menke, and Chad Roberts to the 2023 Washington Fly-In. Since the funds were already allocated to the committee via the budget, no further action was taken.

**10. Committee liaison updates:**

Mary Poe advised that she was listed as a board liaison for some committees, and that those liaisons should be listed. Rosso agreed to make updates to the document and distribute.

**11. Committee engagement suggestions:**

Mary Poe commented that in her role now as a post-board member, and that the varying levels of engagement with the board gave her cause to consider whether the board should do more to encourage committee activity and interaction with the board.

Day commented that he perceives a decline in committee chair engagement with the regular board meetings. Poe noted that Hurst's efforts to prod board liaisons to reach out to the chairs seemed to help last year. Poe also noted that calling the retreat something other than a "board" retreat might help. Day concurred that more membership activity would be preferable.

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**Next meetings**

March 14th (10:00 am CT)  
at Miller and Associates in Kearney

May 18 (10:00 am CT)  
at Woodland Hills Golf Course in Eagle

Late June/early July  
Section leadership retreat

July 18 (10:00 am CT)  
via videoconference

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**Adjournment**

Mike Koenig moved to adjourn, seconded by John Keith. The motion was approved by voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 11:59 am.

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