

**Michigan DNR DEQ Retirees Association  
Board Meeting Minutes**

January 22, 2025 9:30 am-11:30  
Held VIA Zoom

**Roll Call:** Debbie Begalle, Sharon Hanshue, Cheryl Farhat, Sue Colon, Hal Fitch, Dave Forstat, Mike Moss, Patty Roethele, Mindy Koch; Ann Feldhauser joined about 10:30. Absent: Kay Duncan (sent comments via email), Janice Heck.

President Begalle called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**Approval of Agenda**

Sharon Hanshue asked to have two items added to the agenda: scholarships and an audit.

**Approval of Minutes of October 24 meeting**

October 24 minutes covered possible lead and alternate lead for planning the 2025 annual meeting. Board members noted there was not agreement as to who would be alternate lead. Deb proposed that the minutes be amended to state that the lead is to be determined.

An audit was added as an item on October agenda, but the minutes do not cover the audit question. Sue Colon said the minutes should be amended to reflect that an auditor had been found and the audit will proceed. She also noted that two audits had since been completed and she sent out a copy to the board. She will resend them. Sue moved to accept the minutes as amended, and Cheryl seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

**Secretary Report**

Kay Duncan was absent but sent comments to Deb Begalle: Kay will write an article on Directory Distribution for the spring newsletter. Secretary's work load has lessened considerably since we have automated the Directory distribution, and we are not able to get names for new retirees so no prospect letters are being sent. Suggests we put an article in newsletter encouraging members to use the Website payment options for dues and registration payments. Kay prepared a notice to all expired memberships and Dave pushed it out. Nearly 100 were expired as of 12/31/2024.

**Treasurer Report:**

Sue Colon reported that we began December with balance of \$13,115.60. Dues and renewals were \$460, donations were \$75, directories were \$12, interest was \$21.83, for total revenue of \$568.83. Expenses were \$38.60 for postage, \$300 for administrative expenses (for the auditor), \$0.59 for PayPal service charges and bank charges, \$339.19 total. Checking account balance as of January 1 was \$2,935.35, share account at \$3,121.20, Max Money Market at \$2,102.31, seven-month CD at \$5,276.45, for total balance of \$13,435.31. Report accepted.

Dues payments have increased with PayPal and credit card payment options. Hal will draft an article for the newsletter encouraging use of the website and online payments. Members who pay online get a response thanking them for renewing but not a payment confirmation from PayPal or credit card providers. Hal and Sue verify that payments have been properly received.

Sue noted that the auditor found some minor issues but characterized financial procedures as following "generally accepted standards." Sue will email the audit report to the board and board members may discuss any follow-up questions at the next board meeting.

**Officer(s) Reports:**

**Region III:** Patty - nothing to report.

Cheryl wants to announce picnic dates in Newsletter. Region III – Thursday, June 12. We usually reserve pavilion in January.

**Region II:** Mike – Bill Duley retiring in Feb.

**Region I:** Ann joined meeting later. Board noted that UP Picnic will probably be July 8.

**Dave Forstat**

Will be update of database software soon - should not affect us.

Dave was preparing w/ Kay to send out updated directory – found about 130 members have not paid 2025 dues. He & Kay sent out reminder. As of now, still have about 60 members not paid; 368 active members with email addresses that are paid up. Dave will tally number without emails and report to board. Expiration dates are shown on newsletters. Dave has been posting obits and retirement announcements. It is helpful if members provide details RE obit, funeral home, retirement flyers, etc. Cheryl will put note in newsletter. Cheryl wants to meet w/ Amy Abdo of DNR RE putting info in retiree packages about Association; may follow up with letter as Kay has suggested. EGLE has been including reference to Association in retiree packages. Mindy suggests showing Amy copy of letter Association had previously sent to new retirees as example. Deb asked Cheryl to include in newsletter a short paragraph saying Dave Forstat sends out notices – it is helpful to include obit or announcement.

**Cheryl:** Deadline for Spring newsletter is March 1. Cheryl requested info on financials, Fall meeting. Sharon: may have info on scholarships; may want to include info on amendment to Articles of Incorporation. Deb: include summary of survey. Mindy: plans to do Ed article on leasing of DNR land for solar collectors and use of public lands for green energy. Board members expressed support.

**Old Business:**

1. Articles of Incorporation filing and Bylaws - vote by members  
Amendment of Articles not as urgent as previously thought. Board decided to put this up for a vote at the annual meeting rather than via email voting. Cheryl will put article in Summer newsletter.  
Also for Summer newsletter – Deb: post Treasurer report, 2024 annual meeting minutes, etc. so business session at annual meeting goes more quickly.  
Sharon: put articles and minutes on website as well as photos of fall meeting – Hal will do.
2. Review survey results and summarize findings. Following are questions and responses by Board:  
Have you attended an annual meeting and if not why not. Suggestions discussed: personal phone calls, offer of driver of carpooling (maybe put in newsletter?), Zoom meeting (might discourage in-person attendance), photos on website, post members signed up on website (but how many would see it?), send email out (but problem with timing).  
What do you like most about coming to the annual meeting – Almost all said connecting w/ former co-workers.  
Suggestions about a location – Discussed pros and cons of RAMCC. Deb & Sharon will look into RAMCC. Other suggestions: Doherty in Clare; Kirtland.  
Do you like having educational speakers at the annual meetings? – Patty suggested Jason Fleming on improvements & changes in Parks Division. Greg Lusk – Seney Fire (well received). Medical benefits (but SERA does this) – too dry. Suggest post on website? Most interest in DNR-related issues. Decided to contact Greg Lusk (Ann will contact). Aim for 30 minutes + questions.  
Do you like the idea of offering scholarships – discussed committee to research the issue – Sharon volunteered to lead effort; Ann and Cheryl will help. Mindy will review report. Plan to discuss in May Board Meeting.  
Additional ways the Association could support and assist its members – not much more feasible. Deb's comments in newsletter will cover purpose and mission of Association.  
Volunteer of the Year – No nominations by respondents. Suggest we encourage members to share volunteer activities.  
Willing to serve – discussed positive response from one member and where they could contribute. Hal will follow up.  
Other comments – we will be making business meeting more brief.

**New Business:**

1. Posting of board meeting minutes (new item added to agenda)  
Board agreed it's a good idea. Will have to wait until they are approved at next meeting. Post on Members-only page.

**Future Board Meeting Schedule:**

May 22, 10:00. Either Doherty or Fred's.

**Meeting adjourned** at 11:25 am.