



## **Granite State Onsite Wastewater Association – February 28, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**Attending: (All on Zoom)** Chris Albert, Aaron Wechsler, Chris Kent, Bruce Fillmore, Carl Hagstrom, Jim Hanna, Larry Maznek, Micah Denner, Tom Canfield on phone from road **Absent: Staff:** Matt Gatzke

**Meeting started at 4:30p.m.**

**Minutes of January 31, 2023 Board Meeting:** Jim made motion with Chris K. offering second. No discussion. Motion carried.

**Review of January 31, 2023 Financial Report:** Micah did not have any specific comments on the report. Matt commented that the AR report did not reflect recent payments for dues, conference payments and vendors. Larry made motion to approve January financials with Jim providing a second. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Matt and Micah commented on a proposed budget that he sent out earlier. Difficult to guess how much to forecast for conference income. Also, dues will spike too. Dee has done stats on how many we might have attend based on history, so we may plug in that number. We are using actuals so far this year to calculate budget. Cannot use 2022 as a measure as last year reflected pent up attendance energy after no conference for two years. Also addressed need to estimate how many for food functions at the conference. Between 30-80 potential new registrations. On Monday, March 6, we will regroup to give hotel a new count. Reviewed various line item expenses that we have to pay (a/v, vendor setup, room rental, food, etc.) Aaron commented on the former role of the finance committee and the aim to turn a profit on events. Problem with the dues is that we get income in this year when they should have paid last year. We need to consider moving the dues year back to a calendar year. Too many of the AR balances have been with us since August 2022 which is last fiscal year. Micah had commented about some kind of penalty for those who pay late but membership in GSOWA is not mandatory. The conference is the real driver. Brief discussion about how we could get back to a calendar year dues structure. Consider giving them the last four months and just renew at full rate come January. Matt suggested that we table the budget as we ought to use actuals from the conference. Keeping associate membership at actual level. Should reduce SEP income expectations due to pent up demand from COVID in 2022. Keeping SEP expenses where they were in case of cost increases. Due to slow times for home inspections, some are looking to add the credential to be able to add the service to their list of services they can offer. No expected increase for DB Mgt. fees. Left some money for newsletter production.

**Programs and Update:** All speakers set but waiting to hear from ethics speaker. Numbers are lower due to it being first year of new two-year cycle. The fact that one can get six credits in one day starting to have its impact on two-day attendance. Healthy discussion about coming up with a different model where people pay one price for both days. Consider setting one price for entire thing whether you go one or two days, challenge is how to order food. Micah asked how many attend both days vs one day only? Matt explained the need to have people sign in for each session in addition to the credit sheets. Matt reviewed conference sessions and assignments for room proctors and form stamping.

**Legislative and Rules:** Chris A. voiced concern over HB2 and HB655 which seeks to eliminate a number of licenses and certifications including wetland and soil scientists and make changes to OPLC joint board structure. He asked for board consensus to send a letter of testimony against eliminating these designations would be entered into record for a hearing next week. Wetland rules and others would no longer be aligned as they specify certified professionals. Governor sees the boards and structure as a barrier to employment. Sense is that it is a bad idea and would remove some consumer protections as well. GSOWA board felt it ok for Chris to send a letter in opposition. Larry made motion to have Chris represent GSOWA in letter with Tom offering a second. Motion carried.

**New Business:** Commented that GSOWA had nothing to do with recent spamming of emails from an unsolicited source. Matt put together e-notice of the slate of officers for election. Matt read the list. We need a new designer or installer on the board. Kevin Kent would serve out Chris K. spot which expires next year. Tom also expires next year. Aaron will remain as immediate past chair but will not run for any other office. We will also advertise a vacancy for a directorship. Erin Darrow had reached out but there may be complications with her family schedule and previous no response when asked to attend board meetings. Need to consider who might also be our affiliate rep at the board meetings. Gary Spaulding not a voting board member presently.

On hats, the cost was either low cost but not great hats or they were upwards of \$12-\$15 each. Not enough time to order. We need to consider more of a member incentive first. About shirts for board members, it would be great to have them for brand recognition. Need to order them for board members at next board meeting. Wear at events, testify at legislative hearings, etc. Look to do hats at 2024 conference.

Matt asked for permission to buy a new computer for GSOWA to use at events as the two older laptops are not longer serviceable. Chris A. made motion for matt to get the laptop and MS office for under \$1000. Micah seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Vice Chairman Reports (Designers):** Carl echoed Chris's concerns about the OPLC issues.

**Vice Chairman Report (Installers):** Jim commented on inlet baffles and inspectors wanting them to be 8" into tank and not 5"; installers gluing schedule 40 to concrete baffle. Inlet baffles have to be plumb. Angle of deflection is being changed so adding extension puts you in opposition to state regs. Comment was made that a round tank more evenly settled things out based on movement of water.

**Vice Chairman Report (Pumpers):** Larry had no report from pumpers group specifically. He was on an inspection where there was a cesspool for dishwasher and kitchen sink. Had a regular tank for toilet and shower. There is a section in rules for privies and allowed drywells for gray water. Main thing with detergents and chemicals in washers is they can be worse than human waste. Rule changes should take a look at these one-off systems. Water flows near leachfield in the spring which compromise the environment. Cesspools have been on the hit list for GSOWA for a long time. Larry commented that rules said all waste coming from a house (with pressure water) is to have waste going to a state-approved leachfield. There is some wording that refers to waste other than human waste, for which a dry well might work (water softener). DES does not approve them. Drywells did not make it into last rules revision. Larry sees too many situations where washing machine was dumping right on to the ground. How do you stop homeowner's from creating such situations on their own? Micah mentioned we make notes during an inspection when things appear to be in violation. Larry commented that it is the seller who is often leaving a mess for the new home buyer to figure out. Chris K. mentioned that the septic evaluator board is looking to allow inspectors to fail leach beds. In the case of the washer dumping on the ground, he would consider that a failure. Jim reminded all that as an agent of the state it is our job to report things to the state. When you see an incorrect setup, you should feel free to call it out to the homeowner whether or not they choose to fix something.

**Vice Chairman Report (Evaluators):** Micah trying to get new photos together to update the training program. Hearing from home inspectors looking to attend the training programs. Has concerns with location for the field inspection part of the training. System at Homemakers is long gone. Need location with loading. Team to go to Kent's location to determine how they can use it for the May program. Tom said Maine will be certifying Maine evaluators under new rules. They are going to require camera inspections for evaluations. Inspections required in the tidal zones in Maine but not includes all regulated shoreland areas within 250' of the water.

**Meeting Adjournment:** Motion was made by Tom and Chris K. seconded to adjourn meeting at 6:30 p.m.