



## *Executive Committee Year End Update*

### **Environment and Sustainability Committee**

Date: December 6, 2018 EC Meeting

#### **Committee Personnel Changes**

Sherri Buss has served as the past chair and vice chair of this committee for numerous years. She has decided to step down with her upcoming retirement. The committee appreciates all of the hard work and dedication Sherri has provided over the years. Her service will be missed. Matt Huggins will now step in as the vice chair of the committee.

Over the past year a new member was added, Ben Scharenbroich, with the City of Plymouth. His expertise is water resources and sustainable chloride and environmental practices among others. Our committee continues to see growth which helps generate new ideas. However, we also lost two members due to retirements including Klay Eckles and Joel Schilling. Both have been active members pushing for important initiatives ranging from water supply plan coordination to encouraging storm water re-use.

Tim Olson volunteered to serve as the APWA representative on the 2019 Operation and Maintenance Conference Committee ([www.omswconference.org](http://www.omswconference.org)).

#### **Roles and Responsibilities Summary**

Michael Thompson – Chair

Matt Huggins – Vice Chair (new role)

Chapter Sustainability Liaison – Tyler McLeete (new role)

Conference Planning Committee – Eric Nelson to represent interests of E&S Committee (new role)

#### **Committee Work in 2018**

The Committee met three times this year (March 28, July 18, and October 11), and the following is a brief overview of activities and discussions:

1. Environmental Service Event
  - Committee member Matt Huggins (now our new Vice Chair replacing Sherri Buss) and Michael Ryan continue to coordinate our successful Adopt-A-Highway Event. Two events were held this year, one in the spring and one recently in the fall. The photo below is the fall event. This year the committee recommitted with MnDOT for another two-year term of service.



October 2018 Adopt a Highway Service Event

## 2. Conference Planning Committee Environmental Topics

- Sherri Buss (who also served on the planning committee) has been the point person for the committee ensuring timely environmental topics are represented. With her retirement the committee appointed Eric Nelson to take on that role.

## 3. General Information from 2018

- The committee coordinated for Laura Millberg of the MPCA to present on the topic of climate adaption and resilience. The committee provided insightful feedback for their stakeholder information gathering effort.
- There was much discussion on the new MS4 Construction Stormwater Permit which went into effect on August 1, 2018. The General Permit is likely to take effect in August of 2019. The committee will continue to coordinate its efforts with the Minnesota Cities Stormwater Coalition to ensure APWA interests are represented.

## 4. Advocacy

- The committee discussed and recommended supporting the Smart Salting Initiative which was a bill carried to help reduce liability on smart salting as long as employees were trained. This effort failed at the legislature.
- Pete Willenbring and Ron Leaf are spearheading an ongoing effort to coordinate with the Minnesota Cities Stormwater Coalition about the range of topics that were discussed at the meeting to understand how we can leverage MCSC to ensure common sense environmental best practices and streamlined regulations. In addition to the General MS4 Permit there was much discussion on PAH contamination in sediments as it relates to costs for pond dredging. Pete Willenbring followed up with the MPCA on the topic to understand if a new framework is being analyzed on alternative disposal methods. At current the answer was no from the MPCA so there may be an advocacy area for the committee since cost reductions could be significant with a no landfill option for Level 3 soils.
- The Committee discussed chloride impairments and how the committee could coordinate with the newly established government affairs committee to better message the importance of smart salting or take a more active role in supporting future legislation on this front.

## 5. Past Successes

- The committee was a key player in moving towards the establishment of the MAWSAC technical committee which began with the water supply discussions in partnership with local public works officials and the Met Council.
- Successful establishment and continuation of the APWA Adopt-a-Highway Program which provides the MN Chapter with visibility along the Highway 100 corridor north of Interstate 394.
- Partnering and working with a number of stakeholders ranging from MPCA, Met Council, MN Dept. of Health (providing feedback on the stormwater re-use guideline draft proposal), etc.
- Providing recommendation to the EC regarding legislation such as flushable wipes and Smart Salting Initiative. Also, being a sounding board for the EC such as the legislative bill requesting allocation of dollars for forest management (neutral).

## 6. 2019 Initiatives Summarized

- Continuing to be the voice of public works through advocating for our members on topics such as environmental regulations (MS4 Permit)
- Advocacy through MPCA and others regarding PAH Soil Disposal Framework Options
- Involvement in Education through supporting the planning committee and outside organization efforts such as the Operations and Maintenance Conference hosted in Minneapolis in 2019
- Providing strong support to the Awards Committee in recruiting applicants for the Environmental Award Category to ensure local awards can translate into applications for APWA National.

### **Committee Membership**

Chair: Michael Thompson

Vice Chair: Matt Huggins

Members: Ron Leaf, Pete Willenbring, Reid Wronski, Dan Ruiz, Eric Nelson, Michael Ryan, Tyler McLeete, Mark Rehder, Eric Nelson, Tim Olson, Ben Scharenbroich

EC Liaison: Michael Thompson or Matt Huggins

### **Mission**

The Environment and Sustainability Committee keeps the Chapter membership informed and advocates for the membership on current environmental resource issues and approaches to sustainability in public works.