



Kansas Water Environment Association
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Kansas Water Environment Association

Meeting Date: December 13, 2019 Olathe Public Works
Olathe, Kansas

Executive Board Present:

(x)	Chris Ramsey	President
(x)	Jason Patty	President-Elect
(x)	Ryan Rutkowski	Vice-President
()	Ron Thomann	Past President
(x)	Sylvan Coles	Secretary-Treasurer
()	Ron Thomann	WEF Junior Delegate (2017-2020)
(x)	Brian Spano	WEF Senior Delegate (2016-2019)
(x)	Joe Foster	PWO Trustee (2015 – 2019)
(x)	Michael Rudy	Manufacturer's Trustee (2015-2019)
(x)	Dustin Coles	Convention Coordinator (2015-2019)
()	Ed McGrath	Young Professionals Trustee

Committee Representatives Present:

(X)	Sylvan Coles	Administrative Function
(x)	Brian Spano	Administrative – Finance
(x)	Ryan Rutkowski	Administrative – Membership
()	James Martin	Administrative – Constitution & Bylaws
(x)	Waldo Margheim	Administrative – Audit
()	Laura Gray	Collections Committee – Chairperson
()	Alex Darby	Collections Committee – Vice Chairperson
()	Open	Collections Sub-Committee for Awards
()	Stuart Lord	Collections Sub-Committee for National Issues
(x)	Lorrie Hill	Government Affairs – Chairperson
()	Open	Government Affairs: Treatment Sub-Committee
()	Open	Government Affairs: Collections Sub-Committee
()	Andy Sauer	Government Affairs: Storm Water Sub-Committee
()	Michael Carter	Industrial Pretreatment – Chairperson
()	Open	Laboratory Education – Chairperson
()	Open	Laboratory Education – Vice Chairperson
(x)	Jeena Johns	Municipal Management – Chairperson
(x)	John Keller	Municipal Technology Transfer – Co- Chairperson
(x)	Tim Hunt	Municipal Technology Transfer – Co- Chairperson
()	Kurt Bookout	Nominating Committee – Chairperson (KWEA Past President)
(x)	Steve McNolty II	Plant Operations & Maintenance: Committee Chairperson
()	Open	Plant Operations & Maintenance: Plant Awards Sub-Committee Chairperson
()	Open	Plant Operations & Maintenance: Safety Sub-Committee
(x)	Chris Ramsey	Program – Chairperson (KWEA President-Elect)
()	Page Burks	Public Communication & Outreach (PC&O) – Chairperson
()	Carla Dods	PC&O - Vice Chairperson
()	Vacant	PC&O: Public Education Sub-Committee
()	Vacant	PC&O: Publicity/WEF Awards Sub-Committee
()	Barrett Schmidt	PC&O: Publications Sub-Committee
(x)	Tina Leitzel	PC&O: Webmaster
()	Martha Tasker	Scholarship – Chairperson
()	Rebecca Lewis	Stockholm Junior Water Prize - Chairperson
(x)	Ryan Rossel	Student & Young Professionals – Chairperson
()	Alex Beck	Student & Young Professionals – Vice Chairperson

Guests: Kahao Lim – Kansas State University & Heather Phillips – City of Olathe

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approved Minutes of the October 17, 2019 Executive Board Meeting with corrections.

A. Member Services and Operations- Led by Vice-President (Ryan Rutkowski)

i. Secretary/Treasurer Report (Sylvan Coles)

Sylvan updated the Board regarding the financial status as of December 13, 2019 of KWEA. The financial position of KWEA is sound.

ii. Sr. Delegates Report (Brian Spano)

Earlier in the year WEF sent out a survey to MA's asking them to rate topics of most importance to be discussed at the 2020 WEFMAX's. Ultimately four would be selected. The topic choices included:

- **Academic Support**
- **Advocacy**
- **Awards**
- **Boards**
- **Communication**
- **Conference**
- **D & I**
- **Engagement**
- **Financial**
- **MA Resource Sharing**
- **Membership**
- **Operators**
- **Partnerships**
- **WEF Resources**

Brian responded to the survey of behalf of KWEA with his choices (in order of importance being:

- **Engagement**
- **Partnerships**
- **Boards**
- **Conference**

Thirty four MA's responded with these topics rising to the top.

1. **ENGAGEMENT** – Committees, Committee Onboarding, How to get people with unique backgrounds to join and get engaged, Best practices for committee engagement, Engaging with State Regulatory Agencies, program that fosters operator engagement, How to convince employers of the value of membership, Trendy ways to recognize volunteer for their engagement, Engaging local policy makers, Academic engagement, Student Chapters, Design Competition, etc...
2. **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION** – *Statistics on workforce and ideas for new outreach, InFLOW, Social changes in member organizations, competency standards – preparing workforce, workforce innovations*
3. **MA RESOURCE SHARING** – Unique programs in place, failed initiatives, how MAs are using Water's Worth It, MA Grant Program – winners to share details on the winning projects and how it can benefit other MAs, Investments, Reserves, Financial, etc...
4. **COMMUNICATION – Using Technology as a Vehicle** – Successful social media promotions/campaigns/strategies, Marketing Tools and resources, volunteer appreciation messages, branding, website best practices, effective and consistent messaging tailored to various audiences, ways to make the profession "cool" with job branding, webinars/videos/social media etc...

Brian mentioned that on December 16, 2019 the Documentary Film “Brave Blue World” will premier in Los Angeles at the Paramount Theater in Hollywood. The documentary examines how new technologies and innovations can create a sustainable water future. The Water Environment Federation is a supporting partner for the documentary. The film will showcase how innovation and technology can solve water challenges and advance resource recovery.

Filming took place at WEFTEC 2018 in New Orleans and WEF President Tom Kunetz was interviewed for the documentary. WEF intends to use the film as an opportunity for public outreach in collaboration with its network of 75 Member Associations. “Innovation and technology are driving exciting solutions to many of the problems facing humanity, and the water sector is no exception,” said Kunetz. “*Brave Blue World* will showcase the promising breakthroughs taking place in water science and engineering that will contribute to a sustainable future for the planet.”

Narrated by Liam Neeson, the documentary includes interviews with a variety of water experts, as well as high-profile advocates Matt Damon and Jaden Smith. It features compelling stories, beautiful scenery, and examples from across five continents to show novel ways of tackling water problems

‘[Brave Blue World](#)’ is the first honest and hopeful documentary that will paint an optimistic picture of how humanity is adopting new technologies and innovations to re-think how we manage water.

The story will follow Paul O’Callaghan, water industry expert and CEO, BlueTech Research, as he visits sites around the world that are employing novel ways of tackling existing water problems.

This documentary will challenge some of your commonly held assumptions and change how you think about water. We will take you on a journey that explores an alternative water future, look at how we got to where we are today and then challenge some of the most commonly held assumptions about water:

- Is water a global issue?
- Is water a scarce resource?
- Is water essential for human life?

Brave Blue World Mission

- We are here to challenge some of the commonly held assumptions and change how people think about water.
- We aim to bust the global sense of impending doom and paint an alternative, optimistic water future. And the ways to get there.
- We believe that even one person with enough knowledge can make a difference and inspire a movement. We are here to provide that knowledge.

As Brian is moving to Colorado Springs, Colorado, the Board will need to consider his replacement as Senior Delegate as well as the Finance Chair.

iii. **Splashings (Tina Leitzel / Barrett Schmidt)**

- Advertising notifications went out December 12, 2019.

- Winter Issue will be the Conference Wrap-Up Issue – January 2019, Tina is currently pulling together articles. If you have not yet submitted one, you have until December 20, 2019 to get it in. The deadline was November 15, 2019.
- Scheduled to complete a Website Layout Redesign by year's end.
- Splashing's redesign will be in effect for the Winter Issue.
- Chris to put together a Membership Blast?

iv. **Committee Chairs:**

a) Administrative / Finance (Brian Spano):

Brian announced that he will be moving to Colorado Springs, Colorado to take a new assignment with his firm Wilson & Company. Prior to that he will get together for our next meeting the Budget information for next year. Brian asked Sylvan to provide him the financial information for 2019.

b) Audit Committee (Waldo Margheim):

Waldo has completed the 2017 Audit as has asked for the 2018 Audit information.

c) Plant Operations / Maintenance / Safety Committee (Steve McNolty):

No updates at this time.

B. External Relations and Outreach- Led by Past President (Ron Thomann)

i. **Junior Delegate Report (Ron Thomann):**

Ron is on the House of Delegates Water Utility Workforce of the Future Work Group. The Committee has had a couple of meetings. Ron is planning to attend the WEF Mid Year Conference in San Antonio, 2/2020. Attached

ii **Committee Chairs:**

a) Public Communication & Outreach (Page Burks):

Page was not able to make the meeting but reported that her committee has been meeting on a monthly basis. For 2020, they propose that, in addition to continuing the support of social media postings of water related dates (i.e. WWMD, Imagine a Day without Water), that their committee try a pilot of getting a booth and running a water activity at a local Earth Day festival (likely Lawrence this year). Once established, they can make the kit and directions available for members to easily employ in other locations. In addition, they would like to Partner with the YPs (assuming they are agreeable) to help support the kids "water day" at the annual conference as requested by Jason.

Page asks the Board to let her know if there are questions or additional information is needed.

B) Student / YP's (Ryan Rossel)

Kahao Lim of KSU reported that Kansas State University has submitted to WEF a draft of their Constitution & Bylaws for approval. The Board passed unanimously a motion to recognize the KSU Chapter. Chris Ramsey will draft a letter to WEF acknowledging our support for the KSU Chapter

KWEA will discuss at its next meeting budgeting funds for the student chapters after reviewing the budget information presented by Brian. In addition to some financial assistance to establish the Chapter, the chapter is in search of Guest Speakers to start up its program.

Also on the agenda this year the YP's are hoping to organize a screening for the WEF Film, "A Brave Blue World".

a) Scholarship (Martha Tasker):

Martha reported that she will be sending out scholarship information to the Colleges and Universities the first of the year.

b) Stockholm Junior Water Prize (SJWP) (Rebecca Lewis): No Report (Recap id provided)

Two entries were submitted for this year's Kansas SJWP competition. Laura flucke, a senior at Olathe North High School was selected as the Kansas Representative for the competition with her project, "The Effect of Microalgae on Wastewater Quality". Laura represented Kansas at the national competition, located at the Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, on June 13-16, 2019.

c) Government Affairs (Lorrie Hill):

Several from the Government Affairs Committee attended the Four-State Government Affairs Meeting, hosted by the Missouri WEA. The meeting is an annual opportunity for water environment leaders from the EPA Region 7 states to collaborate with each other and EPA on common issues.

The meeting was attended by representatives of Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Kansas Water Environment Association (KWEA), Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ), Nebraska Water Environment Association (NWEA), Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Iowa Water Environment Association (IWEA), Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Missouri Water Environment Association (MWEA), EPA Region 7, and other interested stakeholders.

The Government Affairs Committee has been tracking EPA's development of a peak wet weather management rule for wastewater treatment facilities and the EPA provided some update to the rule consideration at the meeting. They are digesting public comments that were submitted in the fall of 2018 and expect to have a draft rule by the end of this year or the beginning of next year, with a final rule by the end of 2020. The rule is expected to emphasize getting wastewater to the plant, good CMOM programs, and addressing I/I. They are also promoting disinfection and representative monitoring.

The committee will meet in early 2020 to discuss topics for the next annual conference.

d) Membership (Vacant): No Report

C. Professional Development and Education- Led by President-Elect (Jason Patty)

i) 2020 Conference: Jason Patty

- Greg Marshall looks to be the keynote for the Wichita Conference.
- A Water Day Festival is planned for Tuesday afternoon of the Conference. Currently we are thinking of inviting 5-6th grade students to the event. These students will be shadowed by High School Science students. Jason is working with the El Dorado School District. He also hopes to invite Tonya Brownley of Wichita State University & the Young Professionals to be a part of the program.

- The Tuesday Night Meet & Greet will be held in the Exhibit area this year and is designed to resemble a “Block Party” atmosphere. Jason has emailed the Wichita Chamber of Commerce to work with us to attract vendors to the EXPO where they would be given booth space and opportunity to hawk their beverages. These vendors would join the evening festivities where food trucks would be on site to serve our attendees at the M&G. Entertainment is also planned for the night. Ideas include: Corn Hole Competition, Dueling Pianos, SSSSS, and more ideas to come.
- Another Idea being considered is to have a Microbiology Workshop. Jamie Belden and Becky Lewis would host the workshop. The class size would probably be limited to 20 folks and a separate charge might be considered. A few Phase / Contrast microscopes would be needed and perhaps Hach would be able to provide. As the laboratory is currently in flux with Jay Lovett having to resign due to work restraint, the Laboratory track could include this ½ day program and add ethics training also to the mix. Ethics training coupled with a few other papers and the Micro Workshop could fill a full day.
- Also giving some thought to having a Pump Station training Workshop.
- Jason also brought up for thought the idea of doing away with the Annual Awards Banquet given the fact that attendance is low and it is late in the conference. After much discussion, the Banquet still seems to be the best place to present the National awards.

II) WEFMAX 2024:

Jason, Ron & Brian are all part of the WEFMAX Committee engaged in the early planning for KWEA to host. No Updates at this time.

ii) **Committee Chairs**

a) **Collection Systems (Alex Darby): No Report**

b) **Laboratory (Vacant): Jay Lovett resigned due to work commitments.**

c) **Municipal Management (Jeena John):**

Jeena John of Johnson County Wastewater has agreed to take over responsibility for the committee and will reach out to former Committee Chair Patrick Beene for historical perspective. Meanwhile Jeena is looking to recruit some more committee members as well as looking to define the Committee’s purpose. She believes that the Committee’s purpose can extend beyond that of just providing papers for the annual conference. It was suggested that Daniel Jacobus could be a resource to contact?

d) **Municipal Technology Transfer (John Keller & Tim Hunt):**

John Keller of Black & Veatch and Tim Hunt of Automatic Engineering have agreed to Co-Chair the Committee. They too will be looking to define the committee’s purpose as it moves forward. Brian suggested that they might look to other MA’s with similar committee’s for guidance. The committee plans to recruit articles for Splashing’s also.

e) **Industrial (Michael Carter):**

Michael had reviewed the 2020 outline and caught the fact that the Industrial program had been moved to Thursday. As the Industrial awards are given on Tuesday, the program has to remain on Tuesday.

f) **PWO (Joe Foster):**

Work has begun on the Operator’s Mini-Conference which will be held in Topeka at the Capitol Plaza Hotel on April 28-29, 2020. Joe Foster, Heather Phillips, Lorrie Hill, Bart Rehagen, Jeanette Klamm, and Sylvan

Coles met at the Olathe Public Works on December 10, 2019 to decide on tracks for the three available rooms. The group decided on these three general tracks: Maintenance, Operations, & Collections. Discussed were tracks addressing confined space, basics of electricity, pump maintenance and operation, BNR, Activated Sludge, SCADA, lagoons, etc. The committee plans to meet again in early January and have a program to Tina by the end of January.

g) Manufacturer's Trustee (Michael Rudy):

Again this year, the opening session will be held in the Exhibit area. No classrooms are planned in the Exhibit area this year. Ideas are still being bantered about with regard to how best utilize the space that we have available including the idea of a robot roaming about the area. As already mentioned, the Tuesday Night M&G will be held in the Exhibit area and the "Block Party" theme is taking shape.

D. Old Business:

1. 2024 WEFMAX: No Update

2. 2020 WEFMAX:

The locations for 2020 WEFMAXs have been identified as follows. The WEF in the process of narrowing topics for the WEFMAX from ten suggested down to three. A survey has been sent out to MA's to decide which three are of greatest interest.

- Jersey City, New Jersey March 25-27, 2020
- Honolulu, Hawaii April 15-17, 2020
- Charleston, South Carolina May 13-15, 2020
- Fargo, North Dakota May 27-29, 2020

At this time Ron, Jason, Ryan & Dustin have expressed an interest in going.

3. Operator Certification in Kansas:

Jason attended a meeting at KMU in McPherson where the future of Operator Certification was discussed. With Vicki Wessel retiring after 20 years, the program's responsibility has now been assumed by Kathy Tucker-Vogel. Some of the changes that may be coming about in the future include:

- Fee increases for testing with fees going to the Bureau of Water for program use.
- Increased training requirements to maintain certification levels.
- Differentiation of certification for ground water & surface water operators.
- A requirement that individuals whose test scores are below 50% have completed KDHE approved training before retesting.
- Changes in requirements for the Operator in Training (OIT).

A concern was expressed on what kind of financial impact these changes might have on small communities.

E. New Business

1. KWEA Board Retreat:

Chris is considering a KWEA Board retreat. A couple topics on the agenda are (mentioned above) the updating of Committees – their descriptions and responsibilities and also KWEA’s Strategic Plan. Sheila Shockey has expressed an interest in facilitating the retreat. Possible locations for the retreat are:

- Black & Veatch
- University of Kansas
- Johnson County Wastewater
- Olathe Public Works

Chris will check with WEF to see if they can provide any assistance in this regard.

2. Next Conference Dates

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| • 2020 | Wichita Hyatt Hotel | 08/31/2020 – 09/03/2020 |
| • 2021 | Topeka Capitol Plaza | 08/29/2021 – 09/02/2021 |
| • 2022 | Topeka Capitol Plaza | 08/28/2022 – 09/01/2022 |

3. Next Board Meeting: