SORA Board Meeting Minutes  
February 6, 2024 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM (EST)

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

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Board Roll Call:

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| **Region 1: Amanda Clark (CT)** | **Region 9:** ***Treasurer:* Michael Broussard (NM)** |
| **Region 2: Stephen Marshall (NY)** | Region 10: Jeremy Simmons (WA) |
| Region 3: Past *President*: Travis Sterner (MD) | Tribal: Vacant |
| **Region 4: Chris Edwards (KY)** | **Canadian Provinces:** **Derek Smith (Manitoba)** |
| **Region 5: Mike Mettler (IN)** | **At Large*:*  Lance Gregory (VA)** |
| **Region 6: *President-Elect:* Nicholas Huber (OK)** | **Eric Casey: Executive Director** |
| Region 7: Eric Folks (MO) | **Secretary: Marcia Degen (Retiree)** |
| ***Region 8: President:* Chuck Cousino (CO)** |  |

Invited Guests: Dick Bachelder**/ Sheryl Ervin** (COI Rep.), Dave Cotton (membership chair)

1. Approval of January 2, Board Mtg. minutes

Motion to approve as amended: Michael B Second: Amanda C

1. Executive Committee Reports
   1. President’s report: (Chuck) - EPA reached out to SORA to ask for SORA’s assistance with the project “Closing America’s WW Access” Grant. EPA wants SORA to help identify communities with failing systems. Chuck and Amanda attended a meeting with EPA. EPA is rolling program out next week. EPA has completed 11 pilots and now going to 150 new projects. EPA wants SORA to help get word out to our members to help identify sites to apply. Eric C needs to be involved, perhaps write up an article on it. This first phase is to identify communities and EPA (EPA Contractors) will work with the communities to develop options for solutions and then help them select the options. The Access grant would aid in applying for funding as well.

Amanda noted that some states allow SRF money to be used for onsite and some have roadblocks to disseminating the money. That may be an impediment to actually implementing the projects.

There is a form on the website to apply for this project planning help. EPA will provide draft language. We will wait on the detail from EPA before drafting an email to SORA members.

* 1. Treasurer’s Report: (Michael)
     1. 2024 Budget approved at Dec. 2023 mtg. Update with actual numbers from 2023 (Michael): Discussion about using Venmo to facilitate payments. Also need to check on checks and whether the mailbox is being forwarded. Amanda was able to verify that the mail was forwarded yesterday. About 35 invoices have been sent out, a few more to be sent out.

Regarding the budget: Line items need to adjusted to reflect the higher costs. Mail is forwarded weekly to Michael B and that budget needs to go up several hundred dollars. We do need to review the status of paper bills and see if they can be moved to online.

* + 1. Status of closing Wells Fargo account; February, 2024 target date? (Michael/Amanda) Wells Fargo is closed!
    2. 2024 membership/COI billing status – see discussion below
    3. Status of COI billing for Tuesday event; Amount determined? (Michael) - Dick is going to contact the COIs to regarding the membership and the conference support. Sheryl and Dick suggest that there be two separate invoices be sent for membership and for the conference. Michael mentioned that he can send invoices as the COI is contacted and confirmed. If Dick would rather wait till the whole list is confirmed, that will work as well too. The final decision needs to be communicated to Michael
    4. Current account balances:
       1. Savings: $36,056.99
       2. Checking: $5,847
       3. Receivables: $3,635
  1. Secretary’s Report: (Marcia)
     1. Listserv / site management transfer status (Jeremy/Marcia) – Marcia and Jeremy met and Jeremy provided a training session on how to access and update the listserv. The next step is to develop a process to coordinate the list serve with the official member list. Marcia is setting up a meeting.
  2. Executive Director’s Report (Eric C.):
     1. Website updates – Eric has updated some things on the website. Some of the items are difficult to locate which delays the process. He is also investigating the potential for an option of members only page.
     2. Workforce grant update – no word yet from NOWRA yet, but should be finalized in the near future.
     3. Exec. Dir. contract status; extended? (Chuck/Eric C.) – automatic extension unless one party wants to withdraw from the contract.
     4. Other – Chuck noticed that Prinsco has been the highlighted COI for several months running. That needs to be updated.

Amanda noted a miscellaneous charge from the website (roughly $5 per month) that we need to figure out what it’s for.

1. Standing Committee Reports:
   1. Membership (Dave/Eric C.); No report
      1. Online application status; Is website application working properly?
      2. Share privileges for Google docs; Status?
      3. Edits to draft “membership page”
   2. Conference Planning (Eric C./Jeremy); No report
   3. Strategic Planning (Travis): No report
2. COI Report (Dick/Sheryl)
   1. Invoice balances; status of billing/payments See previous discussion under budget
   2. Were old invoices removed from balance sheet? (Michael) – Michael will send out the balance sheet this week.
3. Ad hoc Committee Reports:
   1. Website (Eric C.): No additional report.
   2. Newsletter (Eric C., Michael B., Mike M.): Draft newsletter sent out by email just prior to the meeting. Eric asked for comments by **February 13**.
   3. Policy (Chuck): No new policies
4. Old Business:
   1. Tribal board rep., vacancy – (Nicholas) – Nicholas relayed that Chris Sams is the new tribal (Cherokee nation). Michael confirmed he has already paid his dues.
   2. Discussion of product reviews. (Eric F., Michael) – No report
      1. Michael to develop proposal
      2. Outreach to COIs to see what would be helpful
   3. NEHA monthly magazine update; (Eric C.) – Eric talked with NEHA at EPA meeting. Playing phone tag, but hope to be able to place an ad soon
   4. Listserv limited access website; member only option (Eric C.) – Eric is researching this with the website group.
5. New Business:
   1. M. Mettler request for a dues waiver for 2024. Dues waiver approved.
   2. New Ad hoc committee on OWTS funding options (Lance) – Lance will send out a message to the whole SORA member list to see who would like to participate. Purpose: to share knowledge about resources that are coming available; share experiences (good and bad); share how we can advocate to increase funding.

For example: Lance shared that VA’s Wastewater Infrastructure group was directed to come up with a WW needs list. You can find that list at this link. <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/Published/2023/RD814/PDF> The study estimated $5B of need of onsite infrastructure needs. Also VA has an online tool that allowed the local health departments to identify localities that are in need and also the status of the planning for the project.

Eric C would like to participate in this project. He has a lot of resources that may be helpful. Amanda offered to help with charter and would like to be on the committee.

* 1. Eric mentioned that the Census is working on adding the question regarding septic systems to the Census. We should keep it on our radar so that we can help people act when the data comes in.
  2. Amanda asked about survey that she sent out and should it be posted. She has other surveys that will come out. Do we want to post it or just share the data when we’re done. Yes, that data should be posted under Resources/SORA Survey
  3. Should we eliminate Go To Meeting since we’re using google? Yes, we should eliminate it. Will have to figure out who has access to it.

1. Action Items:
   1. Draft newsletter sent out by email just prior to the meeting. Eric asked for comments by **February 13**.
   2. Lance to send out invite to membership to the new Adhoc Committee.
   3. Sheryl/Dick working on contacting COIs to confirm status/details of invoices.
   4. Marcia to hold coordination meeting on listserv.
2. Adjourn –

**Meeting Dates for 2024 (First Tuesday of each month):** All meetings will start at 2:30 P.M. EST.

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| January 2 | July 2 |
| February 6 | August 6 |
| **March 5** | September 3 |
| April 2 | October 1 |
| May 7 | November 5 |
| June 4 | December 3 |