



2023 Board of Directors: President: Matthew Eickman, Abra Kadabra Environmental • **Directors:** • Rob Greer, Rove Pest Control • Morgan Manderfield, Ecolab • Nathan Heider, Spidexx • Caroline Kohnert, Plunkett's Pest Control • Travis Chambers, BASF • **Past President:** Dr. Mohammed El-Damir, Adam's Pest Control

Jay Bruesch, **Executive Director**, minnpest1@gmail.com, 6563 Bracken Drive Minnetrista MN 55331

MPMA Board of Directors Meeting October 10, 2023

Office of Rove Pest Control Oakdale, MN 55128

Meeting Minutes

Prior to Meeting:

MPMA Active and Allied members were notified of the meeting date and time, and that it was to take place both in-person at the offices of Rove Pest Control, and remotely via Zoom. The link to the Zoom session for the meeting was provided.

In Attendance: (TBD)

Attending in person:

Matt Eickman, Abra Kadabra Environmental
Kathy Watrin, Granite Pest Control
Troy Timermanis, Bear Pest Control
Morgan Manderfield, Ecolab
Kelly Rogotzke, Done Right Pest Solutions
Dr. Stephen Kells, University of Minnesota
Lane Zimmerman, Rainbow Pest Control
Keith Gordon, Veseris
Nate Heider, Spidexx Pest Control
Caroline Kohnert, Plunkett's Pest Control
Rob Greer, Rove Pest Control
Dr. Mohammed El Damir, Adam's Pest Control
Todd Leyse, Adam's Pest Control

Attending remotely via Zoom:

We got a late start on our Zoom connection, and some who planned to attend via Zoom missed out. Planned attendees included:

Josh Reynolds, NPMA
Mike Weissman, Syngenta
Dave Johnson, Catchmaster
Travis Chambers, BASF
Roger Mackedanz, MDA
Brian Elm, Veseris
Shawn Wilson, Cardinal Professional Products



Matt Eickman, President:

Matt called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.

Dr. Stephen Kells, University of Minnesota:

Plans for the 2024 MN PMP Conference – content and venue

An online program will be available this year; MDA has approved it.

The biggest problem in 2023 was incorrect entry of applicator numbers.

Venue: Minneapolis Convention Center is not available for this year. But we have fewer people, so will go back to Earle Brown Heritage Center.

Dr. Kells is expecting 300-400 people to attend the 2024 Conference in person.

The MPMA Board likes the Earle Brown Center as a venue; and parking is great.

Dr. Kells is giving high priority to consideration of vendors' needs.

The Conference will be March 4 and 5, 2024.

3 required special sessions will be covered in 2024: Categories N, P and L

In odd years: Categories J and E will be covered; and N will be covered again.

The main session will be on Tuesday March 5, which will allow vendors to set up on Monday, so that they don't have to travel on Sunday. In-person special sessions will be held on Monday, March 4.

MPMA President Matt Eickman asked if a motion to approve Dr. Kells' meeting plans was in order, since at least nominally, MPMA is a co-sponsor of this event. A motion was made to approve the Conference plans as they stand; it was voted on and unanimously approved.

Morgan Manderfield reminded the group that Jay Bruesch wrote an email to MDA on July 28, asking them to consider allowing MPMA members to review the category A, Structural and Category L (mosquitoes) exams. Morgan has sent employees to take the structural licensing/certification exams, and Caroline Kohnert received reports from employees who took the category L exam; in both cases, bad questions were reported. Morgan forwarded the July 28 email to Jay, who forwarded it on to G. and to Roger Mackedanz. (Originally, the email was addressed to Robyn Frederick and Brian Clark; Dr. Kells indicated that the email really should have gone to G. and Roger, since they are the decision-makers on matters of licensing and certification exams. We'll revisit this topic at our January 24, 2024 meeting, by which time we should have a reply from MDA.



Support is strong among PMP companies for the online option, due to cost savings; Steve wants to make this a good deal for vendors too, however.

There was a spirited discussion of networking opportunities to be planned for the dates of the 2024 PMP Conference:

One of these is to be an MPMA-sponsored breakfast for managers and owners of pest control companies. A motion was made and seconded to have Jay Bruesch and Allison Forcier organize this breakfast; the motion was unanimously approved.

Another planned networking event is a "Happy Hour," to take place on Monday evening, March 4. This will be sponsored by MPMA, but we hope to get vendor support to help pay for this. Food will be provided, and liquor available on a cash-bar basis. Dr. Kells would like to get someone from one of the vendor firms to discuss regulatory issues; we could bring someone in from MDA to talk to vendors and other attendees during Happy Hour. Steve will bring in speakers; but MDA would have to handle catering, etc.

A motion was made to have a Happy Hour sponsored by MPMA but paid for by vendors. This was seconded, voted on and unanimously approved. We hope to have food provided by a generous vendor sponsor; liquor on a cash-bar basis, though vendors tend to pay for liquor anyway by buying rounds for groups of attendees – their customer base.

Happy Hour is for everyone; MPMA will have a booth at this event, along with vendor booths. We should try to get NPMA to send swag to give away at Happy Hour.

A vote was taken to approve July 2023 meetings; the motion carried.

Keith Gordon mentioned that Marc Bramhall would be willing to do a new-products talk at the 2024 Conference, or at others going forward; he just needs enough lead time to prepare this. Dr. Kells thanked him for the offer and will contact Marc when he needs this talk; the agenda is more or less formalized for 2024, so it doesn't look like Marc will need to step in for 2024.

Jay Bruesch: Financials

A vote was taken to approve the July 2023 meeting minutes; these were approved.

A financial report for July 2023-October 2023 was presented. It was voted on and approved.

There was some discussion on possibly better use of our funds to make them work for us a little (checking offers no interest; our savings rate is low).

Morgan Manderfield asked: What about high-yield accounts? Money market accounts? Credit unions? Kelly Rogotzke noted that credit unions are currently paying 5.02%; Kathy Watrin said that CDs are paying 5.75%.



Florida's State Association does lots of fund-raisers – golf tournaments, and things of that nature. But the industry in Florida is big compared to us; they have more pest control companies in a square mile or two than we have in the entire state, and less than a quarter of Minnesota companies are members of our Association. We are small, and our money has less earning potential.

Todd Leyse mentioned that, from the Board's perspective, we could surely use more money; but he is comfortable with where we are at, financially. We have a revenue-generating season coming up (Allied and Active membership renewals, booth reservations, advertising), which will replenish our war chest, and we'll be fine. We do have an outside newsletter publisher now, which costs money; and, if we decide at some point to hire a lobbying firm, that is quite expensive. For now, though, we're okay; and financial matters were put on the back burner for the time being.

Old Business:

Caroline Kohnert: RISE Advocacy training on August 8: Take-aways for MPMA

Todd, Josh Reynolds and Caroline attended.

- Nationwide: RISE has done nationwide and state surveys regarding pesticides; the public is by and large okay with pesticide use in homes.
- Statewide: Most Minnesotans use pesticides in their homes, and believe pesticides are safe when used according to label instructions.

The chief purpose of this event was to discuss messaging and how to control messages that we are sending to the public.

Key points:

- Seek common ground.
- Listen.
- Identify the opportunity.
- Deliver a key message.

When delivering a message:

- Don't overcomplicate things.
- Remember that legislators need to hear from us.
- Remember that legislators are people too: seek common ground, listen, let them know that responsible use of pesticides is vital to the protection of health and property.
- Know your audience.



- Speak clearly.
- Use layman's language.
- Keep it uncomplicated.
- Protect your reputation (don't speculate; don't give out proprietary information; don't talk about your opposition).
- Body language is important: purposeful pacing, firm stance, hands in lap or on table; friendly and relaxed facial expression.

Caroline thought this training was worth her time.

Agenda item: Any action on the preemption front? Short answer is No.

MPMA newsletter: We have a new newsletter publisher; the October issue will be the first published by a professional newsletter publisher. It will be interesting to see what Barefoot Marketing can do for us. Of primary importance: readability and attractiveness to our readership; and optimization of vendor advertising (placement, appearance, etc.).

New business:

Formally nominate Board roster for 2024; vote on nominations, including Allied Board member

We nominated Lane Zimmerman for Board member; the motion carried.

What should be the term period for Allied Board members? A motion was made to extend the term of office for Allied Board members to two years. This was seconded and voted on, and unanimously approved.

New/returning Active members (Crane, Xtreme, Cloverleaf): Cloverleaf Pest Control has re-joined MPMA: Welcome, Cloverleaf! And thank you! Crane and Xtreme were referred to NPMA's Matt Hemmindinger (membership director) for enrollment in the Joint State Membership program.

Future meeting venues: Shall we hopscotch around member firms' conference rooms, or look for a permanent place? Todd Leyse offered to have Adam's host the April 2024 meeting; Plunkett's will host in January 2024. So, we're okay until July of 2024. Meanwhile, Jay will look into Louie's (Cossetta-owned property in St. Paul; Jerry's grocery store in Woodbury (free conference room, and they will cater); and present ideas to the Board at our next meeting.



Dr. El Damir asked: Why don't we buy or lease our own offices? This was discussed, and it was agreed that Jay should reach out to other Associations and ask them how they handle meeting venues, property ownership, and all the rest -- like insurance, taxes, upkeep, etc.

Kathy Watrin doesn't think our membership is adequate to have our own offices. What else would we do with a building if not quarterly meetings?

Lane Zimmerman moved that we alternate east and west venues to ease some of the travel burden on members. The motion was voted on, and carried.

Next meeting:

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M; the venue will be Plunkett's office in Fridley. Members may also attend via Zoom.

Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn; the motion carried, and Matt Eickman closed the meeting at 12:45 pm.