

**Minnesota Rural Health Association
Board of Director's Meeting
Minutes
September 15, 2008**

Present: Jenny Schlagenhaft, Dr. Tim Stratton, Duane Nelson, Karla Weng, Mark Schoenbaum, Dr. Darrell Carter, Kathy Huntley, Maddy Forsberg, David Borgert, Dr. Jack Geller, Judy Neppel

Excused: Nancy Franke Wilson, Liz Quam, Dr. Ray Christensen, Jenny Lohse, Barbara Muesing, Robin Weis, Tiffany Yen, Jill Myers

Ex Officio: Marnie Moore,

1. **Call to Order :** The MRHA Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM.
2. **Minutes:** Approval for the minutes of the June 24th was tabled.
3. **Grant Review:** President Geller reviewed the main points of the Bremer grant application that will be submitted to Rob Jacobson, President of Crookston Bremer Bank and Kelly Greenlees, Bremer Resource Specialist, with tentative plans that the grant request will go to the Bremer Foundation Board in October. He asked for suggestions for modification. There were no suggestions for modification. He received kudos from several Board members so his plan will be to move forward with the request.
4. **Finance Report:** Treasurer Duane Nelson reviewed the August financial report. Motion to approve made by Kathy Huntley, seconded by Dr. Darrell Carter. Passed unanimously.
5. **Executive Directors Report:** Executive Director Judy Neppel reviewed the association report. See attached. Motion to approve made by Maddy Forsberg, seconded by Dr. Tim Stratton. Passed unanimously.
6. **Retreat:** The retreat is planned for October 24, 2008, at 10AM in Maple Grove and Past President Liz Quam's home. The agenda and driving directions will be sent within the next 2 weeks. Please send any agenda items to the Executive Director.
7. **Legislative Agenda:** President Geller asked Marnie Moore what she might think about a MRHA legislative agenda. She suggested that MRHA develop very specific policy initiatives and that they have them ready for the legislative session which begins January 6, 2009. President Geller asked the Board if they were familiar with

Representative Paul Thissen's rural health reform report which impressed him.

8. **Other:** President Geller asked the Board to consider the letter Dr. Stratton had written, as a citizen not representing anyone but himself, to refute a rule that is being proposed at the federal level allowing pharmacists to not fill prescriptions based on moral grounds. Pharmacists choosing not to fill prescriptions, particularly in rural, may be denying medication access to rural citizens in their service area. When a Pharmacist exercises his moral beliefs and does not fill a prescription, the employer will not receive Medicare funding, which in turn may significantly affect rural medication access. The MRHA Board has not in the past weighed in on such issues and believes that Dr. Stratton's letter covers the issue.

President Geller brought the issue of MRHA conducting a policy forum at the Rural Health Conference the past 2 years and suggested that a proactive approach might be one the Board wishes to consider in the future. He suggested that the policy forum be a part of the MRHA work plan and that it be our ongoing contribution to the conference. Kathy Huntley concurred and thought the forum to be a great opportunity for MRHA to be recognized for the work being done. President Geller suggested that the Board put their collective thinking caps on and that this will be a retreat agenda item.

There was a brief discussion on the "Divided We Fail Platform" proposal being advanced by AARP and brought to our attention by Liz Quam. The Board continues to be concerned about the rural focus.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Dr. Tim Stratton. Meeting adjourned at 12:50 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Judith Neppel
MRHA Executive Director