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NAEP-SC NEWSLETTER

News, Trends, Connections & Developments
in the World of Environmental Professionals



The Birth of the Association

by Chapter President, Nick Morgan

I moved to South Carolina from Pennsylvania approximately 7 years ago. I had participated in a successful chapter affiliate of the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) and was surprised that South Carolina did not have their own environmental professional organization providing technical content specifically focused on natural resources and associated regulations. I became involved in other South Carolina associations, including starting subcommittees, organizing association events, and providing leadership on their boards. These experiences were invaluable training opportunities. They motivated me and gave me confidence to break ground on a brand-new association in South Carolina. Here is the story of how the National Association of Environmental Professionals South Carolina Chapter (NAEP-SC) came together so rapidly.

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The Birth of the Association (cont.)

Unknowingly, I was prepared to start NAEP-SC, but the spark of encouragement came from a colleague who was a current member of the Florida Association of Environmental Professionals, Kim Fitzgibbons. She suggested having a meeting where the Army Corps of Engineers was the keynote presentation but use the opportunity to also introduce the idea for establishing a NAEP affiliated chapter. I also contacted Ward Marotti for his help because he was past president of the North Carolina Association of Environmental Professionals (NCAEP) and a current NAEP board member. Ward and NAEP helped me identify other interested individuals. In addition, NAEP provided invaluable advice and guidance documents delineating the steps required to establish a functioning association. The excitement grew as the leadership team coalesced around a common vision.

The first meeting was a critical step. We brainstormed how to attract participants, where to hold meetings, and potential costs. I knew from experience that a good speaker and a free lunch would attract attention. We got the US Army Corps of Engineers to commit to speaking on current issues related to Section 404 permitting. I reached out to my network from other associations and got support from Craig Pearson at Dominion Energy to provide a free auditorium that we could use for the event. Ward and I agreed to get our companies to split the cost of the food for an association that didn't currently exist. This is no small feat considering our management couldn't write a check to the association for an official sponsorship. We reached out to our friends and colleagues and contacted people from other similar association mailing lists. This attracted our first audience for an inaugural meeting on November 15, 2019.

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"The excitement (for NAEP-SC) grew as the leadership team coalesced around a common vision."



The Birth of the Association (cont.)

We had about 30-40 participants at our first meeting and we explained what we were trying to achieve. To demonstrate our dedication to establishing this association, Will Brown from Santee Cooper agreed to sponsor a second meeting approximately three months later. Using the same model, we hosted a speaker at a free venue and offered free food. We had people sign a petition to submit to the NAEP board for approval of the chapter and received a total of 16 NAEP members and 31 others who were interested in supporting the South Carolina chapter. With these signatures, we sent a powerful message to NAEP that there was strong support for an affiliated South Carolina chapter. Several new leaders stepped up at our second meeting to support this association. At the recommendation of NAEP, we formed our first board of directors from those that had demonstrated commitment to forming this new association. Our inaugural board of directors included:

Nick Morgan- President

Lee Williams- Vice President and Planning Committee Chairperson

Will Brown- Treasurer

Haley Willis- Secretary and Student Committee Chairperson

Ward Marotti- Chapter Representative to NAEP

Renee Mulholland- Board Member at-Large and Communications Committee Chairperson

LaTonya Derrick- Board Member at-Large

Matt DeWitt- Board Member at-Large

Craig Pearson- Board Member at-Large

Each of these board members brought different skills and experiences to the team, but all were committed to the hard work required to establish the foundation for future years. To that end, our first team action was to draft the bylaws and mission statement. Once these were completed and voted on by our board members, I submitted these to the South Carolina Secretary of State to officially incorporate as a nonprofit under the name National Association of Environmental Professionals South Carolina Chapter (NAEP-SC). This is not to be confused with the South Carolina Association of Environmental Professionals, which is focused on environmental remediation and, after much encouragement, in early 2019 expressed their formal decision to not become a NAEP affiliated chapter.

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The Birth of the Association (cont.)

Since that time, our association has continued to grow and become more active and established. Together, we have:

- an association of over 70 members
- a bank account and balanced budget
- completed 6 lunch and learns
- hosted a happy hour
- a website and LinkedIn and Facebook accounts

Our future looks exciting! The board is planning to grow our student membership. This will lead to opportunities for the younger generation to learn from the environmental professionals in our state. I would like to establish a regular scholarship that we can use to financially support those interested in the environmental profession. We will also continue to diversify our membership to include professionals from a variety of environmental fields, businesses, and industries. We want members from both public and private sectors and different industries and disciplines so that our association is a representative cross-section of the environmental profession.

On behalf of our board of directors, I want to thank each of you for your support in getting this organization off the ground. As we move forward, we will continue to need volunteers to serve as officers, board, and/or committee members, to plan events, and to spread the word. We want to be known in the state as a profession that collaborates and makes a difference in our community through the special gifts and skills we have. If you are ready to join the team, please contact me or any of our board members.

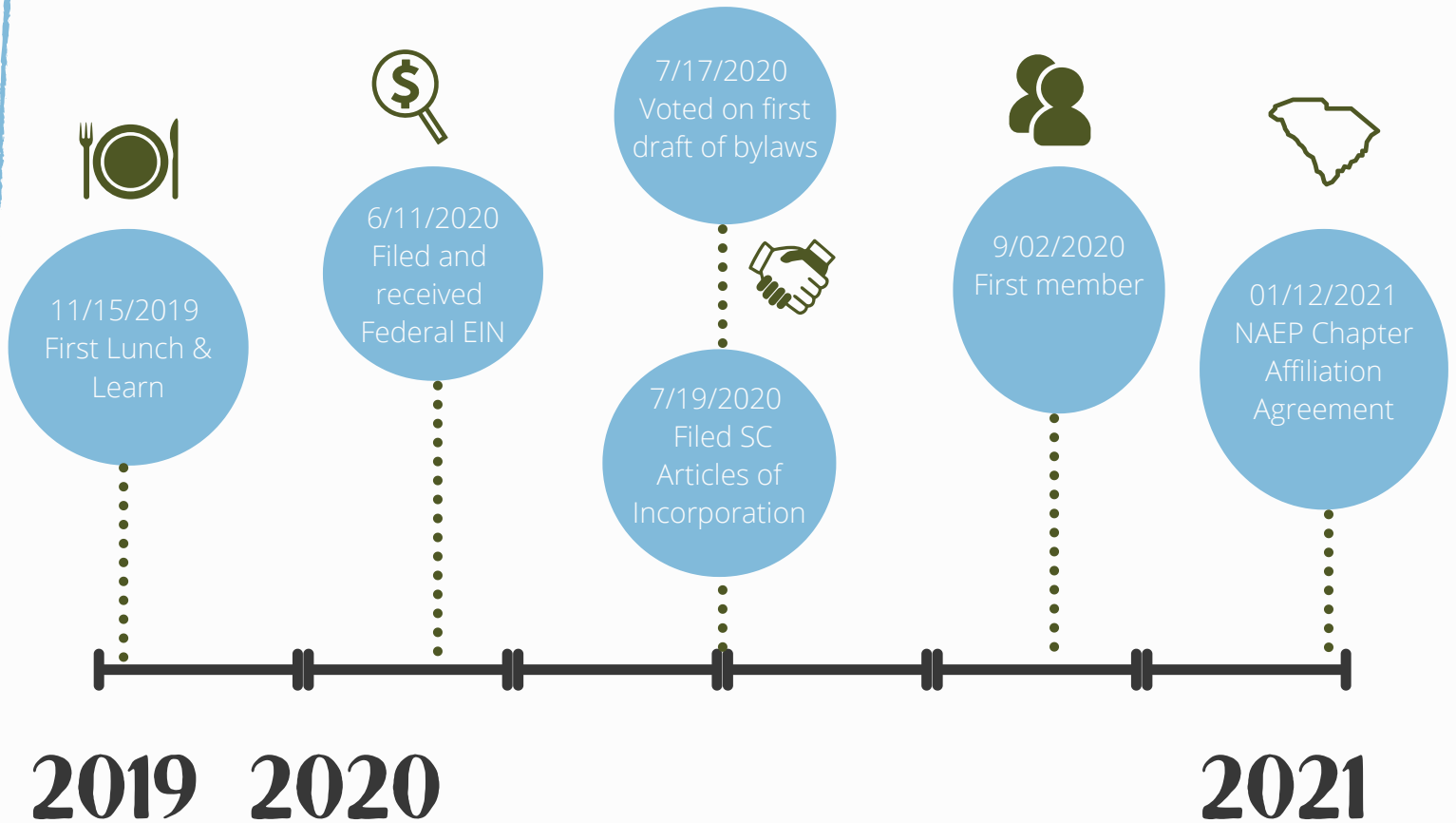
Thank you,
Nick Morgan



NAEP-SC President



Timeline of the NAEP-SC Chapter



Acknowledgements from the President:

I would like to individually acknowledge the contributions of each of our board members, officers, and volunteers that have helped get this association started.

Lee Williams (current Chapter Vice President) has provided leadership throughout the creation of this association. He has contributed toward engaging with NAEP, our committees, and took ownership for planning our lunch and learns. As such, he also chairs our Planning Committee. The lunch and learn planning included identifying sponsorships that were critical to our financial needs. Lee also financially contributed to our association to establish our PO Box before our association had a bank account.

As the inaugural Treasurer, *Will Brown* established our bank account and created our first budget. Will researched the process for the federal nonprofit status and filing our first tax report. Will also established a critical record and processes to make it easier for the next treasurer to follow.

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Acknowledgements (cont.)

Haley Willis has always been an enthusiastic volunteer. I worked with Haley in past organizations and specifically recruited her to the first association meeting. As I expected, she stepped right up to help and took on the responsibility of inaugural Secretary. She also created the NAEP-SC logo and set up our LinkedIn account. Haley also agreed to lead the Student Chapter Committee to help increase student membership and participation.

Ward Marotti's past experiences and connections to NAEP gave our team an ideal strategic advisor. Ward was able to communicate with NAEP and gather examples and information that was useful for our team to consider when forming some of our own documents. This made him an ideal candidate to be our NAEP Chapter Representative to help our chapter stay aware of NAEP's national business.

Renee Mulholland has provided leadership as the chair of our Communications Committee. This committee was responsible for the establishment and maintenance of our website, LinkedIn page, and Facebook page. The website had many complications and Renee took on the challenge to adapt when necessary. Renee is also responsible for maintaining our membership/contact lists and chapter emails. She is my most dedicated editor for any document that NAEP-SC publishes.

LaTonya Derrick is the only board member that was nominated and elected to our board. LaTonya had banking and insurance knowledge that was useful to our board in establishing some of the business needs of the non-profit.

Matt DeWitt helped our association with one of the first sponsorships. Matt also recruited our only regular volunteers that have been critical to our Communications Committee team. Matt has provided our team with strategic ideas that have helped form the culture of our association.

Craig Pearson has past association experience as a treasurer that was helpful in guiding our team on some of the tax and financial requirements of an association. Craig was also critical for helping with the first venues that jumpstarted our association. Craig provides quiet wisdom when our board is having our most difficult discussions.

Veronica Miller is one of the members of our association that has provided many volunteer hours for our Communications Committee. Veronica drafted our website and continues to support its maintenance. Veronica has facilitated numerous virtual lunch and learns using her company Teams account.

Jennifer Satterthwaite was a dedicated volunteer for our Communications Committee. She had past website design experience that was helpful in selecting the website platform that would be best for our skills and needs. Jennifer was also an important editor for our website content and has stepped in as moderator at virtual lunch and learns.

NAEP-SC Events

Visit www.naep-sc.org for upcoming events info!

Upcoming:

Friday, August 27: Lunch & Learn with FEMA
Michael Baker International; 2nd Floor Conference Room;
700 Huger Street, Columbia, SC 29201
and virtually via Microsoft Teams



November 2019, inaugural meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



February 2020, second meeting with presentation by the American Mitigation Company



July 2021, happy hour at Steel Hands Brewery in Cayce



NAEP-SC MISSION STATEMENT

**The mission of NAEP-SC
is to:**

- 1) Provide a diverse group of environmental professionals and students the opportunity to network and exchange ideas,
- 2) foster education about environmental regulations and topics that impact the state of South Carolina,
- 3) facilitate solutions to environmental challenges,
- 4) recognize environmental achievements that have demonstrated leadership, integrity, and innovation, and
- 5) promote environmental ethics and integrity.

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