

IASWCD Board Meeting – September 29, 2023

Attendance: Jeff, Troy, Sarah, John, Les, Stan, Roger, Ethan, Liz

Virtual Attendance: Marc, Kim, PJ, Bobby,, Amy

Consent agenda, Troy and Roger

Treasurer's Report, Mark Kingma, filed subject to audit, Stan and John

Partner Updates

- NRCS, Curtis Knueven, NRCS Acting State Conservationist
 - \$70 million allocated, \$30 million for staff, total of over \$100 million
 - CR and/or Farm Bill extension
 - Level on staff but hiring is a struggle, some changes in certifications and requirements to make this easier
 - \$75 million for FY24 with some additional dollar for easements
 - ACES? Training program using people over 55 years old.
 - Government Shutdown, IRA funds must all be spent
 - If there is a shutdown, NRCS will be off for two weeks. After that, reopen offices with limited staff to help partners.
 - Questions
 - Reporting cover crops at FSA, expects more linkage between conservation and crop insurance.
 - Permanent state conservationist, interviews, more information in October but shutdown could impact this. Expect that they have something in mind so hoping by end of October.
- ISDA, Trevor Laureys
 - Hiring for legislative, grain buyers, and economic development
 - CWI grants
 - 49 proposals, \$2.3 million available with \$4.57 million in requests
 - Grants Committee and DSS will do scoring. SSCB will vote on recommendations on October 24th.
 - MS River Basin Soil Sampling Program, EPA funded, recent press release, provides nutrient management recommendations
 - Statewide expansion of CREP via CWI funds, selection of district administrators, will expand from 11 to 35 watersheds, administrators receive 10% of what goes through the watershed
 - History with CWI grants
 - ISDA recommendations
 - Geographic location
 - Capability to handle the program
- CCSI, Lisa Holscher
 - National No-Till Conference CCSI package, see handout
- Summer Summit Meetings
- Annual Conference – Liz

- Currently looking at a loss of about \$17000
- 1 sponsorship and 3 exhibitors
- Increase meeting registration to fill the gap
- NACD will have a presence at Annual Conference. President will give NACD update and they will have a booth and a breakout session.
- NACD Summer Meeting – Roger
 - Attended WI state association board meeting
 - Increase North Central Regions dues by \$100 to \$500 per state
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
 - Expecting increased funding for conservation in the Farm Bill
- Strategic Planning Committee Updates
 - Development
 - Top priority is to hire Grants/Finance position followed by Legislative position
 - CWI applied for on Grants/Finance position, 75% with 25% match for 3 years or 75%, 50%, and 25% over 3 years, they do not pay benefits or taxes
 - Will likely become necessary for accountability and oversight with respect to IRA/NRCS grant
 - Contractor or part-time person using +/- \$37,000 in grant admin fees
 - Funding
 - Dues structure. Needs to increase.
 - No resolution required. Board sets dues, delegates vote on dues level as part of budget.
 - RESERVES
 - Withdraw Lake City funds to checking and close account, Roger currently has authority, Troy and John, motion carried
 - Establish a reserve account requiring two signatures for each transaction at a federally insured financial institution with signing authority for the Treasurer (Mark Kingma), Secretary (Sarah Delbecq), and Executive Director (Liz Rice) with signers updated annually based on changes in position. Troy and Ethan, motion carried.
 - Legislative
 - Legislative Guiding Principles in Oct/Nov with a vote at annual conference. Provide some guardrails without getting super specific.
 - Importance of legislative staff, leaning towards a full time person.
 - Communications and Marketing
 - Have not met yet.
- ISDA Meeting at State Fair
 - Reimagine CWI and identify a dedicated funding stream.
 - Willingness from Director Lamb to have a conversation. Partner with ISDA, SSCB, TNC, INFB, etc.
- Dues Structure

- Flat dollar amount is regressive. Makes lower income pay a higher share of their resources.
- Jeff: fixed portion + real estate assessed valuation + county AFR
- Marc: flat dollar amount, will higher income counties not participate?
- How much money are we trying to raise?
- Flat or formula? Floor and cap? AFR data that most represents the health of the district? Get more AFR detail.
- Which points will have the most perception issue?
- How to communicate to the districts?
- Districts won't pay less than they will before. Something to capture the districts ability to pay.
- FY2024 Budget – line by line review
 - Income
 - Includes CWI for grants/finance manager.
 - Look for a better option for accruing more interest on cash.
 - Outcome for grants. Liz working on tracking and invoicing for Urban, as well as ensuring good management of outside CCSI sponsorship.
 - Expense
 - Specific discussion around NACD meetings, IANA, legislative materials, legislative contracts, salary for communications manager.
 - Stan motion, Marc second: Make Amy's salary \$67000, motion withdrawn. Adjustment made directly to budget line item.
 - Overall
 - If we get CWI for grants/finance manager, we have about \$150,000 in shortfall. If we do not, we have about \$200,000 in shortfall.
 - Dues income will target \$368,000. Work on the structure will continue.
 - Highlight the spots that could be adjusted in the future if budget needs to be readjusted.
 - Approve, John and Roger, motion carried.
 - Timeline
 - Refine and approve dues structure by early October.
 - Zoom meeting on Monday, October 16th at 8:00am.
 - Amy has drafted a one pager on the benefits of IASWCD to districts, which can be used for communication purposes.
- Resolutions
 - Withdraw resolution related to a dues increase (Marc/Stan)
- Grants/Finance Manager
 - Motion to add position, Roger and John, motion carried.
- Adjourn, Stan and Troy, motion carried