IASWCD Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

**November 17, 2023**

**Indiana Farm Bureau Building**

**225 S. East St., Indianapolis**

**First Floor, Hall D**

Attending - **Board & Staff in person: Jeff Baker, John Kruse, Stan Moore, Les Zimmerman, Sherry Baird, Steve Crowe, Roger Wenning, Ethan Truax, Liz Rice, Amy Work; online: Kim Peterson, Mark Kingma, Elli Blaine, Lisa Holscher, Marc Roberts (briefly), Sarah Delbecq, Troy Hattery**

**Partners: Ray Chattin (SSCB & SICIM), Curtis Knueven (NRCS), Megan (IDEM); online: Jennifer Thum (ISDA) , Teddie Mowery (indiana Envirothon)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order/Welcome**

Meeting called to order at 10:31 am (Eastern)

* Presentation was given by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) regarding the LEAP Lebanon project.
* Consent Agenda approved
* Treasurer’s Report was presented by Mark Kingma
  + Jeff Baker commented that there needs to be a check on the payroll liabilities and Liz stated she would check on this number.
  + Liz stated that the Lake City Bank account has been closed and all funds have been moved into the operating account

**Partner Updates**

* Liz: (shared on behalf of Jennifer Boyle Warner) – Woodland Steward Institute; $1,500 is contributed each year by IASWCD; Liz has sat on the board there and there is also opportunity for others to join the board; meetings: there are three zoom meetings/year; plus some emails; forestry background not necessary; Stan commented that he loves the Woodland Steward publication Les recommended calling Raoul Moore in Montgomery County for this position.
* **Curtis, NRCS:** looks like farm bill is going to be extended another year; was signed; good for NRCS and record level funding for this year; Curtis spent much of his time as acting state con focusing on training; think the partnership needs to focus on training as there are many new people; “selling conservation” is a top need in training. He will continue to work in Indiana and the new state con is starting soon. Roger asked about the mentoring program for farmers that was mentioned under Jerry Raynor’s leadership.
* **Ray SSCB**: we had double the number of grant requests for CWI funding and the decision making was challenging. One challenge SSCB has is the need for more funds; 37 districts did not submit a CWI grant; important to reach out to the districts and tell them to make the effort in applying;
* **Ray SICIM:** been a rough year for this group; group works very hard to keep the initiative growing; going to move forward with IASWCD and double our efforts in the state house next year; CWI is the only means of state support that we have and want to continue to increase it. Liz commented that she and her husband participated in the Weed Wrangle 5K fundraiser this year.
* **Jennifer Thum, ISDA:** training reimbursement for districts has a March 13, 2024 deadline; CREP expansion moving forward; Hypoxia soil sampling program – 10K enrolled, 150 farms, now closed; ISDA fully staffed; RCCP project funded in SW and SE portion of the state; RCCP Sentinel landscape also funded;
* **Megan, IDEM:** 319 non point source grant funding information was presented
* **Teddie Mower, Indiana Envirothon:** 2023 Indiana Envirothon annual update was presented; indianaenvirothon.org; contest resources and registration of teams has been streamlined; thankful to be under IASWCD umbrella; had over 200 students at regional level; 90 students in state competition; Warsaw team went to New Brunswick international competition; added a Central Indiana competition (Marion, Johnson, Shelby, Morgan, Hamiliton, Hancock, maybe Boone and Hendricks); moving the East Central competition to Ball State, Environmental Education Center; Teena Ligman acting secretary; Stephanie Baker, treasurer – Lawrence County SWCD; current balance $32K; 2024 requests/goals – need to make a priority in each SWCD – at least some participation in the competitions; encourage involvement at the regional level; or provide a workshop for these teams; volunteer on the state level; find sponsors; offer items for swag from our state; need an Envirothon coordinator; State Competition: April 24, 2024 at the Beck Center, Purdue University.
* **Geneva, ISDA:** update on the Board Certification Program; website/portal with resources for Supervisors; targeted to all supervisors; including mandatory training for New Supervisors; sneak peek of the program at Annual Conference; table at conference, to view the site and give feedback; Ray commented that he wants Ray: want this program to stand the test of time; trying to figure out how to ensure participation.

**Program Updates**

* **Lisa Holscher, CCSI:** national no-till discount for ICP staff and supervisors - $299 discount good through Dec 8; Marriott is booked; Westin will extend conference discounted rates if needed; CWI at the statehouse will have soil samples from throughout the state; CCSI has been asked to apply for another round of grants with Cargill (row crop production); CCSI going to work on helping with funds for Grants & Finance manager position with IASWCD; CCSI has had over 19K downloads; YouTube channel – getting 30-40 hours viewing/month; 52K have viewed the videos; latest podcast on grazing is a great one!
* **Elli Blaine, USH:** USH received CWI grant funds;appreciate the districts who support as well; new staff: Terri Theisen in NW Indiana

**IASWCD Updates**

* Legislative Affairs Manager position - Les
  + Goals: engage with legislators and thank them; make an impact; develop legislative awareness for supervisors and staff; Imagine Clean Water Indiana; have an appointment with the leadership team at ISDA (Les and Liz);
  + Goal: looking forward to the next budget session; maintain the funding we have and get into more dedicated funding; current funding from cigarette tax; working on Legislative Talking Points for districts;
  + CWI Breakfast at the Statehouse: statehouse reserved – north hall; hired a design company to help with set up;
  + We have sent district staff request to identify supervisors in their districts who could talk to legislators and/or have a personal relationship with legislators.
  + We will have a toolkit of resources available for districts.
  + We are seeking to be part of the broader water conversation in our state.
  + During SWCD Conference there will be a Breakfast Statehouse review – 45 minutes at conference to go over details; etc. possible PowerPoint presentation
* Dues Structure Revision Proposal - Jeff/Sarah/Liz
  + Liz and Jeff presented an overview of the dues structure
  + Steve Crowe has gotten negative feedback from districts in his region.
  + Jeff – we’re increasing dues because we have to; and the association is bringing funds to districts; our goal is to explain why we are doing it and why they should pay;
  + Steve – counties that said no are the ones that he thought would say yes
  + Ray – that $10K increase from CWI funds was noted to allow IASWCD to step up their game
  + Kim – one concern was “would they have to pay same amount if CWI funding decreases;” we need to get the districts the information that Liz sent us; remind districts that the dollars collected will directly benefit them
  + Ray – one push back you might get are the districts that don’t take advantage of any of the benefits of IASWCD
  + Kim – need to start the conversations with districts now; this is hard, but we can get this accomplished.
  + Jeff – we’ve already shown what IASWCD can do when we try;
  + Ethan asked if there was a consequence for not paying?
  + Quite a bit of discussion about dues restructuring.
  + Liz – should we send this out to all staff and supervisors and then have an open Zoom call mid-December?
  + Jeff – find “raving fans” of the increase; business meeting at conf votes on budget
  + Liz will draft an email with all the information and send to board for approval; then send to staff and supervisors with region directors contact info; directors will follow up with districts prior to the Dec 18 Zoom meeting;
  + Roger suggested limit answering questions to Liz, Jeff and Sarah on the Dec 18 zoom meeting;
* 2024 SWCD Annual Conference
  + Update on sponsors/exhibitors – Amy
    - Amy presented the submitted supervisor scholarship application information (previously emailed) to the board. Board voted on scholarship recipients based on budgeted funds for this program. Motion was made to approve these by Stan Moore, seconded by John Kruse. All approved, motion passed.
* NACD North Central Region Meeting (Springfield, IL, January 11-12)
  + Stan Moore volunteered to attend this Springfield meeting.
  + Mark K and Sarah D cannot attend.
  + Motion made to send Stan and one alternate by John and seconded by Roger. All approved, motion passed.
* NACD Annual Meeting (San Diego, CA, February 10-14)
  + $500 Scholarship available; apps due December 1
  + Ethan Truax interested in attending and could possibly use the scholarship(s) from NACD and AgriDrain.
  + IASWCD budget affords Liz and Amy to attend.
  + Discussion was made of who else may attend.

**Lunch Break**

**IASWCD Updates (Cont.)**

* Committee breakout discussions
  + - * Communications & Marketing (Ethan) - website getting updated early next year; discussing having a portal on the site with templates and resources; going to look at resources from IDEA conference (Amy has flashdrive of these); discussed developing a FAQ for staff; looking at creating some kind of marketing plan to “Sell Conservation” for districts and producers.
      * Development (Jeff) - want to create an evaluation process for staff; hired a legislative affairs manager and grants & admin position; Kim P, Elli B, Eric Shideler also on this committee, but not present for this meeting.
* Executive Committee nominations for 2024
  + Jeff will contact Bobby regarding the officer slate and will get that information to [Amy Work](mailto:amy-work@iaswcd.org).
* Next Board meeting will be held on December 8.
* 2024 Board meeting dates have been reserved at the IFB building. Liz will send these out to board members.

**Motion was passed to adjourn meeting by Steve C., seconded by Ethan Truax.**

**Meeting adjourned 2:53 pm (Eastern).**