

IASWCD Board Meeting – March 15, 2024, Indianapolis, IN

Attendance: Liz Rice, Amy Work, Jeff Baker, Ethan Truex, Ray Chattin, Marc Roberts, Troy Hattery, Stan Moore, Les Zimmerman, Steve Crowe

Virtual Attendance: Mark Kingma, Kim Peterson

Meeting called to order at 10:05

- Consent agenda, motion by Marc Roberts and second by Troy Hattery, motion passed
- Minutes from February 9th, motion by Stan Moore and second by Ethan Truex, motion passed
- Treasurer’s Report by Mark Kingma, some clarifying questions asked about current and long term liabilities, motion by Stan Moore and second by Marc Roberts, motion passed

Audit presentation, Justin Agresta from Agresta, Storms, and O’Leary

- An FY23 Uniform Guidance Audit triggered by \$750,000 in federal funds. Testing was done in the “Soil and Water Conservation” category.
- IASWCD received a clean opinion with numbers presented fairly.
- There was a negative change in net assets but the balance is positive. This is common for nonprofit but problematic if it becomes a pattern.
- Revenue and expenses were up. Current lease is included as a future liability as required by a new accounting standard. \$180,000 available for 2024 operations, down from 2023.
- Things to review include check approval controls and policy and in kind documentation.

American Farmland Trust, Dylan Cook and Angie Doucette

- AFT works to save the land that sustains us by protecting farmland, promoting sound farming practices, and keeping farmers on the land.
- Farms Under Threat: 265,000 acres lost in farmland, \$180 million in revenue, 61% of conversion was low density residential.
 - Potential remedies include easements, land use planning, ag districts, property tax relief, farm link, state leasing.
 - Need to focus on areas where there is a high threat of conversion and a low policy response is required.
 - Analysis done prior to solar energy emerging as an agricultural land use.

- Map of nationally significant agricultural land – over 50% more likely to be converted than other agricultural land by 2040
- Indiana Legislation
 - HB 1132 (2023), IN Land Use Task Force report
 - Authorize the PACE program
 - Authorize ag districts (voluntary)
 - Incentives for “smart” solar – don’t put it on prime farmland, put in within the built environment
 - Beginning Farm Tax Credit
 - HB 1157 (2023), Farmland Loss Study
 - ISDA study for 2010 to 2022, to be completed July 2024
- HB 1417 (2024), Economic Impact of Lost Farmland
- Q&A
 - Time taken to improve policies
 - Economics of keeping farmland vs new opportunities
 - Local solar siting
 - Soil health work – private (ex., ADM) and policy (ex., crop insurance premium discount), no on-the-ground presence in Indiana
 - Forested land – limited work, especially in the Midwest

Staff Updates

- Grants and Finance
- Legislative (one page to do list)
 - What does future structure and support for SICIM look like?
 - Watershed Development Commission at the summer region meetings
 - LEAP and water quantity – front end and back end
 - Is there an opportunity for CWI?
 - State Water Resource Plan
 - Vermillion County FB resolution (passed 11-6)
- Board members completed conflict of interest forms

Annual Conference, January 26-28, 2025 at Westin

- Planning Committee meeting on April 5th
 - Currently 3 staff and 3 supervisors plus partner organizations
 - Abstract submissions
- Agenda
 - More time for Statehouse Breakfast, different levels of interest among attendees

- Timing of dinners and luncheons
- Handout, pursue modified option
- Net \$19657.17 for FY24 annual conference
 - Cost savings on the statehouse breakfast, higher registration fees, and minor changes to the format
- Registration Rates
 - Last year we increased by 12% to \$395 per person but need to review the FY25 budget before deciding
- Future Locations
 - Move to an off site location in non-budget years
 - One day event outside of Indianapolis
 - How to supplement trainings during the slim downed year? More at region meetings? Board Certification Program?

Review General IASWCD Committee Guidance

- Outsider participation on standing committees
- Officially combine NRP and Legislative
- Authority and duration of ad hoc committees
- Functions of ad hoc committees – sharing and distributing their minutes, minutes should be available to board
- Condense and standardize committee chair guidelines

Breakout in Individual Committee

- Finance
 - Transition to a 2 year budget, planning further in advance for more stability and giving districts more time to plan for dues expense
 - Ask districts for feedback, ultimately a board decision
 - Reserve policy and structure
 - Emergency, padding, opportunity
 - More financial analysis to determine how funds are reallocated to reserves
- Marketing and Communications
 - Working with IDEA
 - Website
 - Region Directors in better communication with districts
 - Email updates after every board meeting
 - Advertise region directors during annual conference

- Introductions and summaries at summer region meetings
 - Encouraging board attendance to annual meetings and monthly board meetings, budget mileage?
 - Staff and supervisor email list in Drive
 - Prepared remarks to share when visiting districts
- Legislative
 - Incorporate NRP language
 - Formulating new legislative actions and policy
 - Defined membership, standing and advisory
 - Charge themselves to submit resolutions
 - Definition of legislative position

NACD Fly-In, March 19-21, Washington, DC

- Will be attended by Liz Rice, Eric Shideler, John Kruse.

Adjourn, Ethan Truex motion and Steve Crowe seconded, motion passed.