

**Present, Online: Whitney McGrew, Megan Espinda (IDEM), Chris Matthys, Elli Blaine, Lisa Holscher, Sharmin Syed (EPA), Ethan Truax, Gene Schmidt (SSCB), and Bobby Hettmansperger.**

**Present, In-Person: Liz Rice, Amy Work, Jeff Baker, Damyrus Mortenson (NRCS), Les Zimmerman, Ray Chattin, Kenny Cain, Marc Roberts, Cress Hizer, Andy Ambriole, Walt Sell (Purdue Extension), Tara Wessler-Henry (ISDA), Jennifer Thum (ISDA - New Director of Division of Soil Conservation); Meg Leader, Kim Peterson; Stan Moore, Mark Kingma, and John Kruse.**

#### Meeting called to order at 10:06 am

- Consent Agenda - Jeff; Mark K made a motion to approve minutes; Kim P seconded. All in favor.
- Approval of Dec. 8 minutes and Annual Meeting minutes - Sarah; John approved and Kim seconded. All in favor.
- Treasurer's Report – Mark read the current bank account balance and reported on assets and liabilities. Filed as reported.
  - Stan asked about reserve policy. Liz suggested discussion of this later in the meeting.
- Welcome new Board members and staff:
  - new grants & finance manager, Whitney McGrew
  - new board member, Chris Matthys
  - Resilient Indiana Program Director, Meg Leader

#### Partner, Staff, and Program Updates

- Partner Updates
  - Damarys Mortensen, NRCS State Conservationist
    - highlighted items in the report provided
  - Megan Espinda, IDEM
    - gave updates on statehouse bill/Wetlands
    - HB1383 - currently has gone through steps of the legislative process; passed both houses; on governor's desk; please contact Drake Ambranson at [dabramso@idem.in](mailto:dabramso@idem.in).gov; 317-232-8921 for more information regarding this bill.
  - Sharmin Syed, EPA
    - Wetlands - learning about bill;
    - EPA hosting a listening session on Waters of the US on 2/27 at 1:00 pm -3:30 pm; can sign up for verbal input; will share information with Liz to share with others; we invite input
  - Walt Sell, Purdue Extension
    - Congrats to an excellent conference



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- congratulations to the award recipients
- Henry Q thanks IASWCD for opportunity to be on panel
- Urban Soil Health Specialist being hired
- Christian Krumpke - long term ag plot demonstrations; comparing practices
- Linda Prokopy - running a grant that is studying the diversity of crops
- Hellbenders initiative
- Purdue Extension task force - Dean of Ag put together to examine extension and positioning throughout the state
- IN Watershed Leadership Academy in session
- ICP state meeting - Jane Frankenburger gave a presentation
  
- o Tara Wessler-Henry
  - CWI grants underway
  - AFRs coming in now and payments being sent out
  - Training reimbursements are being used well; getting close to \$50K limit
  - grant reports were due and reading through those now
  - putting together successes to share
  
- o Jennifer Thum
  - appreciate the IASWCD for the opportunity of having the SSCB meeting and New Supervisor Training at the annual conference at the Westin
  - Board Certification Program - would appreciate feedback on this; only have two comments at this time;
  - SSCB board opening will be discussed later; term limits getting close
  - 2023 Plan of Work and 2024 - available for review and questions
  - Feb 20 will be the SSCB strategic planning meeting
  
- Recommending a SSCB Candidate - JT, Walt, Liz
  - o Jennifer Thum: Larry Clemens is resigning from SSCB; non-farming interest in NE portion of state; Suggestions for replacement have been Jewel Wise (Kosciusko County) and Chad Shaw (Allen County).
  - o Resumes were provided to the board and shared at the meeting.
  - o Marc Robert made a motion to recommend Chad Shaw and



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Kim seconded. All in favor.

- Staff & Program Updates
  - Grants & Finance - Whitney
    - Whitney: came on in December; new position for IASWCD; this role is needed due to amount of grant funding
    - streamlining internal processes (ie Quickbooks online) for better checks and balances
    - Pathway to Water Quality Program - been checking the funding sources of this program, current and future funding
    - CCSI Program will be reviewed next
    - Resilient Indiana - been working with Meg on this program funding
    - working on taking some of the financial pressure off the association and having programs pay for their services, etc.
    - Liz: the audit is complete; auditor will be presenting the audit and taking questions at March 15 board meeting.
  - CCSI - Lisa Holscher
    - Julie Loehr has resigned. Last day was February 2.
    - Breakfast at the Statehouse review
    - National No Till Conference - CCSI had a soil health booth with partners;
    - CCSI has been invited to bring their booth to Ohio conference in March
    - Jay Brandt is featured on the CCSI podcast with Hoosier Ag Today; can listen via CCSI website
    - email coming from partners regarding virtual Intro to Soil Health Training - February 27
    - other soil health trainings noted on CCSI website
    - looking at collaborating on mentoring program
  - USH - Elli Blaine
    - thank you to Lisa and having USH as part of Breakfast at the Statehouse
    - new counties have come onboard with urban programs (as noted in report)
    - Elli highlighted items from USH report provided
    - theme for this year is financial sustainability for 2026 and beyond; and formalizing an advisory committee this spring



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- o Resilient Indiana - Meg Leader
  - busy month starting the program
  - 1st qtr goals: reintroducing herself to districts and partners;
  - attending a district annual meeting in each region; attending 9 total
  - meeting with various partners - discussing trainings with field staff; and where they can be located; where there is work for them.
  - logo developed and shared at the meeting
  - next - want to attract good candidates; pre-posting TA information now; want to make it easy to contact those interested (have a QR code set up to collect information)
  - hiring three TAs first to get them trained and then hire the remaining 8.
  
- o Legislative Affairs - Les Zimmerman
  - Clean Water Indiana Breakfast at the Statehouse (CBAS) - thank you to Lisa and her team
  - goals: 1). current legislative session, build relationships; 2). legislative awareness and engagement with supervisors and staff; 3). new law in watershed development construction; 4). long term CWI funding options; 5). funding for invasive species; 6). next budget session and define our approach
  - January statehouse - followed two bills;
  - testified on behalf of Glick's senate bill
  - attended rural caucus meeting in January
  - important to maintain a presence as an association (ie rural caucus); the investment to be present at the statehouse is important
  - meeting with Toby Days, IN Conservation Voters,
  - reached out to Senator Braun and asked to meet with him; Mark K suggested going on his website to view a schedule and get more information.
  - Legislative Tips, Tricks and Checklist - resource developed for districts; sent out to districts
  - Watershed development commission - update from Les and discuss by board and Jennifer Thum; Mark Kingma gave history of Kankakee-Yellow River Basin Development Commission.
  - met with Jack Seifert regarding invasive species



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- o Cress Hizer
  - distributed CWI pamphlets
  - Drainage Task Force update
  - legislative update tracker sent weekly
  - adjournment date is now March 8
  - recommend district statehouse visit days in next session

Liz clarified the financial report and the funds in the IASWCD tagged for Resilient Indiana.

Ray on IASWCD board: Ray will not be able to vote on anything SSCB or CWI

Kenny Cain - stepped down on IASWCD board to be on SSCB board; Kenny may work on finding a replacement.

Steve Crowe had a procedure yesterday and was not able to attend today. He is looking for an assistant director.

### IASWCD Business

- Google Drive folder for Board to share, access resources - Liz
  - o let Liz know if you have difficulty accessing this folder
- 2024 SWCD Annual Conference
  - o Jeff - keynote speaker was awesome;
  - o Liz - want more district presence in planning
  - o Les - Marriott is better
- 2025 and Beyond Annual Meetings - Liz, Amy
  - o Liz: 2025 contract is signed with Westin
    - idea of hosting conference every other year
    - 2026: Awards luncheon and Business Meeting; this would allow Amy to do other things
    - 2027: conference with CWI Breakfast at the Statehouse (CBAS); could also do CBAS on non-conference years or not
    - alot of registration funds come from NRCS; looking at agreement for this
    - Jeff: In lieu of a conference, I would like to make the one day a FULL day; 1-2 breakouts and an awards event maybe (during non-conference years)
    - Les - ongoing presence at statehouse and would recommend something every year; conference off year might be a little different, with smaller group and more focused; could possibly do lunch instead; different attendees/attendance; lunch would have to run from 10:30 am to 1 pm;
    - Marc: can we consider moving these around the



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- state (on the off year conference)?
- Board gave thumbs up to the idea of exploring a change and considering every other year for hosting a full conference.
- Liz will have final financials regarding the conference at the March meeting.
  
- Rolling out New Dues Model, Invoicing, What amount is “good standing” in 2024?
  - o Liz will send out spreadsheet to districts with letter from President
  - o invoices go out mid-April with Annual Report
  - o Question: what amount is good standing for 2024?
    - Jeff: good standing starts where we left off; I suggest a plan for the next few years “what is good standing”
    - Mark: Is any district dues below \$2,000? answer: no
    - Jeff: suggested making a policy regarding this
    - Stan: proposed a more robust scale; 2024: \$2K; 2025: \$3K; 2026: \$4K
    - Jeff: like to see a Gold level; where districts who have bought into our vision; they receive something extra (i.e. conference registration discount)
    - Jeff : everyone gets invoiced for full amount;
    - Ray spoke on SSCB part and intention of the additional \$10K for districts and reminded board of the March 20 strategic planning meeting with SSCB
    - Liz: proposes send out invoice for full; unless they come forward with discussion regarding less
    - Stan made a motion dues structure invoice that will say “minimum dues” plus 10% will become Gold Standard Status. Mark K seconded. All in favor.

### Lunch and Strategic Plan Subcommittee Breakouts

#### IASWCD Business

- Strategic Plan Subcommittee Updates  
Mark Kingma and Liz
  - discussed dues increase



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### Kim & Meg - Development Staff

- o idea: collect district annual reports for "Assess County budget amounts statewide"
- o idea: NACD's health insurance option as breakout session at conference (Beth Mason or director of membership)
- o Liz reminded the IASWCD board that they had voted to increase the Health Reimbursement Funding for staff from \$3,500 to \$4,400/annually. Liz informed the board that previously she had discussed health insurance with staff and directors and they opted to stay with Health Reimbursement Accounts. QSERA plan is the plan we are currently using to keep in compliance.

### Les - Legislative

- o strategic committee and board committee will become one
- o suggest combining legislative committee and natural resources committee; Marc will be chair of this committee
- o Marc has draft of the resolution process and guiding principles document and shared with committee earlier this morning; final product in next three months
- o Legislative Affairs Director - Les will transition out of this within a year's time; need to develop a job description; and work on succession plan
- o would like to take the "Develop branding/promotional materials" and move it to the marketing committee

### John and Amy - Marketing Development

- Ray suggested the creation of contact lists; for district directors and supervisors; Liz mentioned she could work on this piece.
- discussed working resources library ideas; region director communication support; and possible survey
- Amy mentioned that the IASWCD was going to get a new look and be streamlined for better usage for districts

### ● Standing Committees Recommitments

- o Executive - Jeff, Sarah Mark Kingma and Marc Roberts
- o Finance - Mark, Troy, Stan, Sarah
- o Governance - to look at the handbook; Marc Roberts. Liz will ask Marc R to pull out 2-3 policies for the full IASWCD board to review at every board meeting.
- o legislative committee - Les read from the policy handbook regarding guidelines for this committee. Les will reach out to Jeff (TNC), Raoul Moore and SICIM regarding this committee.



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### NACD Updates

- NACD North Central Region Meeting - Marc, Stan
  - went to Springfield with Damaryus and Eric Shideler
  - met region con rep
  - Stan: Beth Mason shared the makeup of the associations - we have the most dues and the most staff of other associations in our region.
  - Marc: asked Liz to share the document with everyone
- NACD Annual Meeting (San Diego, CA, Feb. 10-14) - Ethan, Roger as delegates; staff: Amy and Liz attending
- NACD Fly-In: March 20
  - Marc: think it's worth attending; recommend Gene attend and Liz.
  - Marc willing to go, but don't have to go.
  - Liz: Roger suggested new people go
  - Marc made a motion that John, Ethan, Eric and Liz attend. Gene and Damarys go as well. Mark Kingma seconds. All in favor.
  - Delegation is full.

Liz suggested that the March meeting not have in-person partner updates to save time.

June meeting - update strategic plan somewhere offsite

**2:56 PM**

**Adjourn - John moved; Kim seconded.**