



## IASWCD Board Meeting MINUTES

### November 14, 2025

### Meeting held online via Zoom

#### Meeting called to order at 10:05 am by Marc Roberts, IASWCD President

Present (online): Liz Rice, Mark Kingma, Steve Crowe, Troy Hattery, Roger Wenning, John Kruse, John Newby, Marc Roberts, Ethan Truax, Ray Chattin, Sarah Delbecq, Kim Peterson, Whitney McGrew, Jordan Gillenwater, Jeff Baker, Meg Leader, Stan Moore, Elli Blaine, Lisa Holscher

Partners (online): Stephanie Baker, Teddie Phillipson, Jennifer Thum, Walt Sell, Ken Gunkel, Caleb Rennaker, Henry Quesada, Cassie Hauswald, Damarys Mortenson

- **Consent Agenda** - motion to accept the consent agenda made by Mark Kingma and seconded by John Kruse. Approved unanimously.
- **Approval of Sept. 19 Minutes**
  - Liz shared a copy of the minutes on the screen
  - Troy made a motion to approve the minutes, Ray Chattin seconded.
  - No discussion. Approved unanimously.
- **Presentation: Envirothon**
  - Teddie Phillipson-Mower (Acting President) and Stephanie Baker (Treasurer) presented an update on the Indiana Envirothon program.
  - Presentation included an explanation of the competition levels and Indiana's program and how it works
  - Indiana currently has 9 regional competitions (from 7 a few years ago)
  - Reaching 400+ students per year
  - Receive strong support from Ball State, Franklin College, IU and Purdue
  - Stephanie Baker shared annual revenue and expenses 2024 and 2025. Current account balance: \$30K
  - Roger commented that the President's association sponsors NCF
  - **ACTION ITEM: Liz will send a pdf of the presentation with the board and partners. [Done 9-14]**
- **Partner Updates**
  - **Purdue Extension, Henry Quesada**
    - Restructuring due to ANR budget cuts; moving to regional "pod" model January 1, 2026
    - A regional approach is currently being tested in a few areas of the state
    - College is ranked #3 nationally and #6 globally
    - Continue to rely on and work with partnerships
    - Steve asked about pod structure and travel



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- Henry stated that they are hoping to use technology to provide connection and services and feel confident in still delivering impactful programs. Focusing on things that really matter.
- Marc asked if the 10% cut was from this last legislative session.
- Henry stated that yes we know there was a 10% cut, but don't know how it will impact the college. They are not letting people go, but they also cannot hire like they could before (i.e. ANR educator positions).
- 4-H will remain local
- Liz asked if the pause was part of the extension planning over the past year.
- Henry stated that a task force was set up and recommended how they could shift from ANR educators being specialists instead of generalists.
- **IDEM, Caleb Rennaker**
  - Reviewing 319 applications; 13 funded
  - New statewide **septic survey** and **pathogen pollution** projects
  - More EPA success stories coming—Indiana will be a national leader in 2025 (7 currently published and 6 additional stories have been approved but not published yet)
  - Compiling guidance on equipment modifications on BMPs - watch for more information soon
- **ISDA, Jennifer Thum**
  - Provided the ISDA update via chat as she had to exit the online meeting:
    - Two new Resource Specialists hired: Grace Williams (SE) and Sara Day (NE – starts 24th)
    - One vacancy remaining in SW region
- **The Nature Conservancy, Cassie Hauswald**
  - She is the new state director
  - Bison herd in Newton Co - transferred 9 out of the herd for food to native tribes across the country (Oklahoma)
  - Jefferson Co - prescribed fire operations
  - Steuben Co - purchased 260 acres around nature preserve
- **NRCS, Damaris Mortenson**
  - Transitioning post-shutdown; updating tools and programs
  - Focus is on paying all the employees
  - Nationwide program deadline January 15
  - Virtual program training coming; partners invited
  - Budget announcement next week
  - Ken Gunkel asked about MOU's with NRCS and SWCDs.
  - Damaris responded stating MOU with SWCDs expired 12/31/24—new version in progress and they should have something ready in the next few weeks. In the meantime, continue working the agreement until the next one is in place.



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- **Program Leader Updates**

- **CCSI, Lisa Holscher**
  - Lisa highlighted a few items from the written report provided
  - Being fiscally conservative due to shutdown
- **Urban Soil Health (rebranding), Elli Blaine**
  - Elli highlighted items from the written report provided
  - New NRCS contribution agreement
  - Transitioning to more direct technical assistance to small, diversified farms
  - Suggested new program name centered on “small farm conservation”
  - Elli shared [new coverage map](#) and [website link](#) via chat
- **Resilient Indiana, Meg Leader**
  - Meg highlighted items from the written report provided
  - Two new staff onboard; goal to fill final vacancy is February
  - Quarterly review response rate by SWCDs is 90%; average score 4.63/5
  - Upcoming presentation at SSCB (Jan 13): *“How the district and a RITA tech work together”* featuring Camille Sczerbowicz, RITA, and Martin Franke, LaGrange Co SWCD. This presentation will help people and partners understand the value the RITA program has provided to districts.

### Board Business

- **Committee updates (Finance, Governance, Legislative)**

- **Finance Report, Ethan Truax and Liz Rice**
  - The Balance Sheet was provided in the board packet and shared online during the meeting
  - ~\$1M on hand; \$360K unrestricted
  - \$310K pending reimbursement (federal delays)
  - Shutdown contingency plan in place but not needed at this time
  - Motion approved previously to invest in CDs:
    - Proceeding now with **\$100K in a 3-month CD**, then reevaluate
  - New credit card controls implemented for staff
  - Discussion on CD duration; settled on short-term due to federal funding flow
- **Governance, Mark Kingma**
  - Ongoing board recruitment
  - Committee formation improvements discussed
  - Discussion of a leadership interest survey (idea from Sarah)
  - **ACTION ITEM: Liz suggested this survey idea would be a good topic for discussion at the next governance meeting as an idea for next year**
  - Officer slate updates:



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- Sarah Delbecq will be stepping down and not seeking re-election of officer position for next year
- Mark Kingma - proposed VP
- Troy Hattery - proposed Treasurer
- Ethan Truax - proposed Secretary
- **Legislative committee, Marc Roberts**
  - January 27, 2026 - Drive in at the statehouse event
    - Encourage districts to set up their own meetings with legislators on this day
    - Need strong attendance despite short legislative session
    - park at farm bureau and bus to statehouse
    - Provide CWI success stories
  - Ray: working on a contingency plan or strategy for sustaining SICIM and the Indiana Invasives Initiative (III). Working with the Indiana invasives species council on this issue.
- **Events update**
  - **Resolutions review session**
    - **Held via Zoom on November 13** with ~40 attendees
    - Submitted Resolutions and the Delegate Notebook were provided mid-October (on the IASWCD website) to districts, providing ample opportunity to review and discuss prior to the review session and business meeting
    - Positive feedback; suggestions included a Google Doc for pre-submitted questions
    - John Kruse stated that he thinks IASWCD should have a resolutions review session virtually every year a month ahead of the business meeting.
  - **December 19, 2025 Annual Business Meeting**
    - Roger shared that there have been complaints about schools being on Christmas break and people won't be around on December 19
    - Region Director and Officer Elections
  - **January 27, 2026 - Drive in at the Statehouse**
    - Liz working on the agenda for this day



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### NACD Updates

- NACD Updates (Ethan, Roger, Ken)
  - Roger: **Legislative Committee** discussed the shutdown and Farm Bill
  - Iowa forced to lay off 38 staff due to shutdown
  - **Region meeting: Carmel – January 13–14, 2026**
    - IASWCD is hosting a Dinner & Bowling night
  - **NACD Annual Meeting: San Antonio, TX – Feb 15–19, 2026**
    - Anyone interested should notify Liz
    - Ken Gunkel stated he is willing to attend and Ethan is checking his schedule and will let Liz know if he can attend
  - **NACD Fly-in, Washington D.C.: March 2026**
    - Liz briefed everyone on her role regarding setting up the schedule for this DC fly-in
    - Last year, Chris Matthys and Eric Shideler attended with Liz
    - Eric is valuable to have attend for his expertise with a district and position as treasurer for NCDEA
    - Contact Liz if interested in attending
    - Usually three days and two nights

### Upcoming Dates

- **December 12, 2025 - Next IASWCD board meeting**
- **December 19, 2025 - IASWCD Annual Business Meeting**
- **January 27, 2026 - Legislative Drive-In at the Statehouse**

Mark Kingma motioned to adjourn the meeting, Jeff Baker seconded; Approved unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:53 pm**