

ISWCDEA Board Meeting Minutes

February 2nd, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Becky Taylor.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance was taken by Angie Grapperhaus.

Region 1: Karla Smith, Lorraine Foelske, & Joey Deloian (all present) Richard Stewart (absent)

Region 2: Sarah Earles, Becky Taylor, Jackie Kraft, Jeff Woodyatt (all present)

Region 3: Melissa Cauble (late), Jim Nestleroad, Rhonda Koehne, Ellie Crowe (all present)

Region 4: Mitchell Killough (present)

Region 5: Angie Grapperhaus, Bethany Ingram, Nikki Isaacs, Jody Etheridge (all present)

Advisors:

BLWR – Marty McManus, Elliot Lagacy, Debbie Gray, Shelly Ray

AISWCD- Steve Chard, Grant Hammer, Ashley Curran, Teri Fahey

NRCS – Ben Schmidt

Guest: Larry Glover-Meade, Administrative Program Specialist with USDA/NRCS

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Lorraine Foelske introduced Larry Glover -Meade to speak about NRCS training.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Angie Grapperhaus made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Rhonda Koehne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Karla Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from November as printed. Jackie Kraft seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PARTNER REPORTS:

BLWR: Please find attached BLWR report. (This report was provided after the meeting). Additional notes not included in the report include:

SSRP- There are funds available for FY22 to be allocated this Spring.

RCCP Grant- Elliot Lagacy reported that there should be an update on this grant by the regional meetings being held in March.

NRCS: Ben Schmidt reported that the Survey Aide agreements were being extended through August 2025. They are currently in the process of reviewing the NRCS Administrative Assistant budget. There are 25 positions open across the state for both soil conservationist and soil conservation technicians. NRCS is working with FSA & RD to figure out space for these new employees. Ben asked Rhonda if Nolan Reicha, head IT person for USDA in Illinois, reached out regarding Citrix issues. Rhonda said he had David Lopez, IT person from Missouri who is a member of the CEC Citrix team, reach out to her. According to David, on January 18th Citrix converted from FPN to FS Logic which should make the network more stable. Hopefully, this resolved the issue with disappearing drives and disconnected printers. Most agreed in the meeting that the update seemed to help. There were still some that were having issues. Rhonda will work with David on current and future Citrix issues.

NCDEA: No report

AISWCD: Grant Hammer reported a bill, HB 4412, protecting Illinois-based clean energy projects from a growing number of local bans passed. HB4412 was drafted to prevent counties from enacting preemptive local ordinances that outright ban local wind and solar projects, hindering the state's new climate goals set forth in the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. The SWCD's should not be directly implicated. However, there are some upset parties concerning the drainage aspects of this new bill. Grant requested that the IDOA regional reps please let him know of any concerns or input they may hear. There is a suite a bills coming out. One bill will ask IDOT to create, install, and maintain District road signs. The District would be responsible for the cost of the sign, but Grant does not feel like they would be more than a couple hundred dollars. AISWCD is working with partners on SB3471 for nutrient loss reduction.

AISWCD is pleased to share that it has installed a 13' x 7.5' educational display in the State Capitol building rotunda! The highly visible display will remain in place until Wednesday, March 8th, 2023, which coincides with the AISWCD's legislative lobby day. At that time, a ceremony featuring dignitary speakers will remove the undergarments which should be well degraded from the microbiology of our healthy soil! Participants of the 2023 Legislative Lobby Day will have the opportunity for front row seats to the ceremony.

The plan for Legislative Lobby Day is to meet at 9:30 a.m. at the IL State Library, followed by lobbying activities (including the Soil Health Rally) taking place across the street from the Capitol, followed by a reception starting at 4 pm. at the AISWCD office. AISWCD relocated its office headquarters to 201 W. Lawrence Avenue in downtown Springfield. To celebrate this move, AISWCD will be hosting a public Open House on Monday, February 6th, 2023 from 5-7pm. Refreshments and appetizers will be served, and SWCD Directors and staff are welcome and encouraged to attend. Steve Chard added that we are always welcome to stop by the office.

Grant also mentioned that the AISWCD submitted their final draft of the audit and there were no issues found.

Natalie Phelps Finnie has been appointed the director of IDNR.

Grant will be out of the office attending the NACD Conference in New Orleans.

Grant inquired about the images in E News. Mitchell Killough recommended to try forwarding it to someone and view that way and Melissa Cauble said it works on her regular Federal computer but not Citrix.

Steve Chard wanted to remind everyone that Earth Stewardship Day is May 4th and State Envirothon is May 3-4th. The AISWCD is working on Summer Conference and things are going well. Angie G. asked if it was possible they consider splitting the registration back out, so attendees do not need to pay for the full event if they cannot attend it. Steve said that is something they can definitely discuss. Steve said their by-laws need to be updated and he is assisting with the committee to do so. He said the tree planting initiative will be occurring late March-early April. The forestry committee is working on it.

IL SWCD Insurance: Melissa reported there are 86 employees enrolled in health insurance and 146 for life/disability. She completed the required audit and submitted it to IDOA. Bills have been paid until the end of January. Please do not forget to send Melissa, your IDOA rep, and AISWCD your Employee Status form when a new employee is hired. You can visit www.montswcd.com for the most up to date forms.

Guest Report: Larry Glover-Meade was introduced by Lorraine. She wanted to have him speak about the conflicts that have come up with training. Larry works on trainings with NRCS. The SWCD employees expressed their concerns with trainings being so last minute and coinciding with other SWCD training events or conferences. Larry requested that each region have a representative that will coordinate with their region to notify Larry of all possible scheduling conflicts. Larry's email is larry.glover-meade@usda.gov. The regional

reps are as follows: Region 1- Lorraine, Region 2- Sarah, Region 3- Melissa, Region 4- Mitchell, Region 5- Angie. Rhonda asked if Larry could possibly put out an annual or monthly calendar with known trainings. Larry said typically trainings are scheduled about two months out, but it all depends on funding and available dates. However, he will work on it. Jeff Woodyatt asked if the trainings would be in-person or virtual. Larry replied that it would be mixed.

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT: Karla Smith provided financials. See report. She reported that IDOA was generous enough to give \$15,000 to ISWCDEA. Mitchell Killough made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Rhonda Koehne seconded the motion. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Winter Training Report: Seventy-one Districts participated in the event. The evaluation sheets were provided by Rhonda prior to the meeting. The meeting being held during breakfast received a lot of positive feedback. Some suggestions included: no speakers during meals, emergency contact information on the Registration Form, holding the event at the Crowne Plaza, and limit the allotted time for Partner Reports. Everyone agreed that we should not allow speakers during the meal at the next training and emergency contact info was a good idea. Karla reiterated how much more affordable the Northfield is and if they held it at the Crown Plaza registration fees would have to be increased. Everyone agreed that the event should remain at the Northfield Inn. Winter Training for 2023 is scheduled for December 5th and 6th.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) Envirothon Donation -Sarah requested a motion to accept the usual annual donation of \$250. Angie Grapperhaus made a motion to approve the \$250 donation to the 2023 State Envirothon. Jackie Kraft seconded the motion. Rhonda Koehne requested to discuss the donation amount further. After a brief discussion, Melissa Cauble made a motion to increase the donation amount to \$500 and Rhonda Koehne seconded the motion. Motion carried. Karla will adjust the budget accordingly. The check will be made out to the IL Envirothon and mailed to Sondra Baker.
- 2) Summer Conference- Event will be held July 16th-18th at the Crowne Plaza. One topic suggested was working with different generations. If you have any ideas on topics or speakers please pass them along to Steve Chard and CC Becky.
- 3) Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing- Sarah sent certificate to review prior to the meeting. Sarah requested to be reimbursed the cost. Rhonda Koehne made a motion to reimburse Sarah and to have this cost reimbursed or covered by the ISWCDEA annually. Angie Grapperhaus seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 4) ISWCDEA Housekeeping:
 - a. Update Board Info: Please review spreadsheet Angie sent with the home/cell phone list, committees, and terms. Notify her if any corrections need to be made.
 - b. Review and Update By-Laws: Angie provided the updated by-laws reflecting the change passed at the Winter Meeting. No other changes or suggestions needed at this time.
 - c. Review 2022 Activities and Update 2023 Annual Plan of Work: The APO is attached. Karla Smith made a motion to approve the plan of work as printed. Mitchell Killough seconded motion. Motion passed.
 - d. Review and Update Policies- Policies attached. No corrections needed at this time.
 - e. Review and Approve 2023 Budget – During the meeting, Karla amended the budget to adjust the donation to Envirothon to \$500. Lorraine Foelske made a motion to approve the revised budget and Melissa Cauble seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 5) Representative/Senate Letters for Funding (drafted by the McHenry/Lake Director) – Letter was reviewed and discussed. Grant recommended not sending the letter as is because it will muddy the water. Grant said the best thing you can do for support is attend the Lobbying Day or the AISWCD Open House next week. If you want to send a letter, tell them what you are doing and invite them to events like field days or annual meetings. Give them opportunities to connect with you. Lorraine volunteered to draft a letter taking in Grant's recommendations. Jeff Woodyatt made a motion to have

Lorraine revise the letter and have her send it to the ISWCDEA for review. Lorraine Foelske seconded the motion. Motion approved. Grant recommended that ISWCDEA coordinate some sort of legislative outreach program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS INTERNAL:

1. Annual Plan of Work/By-Laws/Policies and Procedures- See above; Angie Grapperhaus
2. State Envirothon: No report
3. Employee Guidebook: No report; Sarah Earles
4. Farm Progress Show: No report; this will now be handled by Becky Taylor and Melissa Cauble.
5. Fundraisers: No report; this will now be handled by Jackie Kraft and Karla Smith.
6. Legislative: No report; Sarah Earles & Becky Taylor
7. MOU: No report; Sarah Earles & Becky Taylor
8. Nominating: No report
9. Regional Training: Training will be held March 2nd, 7th, and 9th. Regional reps will be sending out info.
10. Scholarship: Mitchell Killough said he was fine handling the scholarship for Region 4. The scholarship topic will be something regarding the 5th Category in the State Envirothon. Information should be sent out regarding the scholarship no later than the beginning of April and the winner is selected in May to be announced at the Summer Conference.
11. Summer Conference: No report
12. Website: Lorraine is replacing Renee W. She finally has the log in information for the site.

REGIONAL ISSUES/REQUESTS:

Region 1: Lorraine said her computer waiver request was rejected. She will send a template out to be used.

Region 2: No report

Region 3: No report

Region 4: Mitchell is reaching out to people Tara spoke to about interest in being Region Rep.

Region 5: No report

CORRESPONDENCE: N/A

COMMITTEE REPORTS: – STATE:

Civil Rights: No report, Melissa Cauble

State Technical Committee: No report; Thad Eshleman

Training, Safety, and Health: No report; Spring Duffy

Meeting Dates for 2023

- Feb – 2nd Teleconference
- May – 10th In Person
- July – 6th Teleconference (usually related to ISWCDEA involvement in Summer Conference)
- August – 3rd In Person Plan Winter Training
- September – 7th Teleconference
- November – 2nd Teleconference to finish Winter Training Coordination
- December – 2023 Winter Training Dates (Dec. 5th & 6th)

Rhonda Koehne made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joey Deloian seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Minutes compiled by Angie Grapperhaus.