

**ISWCDEA Board Meeting Minutes
September 7th, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Sarah Earles.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance was taken by Rhonda Koehne.

Region 1: Karla Smith and Joey Deloian were present. Rich Stewart was absent.

Region 2: Sarah Earles, Jackie Kraft, Jeff Woodyatt, and Becky Taylor were present.

Region 3: Melissa Cauble and Rhonda Koehne were present. Ellie Crowe was absent.

Region 4: Kathy Bircket, Kristie Cooley, and Mitchell Killough were present.

Region 5: Jody Etheridge, Bethany Ingram, Nikki Isaacs, and Marilyn Thompson were present.

BLWR Advisors: Marty McManus and Debbie Gray were present. Brian Rennecker, Elliot Lagacy, and Shelley Ray were absent.

AISWCD Advisors: Grant Hammer, Ashley Curran, and Teri Fahey were present.

NRCS Advisor: Eric Gerth was absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Kathy Bircket made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Jackie Kraft seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Joey Deloian made a motion to approve the August 5, 2023, minutes as printed. Bethany Ingram seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PARTNER REPORTS

BLWR

- Marty McManus reported there is still \$1.6 M in FY 22 cost share to spend by December 15th deadline.
- He also wanted to remind us of the Technical Assistance (TA) dollars available under their RCPP AFA.
- Posting has closed and interviews have been conducted for the IDOA Regional Representative position that will be housed in Springfield and will represent the Western IL territory (Randy Grove's old Region).
- The BLWR has also posted a vacancy for Elliot Lagacy's old regional position, but no interviews have been conducted.

NRCS

- Eric Gerth was ill and did not pass any information along to Sarah Eales or Becky Taylor to report to us.

NCDEA

- Sarah Earles reported there were no updates to give.

AISWCD

- Grant reported SB1701 (reinstates SWCD authorities) and SB3235 (SWCD road signs) were passed and signed without much attention because they had planned on them being a big announcement at Ag Day at the Illinois State Fair. They will try to schedule a "celebration" luncheon at the AISWCD office later.
- Ag Day at the State Fair was cancelled due to hot weather and the huge storm that blew through before Ag Day.
- AISWCD received 9 NACD Technical Assistance grant applications. They have ranked them and forwarded them on to NACD.
- NRCS had made a request of partners for ideas on ways Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) dollars could help conservation efforts in Illinois. There is an upcoming meeting to discuss those ideas. Thank to all who submitted an idea.
- There is also a meeting in late September with State Conservationist Tammy Willis to discuss Citrix issues updates.
- There were over 300 people in attendance for Summer Conference. They will be sending out a survey asking for feedback.
- Grant thanked Teri Fahey for taking the lead on organizing their stuff for Farm Progress show.
- 75 of 97 SWCD paid AISWCD dues, 12 of which also contributed \$100 to AISWCD Foundation. The Foundation has a \$36,000 fundraising goal. Those funds will help support Envirothon, McKibbin Scholarship, and Auxiliary Poster Contest.
- AISWCD has advertised their Executive Director position Grant is vacating. It will close very soon.
- Ashley Curran reiterated she is the person to contact for Citrix issues. She has some solutions for some of the known issues.

- Teri Fahey thanked all the volunteers who helped set up and man booths at Farm Progress Show.

IL SWCD Insurance

- Melissa Cauble reported there were 94 employees participating in our group health insurance—including 8 IDOA Conservation Planners and 2 Retirees.
- The current balance in the account is roughly \$14M and does include the FY23 funds deposit.

Karla Smith made a motion to approve the Partner Reports. Mitchell Killough seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Kathy Bircket made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Jeff Woodyatt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

The board reviewed the list of items that need to be completed for Winter Training. Each person responsible for the task or session speaker gave a brief report of their progress.

Sarah Earles reported that, on August 8th, she sent out the first announcement for accepting Outstanding Employee of the Year nominations. She is planning to send out a reminder email once a month.

Sarah Earles also asked the ISWCDEA board members to review the Regional Mentor contact list to see if there needed to be any updates made or if they could fill in some of the blank spots with a contact person. We want to be able to hand the updated list out at Winter Training.

Sarah reminded Region 1, 3, and 5 ISWCDEA Reps that their region is to conduct elections for ISWCDEA Representatives. Region 1 reported they have ballots out. Region 3 reported they are looking for nominees. Region 5 reported they have ballots out.

Sarah stated that Rhonda Koehne must go off the board this year, so there will be a need for a nominee for the Secretary position at least. If any current board members are interested in holding any of the Executive Board positions, please let Sarah or Becky know so they can pass that information along to the nomination committee.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business brought before the board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS INTERNAL

- Annual Plan of Work/By-Laws/Policies and Procedures - No report; Rhonda Koehne
- State Envirothon: Ashely Aber sent recently sent out an email with 2024 State Envirothon dates; Sarah Earles
- Employee Guidebook: No report; Sarah Earles & Becky Taylor
- Farm Progress Show: The Farm Progress Show was considered a success. The AISWCD ended up paying the bill for some pins we ordered as a way to thank us for the help; Becky Taylor
- Fundraisers: Fundraising occurred at AISWCD's Summer Conference- Karla reported we profited \$771.00 on the pork and lottery ticket raffles—which meets our goal of raising enough money to cover our \$500 scholarship.
- Legislative: No report; Sarah Earles & Becky Taylor
- MOU: No report; Sarah Earles & Becky Taylor
- Nominating: Sarah Earles and Becky Taylor will reach out to the nominating committee for the upcoming Executive Board elections.
- Regional Training: No report.
- Scholarship: Scholarship was awarded to Brandon Hartmann at Summer Conference in July. Bethany Ingram asked for clarification of who is eligible for ISWCDEA Scholarship...does it include nieces or nephews? The question was answered by looking up and reading the eligibility from the SCHOLARSHIP section from the ISWCDEA Policies, which states: "Those eligible to apply must be an employee of a SWCD within the state of Illinois who is an active member in good standing of the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Employees Association, an employee active member's spouse or an employee active member's legal dependents."
- Summer Conference: Summer Conference is completed for 2023.
- Website: Some updates and additions have been made to the ISWCDEA website and more are to come; Rhonda Koehne

REGIONAL ISSUES/REQUESTS:

Region 1: Nothing to report

Region 2: Nothing to report

Region 3: Nothing to report

Region 4: Nothing to report

Region 5: Nothing to report

CORRESPONDENCE:

Rhonda Koehne reported she received a "Thank you" note from Ivan Dozier thanking the ISWCDEA for the thoughtful retirement gift he was given and he thanked us for our dedication to conservation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – STATE:

Civil Rights: No report

State Technical Committee: No report

Training, Safety, and Health: No report

Meeting Dates left in 2023

- November – 2nd Teleconference to finish Winter Training Coordination
- December – 2023 Winter Training Dates (Dec. 5th & 6th)

Marilyn Thompson motioned to change the November 2nd Teleconference to October 26th due to Secretary Rhonda Koehne not being able to attend the November 2nd meeting. Jackie Kraft seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mitchell Killough made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marilyn Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Minutes compiled by Rhonda Koehne.