

**AISWCD Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
AISWCD Quarterly Board
Northfield Inn, Springfield, IL
December 9, 2014**

Present:

Myron Kirby, President
Tom Beyers, V. President
Van Bitner, Secretary
Kenny Vosholler, Treasurer
Jerry Snodgrass, Area 1 VP
David McCormick, Area 2 VP
Steve Stierwalt, Area 3 VP
Lee Bunting, LUC 3
Terry Davis, LUC 4
Dan Duval, LUC 5
Randy Molitoris, LUC 6
Joe Rothermel, LUC 7
Jason Anderson, LUC 9
Daniel Doedtman, LUC 10
Steve Fulling, LUC 11
Don Beisiegel, LUC 12
Dale Shumaker, LUC 15
Gerard Fabrizio, LUC 16
Marie Bunting, AISWCD Auxiliary
Sondra Baker, ISWCDEA Co-Chair
Keith Livesay, ISWCDEA for Kara Downin
Kelly Thompson, AISWCD
Gina Bean, AISWCD
Matt Hanauer, AISWCD

Absent:

Lonnie Wilson, Past President, LUC 2
Glen Bowers, Area 4 VP
Barb Klinger, LUC 1
Darrell Roegge, LUC 8
Roger Johnson, LUC 13
Tom Anderson, LUC 14
Kara Downin, ISWCDEA Co-Chair

The meeting was called to order by Myron Kirby at 8:36 am.

Approval of Agenda: Approved with an update by Myron Kirby to add the topic of the Client Gateway to New Business.

Motion: Don Beisiegel 2nd: Lee Bunting Approved: All

Approval of June 2014 Minutes: The minutes were not included in the Board Member packet. Minutes from the June 2014 meeting were shown using a projector. Terry Davis made the comment to change Glen Bowers to say he is from Washington County SWCD.

Motion: Steve Stierwalt 2nd: Steve Fulling Approved: All

OLD BUSINESS:

Dues Update - Gina Bean reported that she and the auditor have not been able to find a spread sheet on Sherry Finn's computer of who has paid and how much they have paid. Since Districts have not been paid since the last time Sherry reported, Gina gave those numbers. 8 Districts have not paid any dues, 4 Districts have only paid the second installment and 2 Districts have paid a portion of their dues. Gina did report that Boone County had paid \$764.55 since Sherry's last report, but until a spreadsheet can be made, Gina does not know which category they are in. Myron Kirby suggested to the Board that if they know of a Districts that has paid and it isn't listed later, to let Gina know. Myron would like to visit all of the non-dues paying Districts in the near future.

604B Grant Update - Matt Hanauer introduced himself to the group and let them know he is there to help Districts implement watershed grants. He has also helped write a RCPP grant for American Farmland Trust and they are working closely with Districts. The IUM is finished but he is continuing to work on basic standard updates. There was discussion from the group and Kelly Thompson reminded everyone that the 604B grant is for outreach and education.

CREP Grant Update - Gina Bean reported that all six positions are full. Sarah Still replaced Jeremy Pruden in Brown county starting on November 1, 2014. All Housing Districts are up to date on Housing District payments. It was asked if the Association could have someone at the next meeting give a partner report that deals with the other CREP in Districts.

2015 State Budget Update - Myron Kirby reported that the budget is unknown with the new Governor. Kelly Thompson has been contact with the transition team.

Policy Book Update - Tom Beyers reported that the policy book has been compiled from the last 10 years' resolutions. Rich Nichols has made recommendations and the book will be looked at during the March Quarterly Board meeting.

MOU Update - Sondra Baker reported on two MOU's. The first is the one the ISWCDEA was involved in with NRCS. She reported that Ivan Dozier has talked with them and he will be looking into a template in the next couple of months.

The second MOU is the one with FFA concerning the Envirothon. It has been signed by both parties. In this agreement FFA will still pay the \$100 for FFA teams to compete at the state competition. They will also be represented on the taskforce, add AISWCD and SWCDs to media outlets they use, and actively look for sponsorships. The Envirothon coordinators will contact FFA as soon as LUC competitions are done so FFA can check if students are current members. After the state competition, all scores will be sent to FFA.

-
NEW BUSINESS:

AISWCD Staff Changes - Myron Kirby reported that Kelly Thompson is the new Executive Director and Gina Bean is the new Administrative Coordinator. He updated the Board on the missing funds situation that took place in September:

He stated that at the September 9, 2014 Executive Committee meeting, Sherry Finn had reported that her last day at AISWCD would be September 30, 2014. Kelly took over as Executive Director on September 16, 2014 and on September 18, 2014, while looking for papers in Sherry's off, she came across a drawer that had over \$20,000 in uncashed checks. Myron was called the next morning and decided at that time to let Sherry be done at AISWCD to take care of personal matters at home. Uncashed checks were deposited that day and Districts where notified if their check had been uncashed for some time. On September 24, 2014, Kelly, Myron, and Kenny Vosholler went to the bank and found that no deposits had been made since May. At this time it was decided to have an exit audit. The executive board was contacted and let known of the matter.

While doing some digging in QuickBooks Gina Bean found a questionable deposit. In QuickBooks it showed that \$350 in cashed had been deposited for the petty cash taken out that year. There was also a check for \$2.00 from Whiteside County SWCD. Gina looked at the bank statement online and it showed no cash had been deposited and that a check from Whiteside County SWCD for \$352.00 had been deposited. The auditors would not have noticed this unless they would have looked at the bank statement specifically. Auction money was not entered so it was untraceable. After having the auditor do more digging, it was found that \$8,241.00 was missing in cash.

Myron Kirby and Kelly Thompson made many attempts to contact Sherry Finn with no success. A certified letter was sent to her home. Myron called her family and that is when Sherry contacted him. She met with Myron, Kelly, Van Bitner, and Gina Bean at the AISWCD office on October 15, 2014. She was given two options. Option one: pay \$10,000 plus \$5,000 for misappropriated funds. Option two: AISWCD could turn in the missing funds to their insurance company, but a police report would have to be filed. Sherry chose option one and met Myron and Kelly that Saturday with \$15,000.00 that was deposited into the account later that day. While there, Sherry also had to sign a letter, which Myron read to the Board, stating that this incident could be known to anyone. She also signed away her last paycheck and two vacation days.

Myron let the Board know that the AISWCD are still trying to get the books in order. They could not find that any checks were written to other banks.

Gerard Fabrizio let the Board know that his Land Use Council was upset about the situation. Myron Kirby let him know that he understood and that when the Board would ask Sherry Finn about matters they were told it was taken care of. If someone steals from AISWCD they will be penalized. This is the reason for the open letter. With this letter being signed, the Board and staff can openly talk about the situation. Myron assured everyone that this is their Association. There will be numbered receipts at the auction this year. There will be a copy for the payee and one for the auditor. Steps are being taken so this does not happen again. There are two signatures on everything money related in the office. Myron will also be meeting with the auditors every year so they are aware of money intake. He also suggested not changing auditors every three years like had been done in the past.

Terry Davis and Lee Bunting commended the staff and Myron Kirby on how the situation was handled and brought to the Districts. It was suggested that expense reports be made easier to read at Quarterly Boards.

Results of Exit Audit - Myron Kirby reported that the auditors were able to find \$8241.00 in missing funds in the form of cash.

2015 Farm Progress Show - Kelly Thompson reported that planning has started for the 2015 Farm Progress Show. The event will take place on September 1, 2, 3 in Decatur, IL.

NACD North Central Region - Tom Beyers reported that Lonnie Wilson will be stepping down as Chairman of the NACD North Central Region. The national event for Envirothon will be taking place in Missouri in 2015.

NACD Annual Meeting

Scholarship Recipient - Kelly Thompson reported that Myron Kirby was the NACD scholarship recipient. He will take \$400.00 off of his registration costs.

NACD Auction Item - Jerry Snodgrass reported that he has a contact in his hometown that will sell the Association a model DEF15 Rifle for \$400.00. It will be engraved with the date, location and NACD logo.

The board made and passed Myron Kirby as the Delegate and Tom Beyers as the Alternate.

Motion: Van Bitner

2nd: Steve Fulling

Approved: All

The motion to close nominations was made by Dan Doedtman and 2nd by Don Beisiegel.

Waters of the US (WOTUS) - Kelly Thompson reported that since comments from Districts were on both sides, the Association could not take a position.

Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy - Myron Kirby let the group know that the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy is out for comment until January 24, 2015. It is located on the AISWCD website and Kelly Thompson has sent an email with links.

Client Gateway - The Board passed a motion for AISWCD and NRCS to enter into an agreement concerning the new Client Gateway and for AISWCD to be the administrator. Myron Kirby reported that Ivan Dozier had met with him, Kelly Thompson, Sondra Baker, and Keith Livesay and informed them that there is a national initiative in updating NRCS's entire computer system. This will allow landowners to electronically let offices know if there is a problem on their land. Through this system, they will also be able to set up appointments, sign contracts, and certify for payments electronically. This is an opportunity for Districts to earn more money.

Ivan Dozier had informed Myron Kirby that he did not have the staff to administer this program and that is why it was being offered to AISWCD. With this agreement, the Districts would receive \$450,000 to be split and AISWCD will be receiving \$50,000 to administer it. If all 97 Districts participate it would allow

each District to earn \$4639.17. This program is a great way to work with partners to gain new money for the Districts.

The motion to allow AISWCD to enter into an agreement with NRCS on the new client gateway and be the administrator of the program was made.

Discussion: Tom Beyers pointed out that this is a nationwide effort. In Illinois, Ivan Dozier has looked at the Association and that is a positive thing.

1st: Kenny Vosholler

2nd: Tom Beyers

Approved: All

PARTNER REPORTS:

IDOA (Steve Chard)- Bob Flider will no longer be the Director of IDOA with the new Governor in place. The transition team has started, but he did not know who will be the new Director. The first of the FY2015 allocations should be in the Districts' accounts soon. He encouraged Districts to comment how they see fit with the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. He also encouraged everyone to attend the Conservation Cropping seminars that will take place early 2015. There are two retirements this year at IDOA. Randy Grove and Alan Gulso will be retiring December 31, 2014. Steve Chard did not know when those two positions would be replaced. As of now, the work load will be spread out.

NRCS (Ivan Dozier)-NRCS will be going from five administration areas to four. There will be 34 District Conservationists in the state. There are no plans right now to close offices. Ivan Dozier reported that they are not under a hiring freeze currently. There are 90 people eligible to retire in the next five years. There are plans to hire 11 students and nine graduates.

Ivan Dozier spoke more on the client gateway stating it was a national initiative to update the computer system. They learned from the pilot program and are willing to try again. With this program, landowners will be able to set up appointments, sign contracts, and certify for payment all electronically. He does not want to bring in a third party to administer the client gateway, and if he had to have his own staff administer it, it would cost \$350,000 to \$400,000. If AISWCD is the administrating party, the Districts will receive \$450,000 to split.

IEPA (Dick Breckenridge)- Director Lisa Bonnett sent her regards and there is a lot of support to keep her on as Director. Comments for the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy are open until January 24, 2015. He passed around handouts, one concerning environment college classes and certificates at Lincoln Land Community College. Kelly Thompson has been asked to be on the advisory board for the education grant.

ISWCDEA (Sondra Baker and Keith Livesay) – The registration fee for this year's Winter Training was raised to \$20. There were five more registrations than last year. All five regions were represented. Keith Livesay reported that he appreciates the Directors and he also thanked the partners.

Envirothon (Sondra Baker)- This year's competition will take place April 29 and 30, 2015. Registrations are due to Sondra Baker by April 10, 2015. All permission slips must be turned in by April 17, 2015. Sondra is currently contacting sponsors. If anyone knows of anyone willing to donate, please contact her. She would like to make Envirothon self-sustaining for the future.

SWCD Insurance (Melissa Cauble)-Reported and handouts are in the packet.

AISWCD Executive Director (Kelly Thompson)- Kelly Thompson will now be doing bi-weekly reports instead of weekly reports. No one on the board could remember that this was ever voted on.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive (Myron Kirby) - Districts not in good standing will not be able to participate in the new agreement with NRCS concerning the Client Gateway. AISWCD will be administering the agreement and

in order for Districts to participate they must be in good standing.

Forestry (Terry Davis) - The new state forester is Tom Wilson. He is the type of person the committee was hoping would get hired when they wrote their letter asking for a new state forester to be selected soon.

Auxiliary (Marie Bunting) - Debbie Ruff from Livingston County SWCD was on the team that reviewed this year's NACD Local Heroes, Your Hardworking Pollinators. During the NACD Annual Meeting, the auxiliary will be taking a tour where the Mardi Gras floats are made. Marie Bunting passed around tickets and cash bags for anyone who wanted to sign up for the quilt raffle.

Illinois Rivers Coordinating Council (Lee Bunting) - The Council has met twice since the June Quarterly Board meetings. They are looking to raise the amount from \$0.10/pound to harvest Asian Carp out of the River. They are also looking at ways to keep the Asian Carp out of Lake Michigan. If anyone would like to join the Illinois, Mississippi, Wabash, or Ohio Rivers Coordinating Councils talk to Kelly Thompson or Lee Bunting.

Communications (Steve Stierwalt) - The committee understands that Legislative Day is a way for everyone to spread the word to Legislators about the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. The committee looked at last year's handouts. Steve Stierwalt reported that Governor Rauner has said he wants to put a farmer in the Director seat at IDOA.

Legislative (Tom Beyers) – Legislative Day 2015 was discussed.

A motion was made that this year's Legislative Day and Quarterly Boards be the following:

March 9, 2015 - Executive Board and FAC

March 10, 2015 – Legislative Day with a reception at Boones Saloon

March 11, 2015 – Full Board meeting

1st: Tom Beyers 2nd: Jerry Snodgrass *Approved:* Discussion took place.

Motion was amended:

March 10, 2015 – Legislative Day with a reception at Boones Saloon and Executive Meeting afterwards.

March 11, 2015 – FAC meetings in the morning and full Board meeting in the afternoon.

1st: Tom Beyers 2nd: Terry Davis *Approved:* All

The Legislative Committee is allowing Mike Hoffmann to handle the Illinois Envirothon Day request.

Education (Jerry Snodgrass) - In the meeting, Valerie Keener reported that the Monarch Butterfly is being considered to be put on the endangered species list. There is also a concern that unless a college is a four year college, continuing education classes will not be put on. She or Jerry Snodgrass will send the office information that can be sent out IL ALL. The Teacher of the Year and George McKibben Scholarship applications have been updated for 2015.

A motion was made to change in the Teacher of the Year application that teachers no longer have to be full time.

1st: Don Beisiegel 2nd: Lee Bunting *Approved:* All

Planning (Van Bitner) - During Van Bitner's report the Board voted that this year's Annual Meeting theme will be "What's the Buzz About Conservation?" It will go along with the NACD poster contest them which is "Local Heroes, Your Hardworking Pollinators."

The Board voted on the following items:

1. Motion to approve the 2015 theme as "What's the Buzz About Conservation?"

1st: Van Bitner 2nd: Steve Fulling *Approved:* All

2. Motion to let planning committee move forward with planning a Sunday conservation tour in

Bloomington to a bee farm

1st: Van Bitner 2nd: Steve Fulling Approved: All

3. *Motion to allow the planning committee to come up with a logo that goes along with the 2015 theme*

1st: Van Bitner 2nd: Steve Stierwalt Approved: ALL

The committee is also looking into a Sunday tour to a bee farm in Bloomington. The Board voted to let the Planning Committee continue researching this idea. The Annual Meeting will be July 27 and July 28, 2015 at the Northfield Inn in Springfield. The Board voted to allow the Planning Committee to come up with a logo that will go along with the theme.

Financials (Kenny Vosholler) - Due to the turnover in the office, the Board tabled the December 31, 2014 financial discussion until the March Quarterly Boards.

Motion made by: Tom Beyers 2nd: Dan Doedtman Approved: All

The 2015 budget was presented and adjustments were made. The budget was accepted as proposed.

Motion made by: Tom Beyers 2nd: Jerry Snodgrass Approved: All

A motion was made to allow Kenny Vosholler, the treasurer, to transfer funds he deemed necessary from the Building Account to the General Fund Account with the creation of a line item showing funds had been taken out and replaced.

Motion made by : Terry Davis 2nd: Steve Stierwalt Approved: All

At this time, the staff were asked to leave the room so raises/bonuses could be discussed. Van Bitner, secretary, took notes.

A motion was made to give a 2.5% salary increase to the CREP employees who have been there longer than a year and for the others to receive the same raise on their one year anniversary.

Motion made by: Lee Bunting 2nd: Don Beisiegel Approved: All

A motion was made for each CREP employee to receive a \$100.00 Christmas bonus.

Motion made by: Tom Beyers 2nd: Dale Shumaker Approved: Discussion

The motion was amended for the following Christmas bonuses:

Sheryl Phillips, Tim Royer, Jake Vancil, and Dan Sahm to receive \$500.00

Catherine Dunn to receive \$250.00

Sarah Still to receive \$100.00

Motion made by: Terry Davis 2nd: Dale Shumaker

A vote was done by a raise of hands: 10 yes, 6 no. The amendment and motion was passed.

Urban Community & Conservation (Jerry Snodgrass and Gerard Fabrizio) - Gerard Fabrizio reported that the North Eastern Illinois Legislator tour had been canceled due to low attendance. He reported that AISWCD had paid \$331.22 for mailings that were sent out.

AREA VP REPORTS:

Area 1 (Jerry Snodgrass) - No Report

Area 2 (David McCormick) - No Report

Area 3 (Steve Stierwalt) - No Report

Area 4 (Glen Bowers) - Tom Beyers reported that he and Glen Bowers had been at a meeting where Glen Bowers commented on how the office and directors handled the issue of missing funds. He thought the office handled it as best as they could. At this meeting there was also a speaker on Gypsum.

The meeting was adjourned by Myron Kirby at 1:33pm.

1st: Terry Davis 2nd: Dan Doedtman Approved: All

Minutes taken by : Gina Bean, AISWCD Administrative Coordinator