

Joint Committee Meeting

June 14, 2019 | Illinois Department of Agriculture Auditorium | Springfield, Illinois

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 A.M. by AISWCD President Steve Stierwalt. Roll Call of Committee Chairpersons was conducted by Dale Shumaker, Secretary. The Consent Agenda Items including the Meeting Minutes of the March 4, 2019 Committee Meetings, Agenda, and Written Reports were provided.

Legislative Committee:

Committee Members Present:

Tom Beyers, Chairperson
Bill Litterell
Dale Shumaker
Randy Molitoris

Staff/Advisors/Guests Present:

Grant Hammer, AISWCD
Sue Davis, Minute Taker
Terina Coffey, ISWCDEA Co-Chair
Mike Hoffmann, Lobbyist

Staff Report - Grant Hammer stated that Lobby Day went well as did the Legislative Reception. He stated that there was a series of meetings with the Governor's office and lawmakers before the Budget was passed.

Lobbyist Report - Mike Hoffman stated that there is a Budget and a Capitol Plan. SWCD's were in the Budget at level funding at \$7.5 million for Operations and Cost Share. He was disappointed that Health Insurance did not get covered in the new Budget but that the groundwork needs to be set ahead of time for next year; need more support from lawmakers and Governor's office. In the Capital Budget there is 20 million in Cost Share; some to IDNR and some for CREP. The Governor's office supported this and this is for 6 years.

For CREP, there was \$37 million re- appropriated for CREP out of the Capital Bill. And also \$20 million to IDNR for CREP and some to IDOA for Cost Share; this is a 6-year figure.

HB 2737 defines Soil Health and was passed; Soil Health is now part of the District Act.

Michelle Bloomquist is the new CREP Program Manager at IDNR; she has limited knowledge about the program but has been learning the program. She has been starting to work on the issues and violations; she is working on new contracts with Districts because the ones previously have all expired. Director Sullivan gave huge support to the District and he testified to try and get our Health Insurance covered this year.

2019 AISWCD Legislator of the Year Award - Grant stated that Senator Scott Bennett of Champaign had ran the Nutrient Loss Resolution and the Soil Health Bill this year. A motion was

made by Bill Littrell and seconded by Dale Shumaker to recommend Senator Bennett for Legislator of the Year, motion carried.

2019 AISWCD Friend of Conservation Award - It was presented to nominate Kris Reynolds of American Farmland Trust for the Friend of Conservation Award. A motion was made by Dale Shumaker and seconded by Randy Molitoris, motion carried.

E-Advocacy Tools - Grant discussed the Voter Voice program, a platform that would be used to work with legislators and track legislative issues. He was not asking for action to be taken at this time but is working with Alan Howard on the Budget to see if this could be included. The cost would be around \$2,500 at the lowest level and there is about \$5,000 in the Budget for something like this.

Resolutions:

- 2019-1: Promote No-Till, Strip-Till and Cover Crops. Resolution was submitted and approved by Iroquois County Soil and Water Conservation District and approved by the Kankakee River Basin Commission
- 2019-2: Explore through survey and other means the viability and desire to move the Annual Meeting and Summer Training Conference to a winter date. Presented by the Champaign County SWCD.
- 2019-3: AISWCD to assess and provide a draft of the Resolutions, Policy, and Procedures Manual to the Board of Directors for adoption at 2020 Annual Meeting. Presented by the Champaign County SWCD.
- 2019-4: AISWCD Require LUC leaders notify and transmit results of LUC Level elections to the ASIWCD for documentation and outreach to new leaders. Presented by the Champaign County SWCD.

Education Committee:

President Steve Stierwalt led the meeting in Jerry Snodgrass's absence.

Staff Report – Grant Hammer reported the staff has stayed engaged in supporting the awards this spring. Efforts were re-doubled. He also thanked Valerie Keener (DNR) for her help in passing the word along for “Teacher of the Year.”

McKibben Scholarship/Teacher of the Year - Grant Hammer reported there had been good applicants for the McKibben Scholarship and Teacher of the Year. Bill Hammes from Sherrard High School (Rock Island County) was chosen for Teacher of the Year and Megan Finfrock from

DeWitt County was chosen for the McKibben Award. Steve Stierwalt asked for recommendation for approval to the board. Dale Shumaker reported there was another candidate he would like consideration on for Teacher of the Year. Dale recommended Brent Miller from Century High School in Ullin, Illinois (Pulaski County). Dale thought Miller scored as high or higher on the score sheet. It was suggested that two awards be given for Teacher of the Year. The board will vote on this in the afternoon. Tara Hopkins reported she had contacted Audubon Society on whether they will be a sponsor of the Teacher of the Year Award again this year; she is waiting to hear back from them.

Planning Committee:

Dale Shumaker, Chairman, thanked those working behind the scenes.

Staff Report – Grant Hammer reported the key volunteers are making good progress. Partners are also being engaged. The AISWCD has 11-12 exhibitors to date. There are a couple new sponsorships. All the sessions will be in the same room. Terina Coffey reported there are approximately 190 people registered to date, which does not include agencies or speakers. The speakers have all been notified, and most have confirmed. A DJ has been contracted for light music during Farm Family dinner, music after dinner and after the auction. Kenny Hawthorne has agreed to auctioneer the auction. Tara Hopkins updated the group on the speaker list. Forestry Award - Dale Shumaker reported he had scored the Forestry Award applicants (2). Both entries had an approved forestry plan. He felt William Calvert should receive the award. This will be voted on by the board in the afternoon.

Farm Family – A committee including partners will be appointed to judge the Farm Family.

Financial Committee:

Dan Duval was not present. Alan Howard gave the financial report. Financial Reports were passed around to those present. Alan reported 88 districts have paid their dues.

Barb Klinger made a motion to adjourn the joint committee meeting, seconded by Randy Molitoris. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:57 am.

Minutes taken by:

Cindy Moon & Sue Davis