

**Board of Directors Minutes
December Quarterly Boards
Northfield Inn, Springfield, IL
December 8, 2015 @ 8:30 am**

Present:

Myron Kirby, President
Tom Beyers, Vice President
Van Bitner, Secretary
Kenny Vosholler, Treasurer
Jerry Snodgrass, Area 1 VP
David McCormick, Area 2 VP
Steve Stierwalt, Area 3 VP
Barb Klinger, LUC 1
Terry Bogner, LUC 2
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
Roger Johnson, LUC 13
Tom Anderson, LUC 14
Dale Shumaker, LUC 15
Gerard Fabrizius, LUC 16
Kelly Thompson, AISWCD
Gina Bean, AISWCD
Matt Hanauer, AISWCD
Marquitta Thomas, AISWCD
Marie Bunting, Auxiliary President
Spring Duffey, ISWCDEA
Thad Eshleman, ISWCDEA
Sondra Baker, Envirothon

Absent:

Lonnie Wilson, Past President
Glen Bowers, Area 4 VP
Mike Hoffmann, Lobbyist

LUC 8 is currently vacant

Myron Kirby called the meeting to order at 8:35 am and Van Bitner took roll.

Approve Agenda

1st = Roger Johnson 2nd = Tom Beyers Carried = All

Approve June 2015 Minutes – Myron Kirby asked for a motion to approve the June 2015 Board of Directors minutes and the September 2015 Executive committee minutes. The Executive committee minutes were not available during that committee meeting and were passed out before the Board of Directors meeting to be examined.

1st = Tom Beyers 2nd = Dan Doedtman Carried = All

Partner Reports:

- A. IDOA – Warren Goetsch (Deputy Director) reported that there is a new IDOA Director, Raymond Poe. Grant Hammer is the new Chief of Staff. There is still no Illinois state budget at this time. There was a bill passed to release some funds to IDOA but SWCD funds were not included in that bill. IDOA has put a proposal together for the FY17 budget that includes a funding level for SWCDs that was the same as the FY15 level. He knows the importance of work and SWCDs are a full partner of IDOA. He is feeling positive that SWCDs are working to restructure and are being open minded. Steve Chard also reported for IDOA. He informed the group that Mike Rahe would be retiring on December 31, 2015. There are currently ten employees in the Bureau of Land and Water. He thanked districts for getting the money spent for cost share this year. He reported that several district audits

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- are overdue. They were due on October 15, 2015 and if those have not been turned in to IDOA they need to be as soon as possible. IDOA will know more about the Region Representative positions after the FY2016 budget passes.
- B. FSA – Rick Graden reported that they are currently fully staffed. The general CRP sign up started December 1, 2015 and ends February 26, 2016. This is the first general sign up that was not only taking place for two weeks. Continuous CRP signup is helping the nutrient loss efforts. Currently cannot approve any CREP. There is no money so people are having to be denied.
 - C. AISWCD Auxiliary—Marie Bunting reported the auxiliary had been talking about their 2016 summer conference sessions, country store, and bake sale. She passed around an envelope for individuals to purchase raffle tickets for the annual quilt.
 - D. ISWCDEA – Spring Duffey and Thad Eshleman reported on winter training and their new positions as co-chairs. During winter training, ISWCDEA honored Mike Rahe, Melissa Cauble, Annyce Winters, and Megan Andrews. Renee Weitekamp was this year’s Employee of the Year award winner. Spring and Thad then passed around a sheet from ISWCDEA concerning the current funding situation.
 - E. Envirothon - Sondra Baker reported that this year’s Envirothon will take place April 27 and April 28, 2016 at Allerton Park. She has had a good outcome on the letters of intent. Letters will be going out this month to sponsors. If anyone has leads on sponsors they are to contact Sondra. There will be no changes to the MOU with FFA this year. The National Envirothon will take place in Ontario, Canada this year.
 - F. SWCD Insurance - Melissa Cauble was not in attendance so Annyce Winters reported on her behalf. They currently have one district late on payment. Next month there will be no cushion in the account for late payments. They have been in contact with CMS and the group standing should not be hurt because of the current funding.
 - G. AISWCD Executive Director - Kelly Thompson introduced the new AISWCD communications intern, Marquitta Thomas. She informed the group that she has been in constant contact with the AISWCD board members and took the time to remind the board that the mission of AISWCD is to “represent and empower the 97 soil and water conservation districts.”

Old Business

SWCD Dues Update - Gina Bean reported that with no new money coming in from IDOA to the districts, there has not been any new invoices sent out since the last meeting. Districts that did not pay last year’s first allocation of dues include Adams, Kankakee, and Pope/Hardin. Districts that did not pay last year’s second allocation of dues include Adams, Kankakee, Macon, and Pope/Hardin.

Grants Update

604B - Matt Hanauer reported that the Illinois Urban Manual Technical Review Committee is currently working on several standards. Sediment Forebay and Temporary Stream Crossing standards have been passed by both committees and are currently being approved by the IEPA. Erosion Control Blanket standard update has passed through public review and is being looked at one last time before being sent to the IEPA. Technical Review Committee and Steering Committee meetings will take place on December 10th and December 15th, respectively.

The current grant period ends July 2016, but another will begin at that time through July 2017.

CREP - Gina Bean reported that Sarah Still, located in Brown County, worked her last day on November 30, 2015. AISWCD is currently in the hiring process for this position. Brian Rennecker is the newest CRS and is located in Sangamon County. He began work in early November. The housing payments for May through October have gone out. Kelly Thompson signed new housing agreements with all of the districts housing a CRS.

NRS Agreement - Kelly Thompson reported that new plans of work for CRP have gone out. This agreement will be a 75/25 split. Deadlines for paperwork will correspond with FSA and NRCS deadlines. The new Administrative Assistance contracts will go out to districts before June.

FY 2016 State Budget Update – Myron Kirby reported that there is still currently no movement with the state budget.

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Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Taskforce Update – Tom Beyers encouraged districts to put on roadshows. He talked about the survey that went out asking districts if they were hosting a roadshow and that 34 districts indicated that they would be hosting.

Precision Conservation Management Pilot Program Update—Kelly Thompson reported that she talks to Laura Gentry from the Corn Growers Association frequently concerning this topic. They are ready to hire two employees. A question from the floor was asked to have Kelly see if district staff could share those duties and be paid. Kelly will talk to Laura about this.

New Business

North Central Region NACD Meeting (January 13, 2015)

A motion was made to send Myron Kirby to the 2016 North Central Region NACD Meeting.

1st = Terry Davis 2nd = Lee Bunting Carried = All

NACD Annual Meeting

A motion was made to send Tom Beyers to the 2016 NACD Annual Meeting.

1st = Lee Bunting 2nd = Steve Fulling Carried = All

NACD Auction Item – A hat was passed around to collect money for an auction item to be sent to the NACD auction. Any extra funds would be used for the 2016 AISWCD summer conference auction.

A motion was made to vote not to send a rifle to the NACD auction.

1st = Gerard Fabrizio 2nd = There was not a second

A motion was made to donate a rifle to the NACD auction.

1st = Kenny Vosholler 2nd = Jerry Snodgrass Carried = A vote was done by a raise of hand with one person voting no. Motion passed.

A total of \$638.00 was collected and counted by Tom Beyers and Kenny Vosholler.

State Funding—Myron Kirby stressed that he has been fighting for the \$7.5 million for districts when he goes to meetings. He understands that there is a direct correlation between the staffing and soil loss. He talked about a meeting he had with the Lt. Governor and how she said his team did a good job presenting at the local units of government meeting in Peoria.

Additional Items

Steve Stierwalt came to the podium and had a packet passed out to all board members. He, Terry Bogner, Lee Bunting, and Jerry Snodgrass have been meeting trying to make a plan for the current funding situation. One goal they have is to come up with a long term dedicated source of funding. He suggested that they shift from talking about amounts of employees to what deliverables districts can offer and how important they are to conservation.

A motion was made to adopt a long term dedicated funding within a year with a set timeline.

1st = Steve Stierwalt 2nd = Jerry Snodgrass Carried by all with the approved amendment.

There was discussion on the motion.

An amendment was made to the motion to establish a draft by March quarterly boards with a full plan by summer conference.

1st = Terry Davis 2nd = Steve Stierwalt Carried = All

Thad Eshleman, ISWCDEA co-chair, spoke up and said he would like one employee to be included from each region for input.

Steve Stierwalt continued and talked about the idea of “Super Districts.” He expressed that they (AISWCD) have been told they (Districts as a whole) need to look different for funding. With a “Super Districts” plan, districts would subject to an accountability factor. Districts could work together and share resources and staff that are specialized in certain categories.

AISWCD President, Myron Kirby, officially appointed a taskforce to work on a plan for funding and to report back to the full board. The members he appointed included Jerry Snodgrass, Lee Bunting, Terry Bogner, and Steve Stierwalt who would act as Chairman.

Gerard Fabrizio asked Myron Kirby to add five employees and himself to the taskforce. Myron stated he would take it under consideration.

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A motion was made to work on a plan and actively encourage districts to work together and come up with their own multi-county cooperation agreements.

1st = Steve Stierwalt 2nd = Terry Davis

There was discussion on the motion. Myron Kirby stepped to the side and gave Vice President, Tom Beyers, the floor.

A motion was made to table this motion until a future meeting.

1st = Myron Kirby 2nd = Roger Johnson

A vote with a raise of hands was conducted. Yes=12 No=8 Motion Passed to table previous motion.

Committee Reports

Forestry - David McCormick asked Van Bitner, Planning Committee Chairman, if the forestry committee could lead a session at summer conference. Van agreed. This year's theme will be focused on trees and forestry.

Focus Area Committee Reports

Communications - Steve Stierwalt reported that most of the time the committee had talked about the new plan for funding.

Education - Jerry Snodgrass reported that Valerie Keener from IDNR had been in attendance and she stated that this year the Teacher of the Year winners received a grant for a field trip. One of the teachers has already taken advantage of this grant.

Envirothon - Sondra Baker attended the committee meeting and asked that a new rule be adopted and enforced saying any LUC sending a winning team to the state level must also send a representative to volunteer at the event.

A motion was made to say any LUC sending a winning team to the state level must also send a representative to volunteer at the state Envirothon competition.

1st = Jerry Snodgrass 2nd = Roger Johnson Carried = All

Planning - Van Bitner reported that many items for the planning stages of the 2016 summer conference had been discussed. The committee is thinking about buffets for lunches and keeping a plated meal for dinner. The committee also talked further about the 2016 Twilight Parade that takes place the first day of the Illinois State Fair.

A motion was made to hold the 2016 summer conference July 25, 2016 and July 26, 2016.

1st = Van Bitner 2nd = Steve Fulling Carried = All

A motion was made to make the 2016 theme "You, Me, and Trees"

1st = Van Bitner 2nd = Jason Anderson Carried = All

Legislative - Tom Beyers reported that a date for the 2016 legislative day has not been set but it is possible it will be taking place the first week of March. AISWCD will host a reception similar to what they have the past couple of years.

A motion was made to schedule and plan a legislative day event the first week of March with a reception afterwards.

1st = Tom Beyers 2nd = Roger Johnson Carried = All

The executive committee will continue to reach out to both sides of legislators to seek their current positions on SWCDs.

Urban Community & Conservation - Gerard Fabrizius reported that there were only three members at the Urban committee. Matt Hanauer had given an update during the grant portion of the meeting. NRCS is giving EQIP funds to northeast counties.

Myron Kirby asked that everyone encourage landowners to enter into Client Gateway.

Financials - Kenny Vosholler

A motion was made to accept the financials.

1st = Roger Johnson 2nd = Lee Bunting Carried = All

A motion was made to accept the amended budget.

1st = Roger Johnson 2nd = Steve Fulling Carried = All

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Employee Raises/Bonuses

A motion was made to go into a closed session to discuss employee salaries and raises.

1st = Steve Fulling 2nd = Barb Klinger Carried = All

During closed session, only AISWCD board members were present. Raises and end of year bonuses were discussed for each employee individually. Van Bitner took the following notes:

A motion was made to approve the grant employees' raises and salaries.

1st = Jerry Snodgrass 2nd = Barb Klinger Motion Passed

A motion was made to approve the AISWCD employees' raises and salaries.

1st = Roger Johnson 2nd = Dan Duval Motion Passed

A motion was made to exit the closed session.

1st = Steve Fulling 2nd = Randy Molitoris Motion Passed

AISWCD employees, SWCD employees, and guests were asked to rejoin the meeting.

A motion was made to approve amounts discussed in the closed session.

1st = Jerry Snodgrass 2nd = Roger Johnson Motion Passed

Area VP Reports

Area 1 - Jerry Snodgrass asked that AISWCD come up with an amount districts should have in their bank accounts when they close their offices. This was brought up in the executive committee and it was decided there that AISWCD will make a list of items districts should be thinking about. Every district is different so a set number cannot be decided on by AISWCD, but it is hoped that districts can look at the list and consider what is best for them.

Area 2 - David McCormick asked if districts have to pay dues to AISWCD to participate in NRCS agreements once funds come in from the state. Myron Kirby answered him and said yes and that is the current AISWCD policy.

Area 3 - Steve Stierwalt reported that he had attended the recent Farm Bureau annual meeting in Chicago.

Area 4 - Glen Bowers was not present but Steve Fulling reported on his behalf. Steve mentioned that LUC 11 has two districts that are struggling to keep their doors open currently.

Other: A question came up concerning the administration for Client Gateway. It was stressed that Angela Biggs had reported that the Administrative Assistance was all of the administrative work from start to finish of the contract.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm

1st = Barb Klinger 2nd = Don Beisiegel Carried = All

Minutes taken by: Gina Bean (AISWCD Administrative Coordinator) and Van Bitner (AISWCD Secretary).

Minutes transcribed by: Gina Bean (AISWCD Administrative Coordinator)