

**ISWCDEA Board Meeting Minutes**  
**August 5, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. by Becky Taylor.

**ROLL CALL:**

Roll Call was taken by Rhonda Koehne.

Region 1: Karla Smith, Richard Stewart, and Joey Deloian were present. Lorraine Foelske 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 and Kristie Cooley were present. Mitchell Killough was absent.

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

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

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

NRCS Advisor: Eric Gerth was absent.

**AGENDA:**

Becky Taylor suggested moving the topic of the meeting Theme until after we discussed possible sessions and speakers. She also suggested we move discussing the meals further down the agenda as well. Members present agreed both were good suggestions, so they were moved to later slots on the agenda.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Winter Training**

Board members reviewed and discussed the comments collected during last year's Winter Training session. Comments that were discussed included:

- Several employees have asked about moving Winter Training to Crowne Plaza. ISWCDEA has discussed this a number of times, but having the meeting at the Crowne Plaza is cost prohibitive, as it costs roughly twice as much as Northfield Inn.
- There were a number of positive comments about having the Annual Meeting at breakfast. We should continue that for this year.
- There were also a number of comments that the Scavenger Hunt was fun. We could repeat that again this year.
- There were enough comments about Partners having handouts for their reports to suggest that to the Partners for this year.
- There were several comments about how some of the sessions needed more time.
- There were also several comments about not having speakers/presentations during the meals so we could visit.
- There were a few comments showing disappointment that the agency employees didn't stick around for the Employee Forum. The board discussed that in the past some SWCD employees have been disappointed that the agency people were in the room during this time, so it is hard to please everyone. It was also pointed out that the agency people were out in the hall and were asked to come back in to answer questions. IDOA and NRCS employees came in the room when we requested it.
- Some of the newer employees were requesting to have sessions to help them network with one another.

The board members were asked to disclose any ideas they had or they had received from others in their Region for Winter Training session topics or speakers. The list of topics presented by the group were:

- NRI Reports and how to complete them
- IDOA's new Budget and Quarterly Report form
- Partner Programs (with no explanation of what this means)
- Local Work Groups
- Calendar of SWCD activities that need to be done—by month
- FOIA & OMA requirements
- SAM & GATA requirements
- Grant writing—such as NACD technical grants or a panel based group of various types of grant
- New employee session
- NRCS computer seat waiver (explanation of process—including the “new” process they are working on)
- PFC, IDOA's RCPP, and SSRP processes –start to finish

- Soil Health information—general information
- Cultural Resources – Archeologist explain her process (too long) and define more clearly what producers can expect to have to do
- Acronyms and basic district policies
- Comptrollers Report
- Networking – AISWCD, NRCS, Regional Contacts
- Employee Forum – with topics suggested ahead of time by employees

The board members grouped some of the topics into session suggestions that could cover multiple topics and decided which topics to try to cover during the upcoming Winter Training. Then the board members were asked for volunteers to be in charge of organizing each of the sessions—including contacting potential speakers and/or finding the necessary resources to be presented on the topic(s).

A theme for the 2023 Winter Training was discussed. There were two ideas presented:

- Illinois SWCD Employees—You ARE important
- One Team, One Goal

The Theme was voted on, and it was decided to use “One Team, One Goal” as the theme.

Marilyn Thompson motioned to keep the registration fee for the 2023 Winter Training at \$25 per person. Karla Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The board members discussed the menu options for the luncheon on Tuesday and the Annual Meeting breakfast on Wednesday. It was decided to choose the option of building our own buffet—with 3 entrée selections—for Tuesday’s lunch. The three entrée selections will be lemon chicken, vegetable lasagna, and sliced beef served with garlic mashed potatoes and green beans with bacon for sides and cobblers for dessert. It was then decided to serve the same breakfast as was served last year for the Wednesday’s breakfast.

Board members discussed the list of other duties that will need to be completed to organize the training and volunteers selected tasks they were willing to be responsible for completing.

Jackie Kraft made a motion to move forward with the Winter Training plans as discussed. Rich Stewart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Announcements**

Sarah Earles reminded ISWCDEA Regions 1, 3, and 5 that this year would be the year for them to conduct elections of their ISWCDEA Representatives. Questions were raised about how to properly conduct the election, so a discussion of the election process followed. Board members were reminded the regional elections should be completed 45 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

Becky Taylor and Sarah Earles informed the other board members that they had a sign-up sheet for volunteers to help work the conservation booth at the Farm Progress Show, August 29-31 in Decatur, Illinois, if anyone was interested in doing so.

Karla Smith motioned to pay for the representative’s lunch from the ISWCDEA funds. Rhonda Koehne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Remaining ISWCDEA Meeting Dates for 2023**

- September – 7<sup>th</sup> Teleconference
- November – 2<sup>nd</sup> Teleconference to finish Winter Training Coordination
- December – 2023 Winter Training Dates (Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>)

Jackie Kraft made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Woodyatt seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Minutes compiled by Rhonda Koehne.