

Illinois Forestry Association

Board of Directors Meeting

May 11, 2007

Meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by President Ray Herman in Champaign at the NRCS office.

Members present: Ray Herman, Kurt Bobsin, Susan Romano, Mary Duff, Rollie Spaniol, Bob Sloan, Mike Kiefer, Lee Rife, JB Gates, Kathy McTighe, Debbie Jones, Roy Bailey, and Jay Hayek. Absent were Joe Newcomb, Stephanie Brown and Dave Gillespie.

Herman's Comments

Ray stated a question has been raised if the organization is going too fast, he feels it is not. Ray spoke about the commitment to IFA that he expects from directors because they hold elected positions.

Review of Agenda

Ray stated questions on written reports should have been a sub bullet point under Old Business. Ray stated no reports would be given unless a written report was received. Kurt Bobsin stated work plans needed to be modified but work should continue on the plans outlined in the papers.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from February 27, 2007 should state 2007 as the year not 2006. Lee Rife made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by JB Gates, MCVV*.

Minutes from March 20, 2007; Bob Sloan made a motion to approve minutes with correction of C-Far's spelling, seconded by Lee Rife, MCVV. Discussion was held on C-Far.

Minutes from April 17, 2007; Mary Duff made a motion to approve minutes, seconded by Bob Sloan, MCVV.

Minutes from May 2, 2007,; Susan Romano made a motion to approve minutes, seconded by Mary Duff, MCVV.

Discussion was held on how Jeff Riley's was recommended as a lobbyist to serve IFA. Ray explained he contacted a few people while Susan Romano was contacting people; Ray was recommended Jeff Riley after Mike Hoffman declined.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Bob Sloan gave the board of directors the Treasurer's report. Kurt Bobsin asked about \$1000 in the other income part. Bob explained this was a monetary donation. JB Gates made a motion to approve treasurer's report, Lee Rife seconded, MCVV.

Old Business

Membership

Ray stated retention of 2006 members is currently around 55%. For 2007 279 members have paid dues and are considered active members. Ray stated he would like to see the membership retention rate increase. Ray asked for discussion on how to increase membership. Mike Kiefer asked for assistance and feedback on a letter he drafted. Ray asked the regional representatives if they are happy with the membership numbers, the reps stated they are not pleased with the number. JB Gates explained Region 4 directors have made calls to past members and asking for them to rejoin or why they do not want to renew their membership. Discussion was held.

Discussion was held on dues dates. Questions were raised how members who sign up late in the calendar year should be handled. Ray stated he would like to consider members who joined in the September through December of 2006 paid members for 2007. Discussion was held on ways to retain members while accomplishing new membership growth.

Position Papers

Ray stated the decision was reached by the executive committee that the current position papers need to be updated, and reworked to ensure accuracy. The tax assessment position paper is in need of revisions and revising. Kurt Bobsin explained the position paper was developed in early 2006 and as time has passed the need for revisions has increased. Kurt explained the changes to the woodland tax assessment position paper. Discussion was held on changes. Rollie made a motion to approve the position paper with one change as presented, Susan Romano seconded. Discussion was held. MCVV.

4% Tax assessment fee position paper. Discussion was held on the proposed changes to the position paper. An additional column will be added to table on page two to include actual sweeps in addition to authorized sweeps. Discussion was held.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:21p and was scheduled to reconvene at 1p.

The meeting was called back to order at 1:01p.m.

Legislative Committee

Mary Duff introduced Jeff Riley as the new IFA lobbyist and gave a brief history of his background and how he came to represent IFA. Jeff Riley explained he will take on a different position no later than July and will direct IFA on ways to continue moving forward with a replacement. Jeff gave a description of plans he has for the brief time he will work with IFA. Discussion held on legislators to meet with to discuss IFA needs and concerns.

A lobby day for the association was discussed. Ray stated a one page fact sheet will be drafted to give to legislators. Discussion was held on bills and possibilities of get something through during the current session.

Maps and Legislative booklets were passed out. Susan Romano gave an update on the Legislative Committee. Susan would like the association to conduct interviews for the applicants for the upcoming opening for a lobbyist. Discussion was held on ways to get members to call their legislators with a unified message in support of IFA goals.

Ray stated he has contacted other groups to support IFA's position, in these efforts he has some success getting support. Bob Sloan stated he had contact with forest groups and organizations about working together.

Susan Romano stated she is working on an Emerald Ash Bore position paper, but it might not be needed as the legislators might pass the current proposed bill.

Jay Hayek spoke on bills of interest for the IFA and gave background information. Susan Romano made a motion to support the amendment SB 281 to state funds go directly to the Forestry Development Fund instead of Wildlife and Fish Fund, seconded by Mary Duff. Discussion was held. MCVV.

Jay agreed to write a letter to Senator Sullivan stating IFA's position on SB 281 and mention the State Forest Act and it's wording in regards to state foresters and staff.

Jay stated SB 1617 the Emerald Ash Borer Revolving Loan program & Fund should have the support of IFA. Mike Kiefer made a motion to support SB 1617, seconded by Debbie Ruff. Discussion held. MCVV. Kurt stated letters to legislators on IFA viewpoint should be copied to our partners so recognize the group is active. Susan asked if members should be copied, Ray thought the website and newsletter are a better way.

Mike Kiefer made a motion to send e-mail information to members and not rely on "snail" mail and phone calls to communicate the workings of IFA, seconded by JB Gates, MCVV.

Rollie Spaniol made a motion to support SB 1638 seconded by Roy. Discussion was held. MCVV.

Discussion was held on SB 0117 about changing this "shell" bill to reflect 4% tax assessment.

Discussion continued on position papers. Kurt continued reviewing position papers. Kurt will revise the position paper and send to the board electronically for input and review. Discussion was held.

Kurt moved to the third position paper and stated a small amount of changes were done. The board reviewed changes of the staffing position paper. Discussion was held. Motion made to approve the changes and revisions to the position paper by Debbie Jones, seconded by Mike Kiefer. MCVV.

Bob Sloan stated JoDaviness County is holding a workshop that IFA is co-sponsoring and has asked for monetary help. Bob Sloan recommended \$200 as monetary support for the event which will be held in late September. Debbie Jones made a motion to co-sponsor and provide \$200 to reduce cost of workshop, Mike Kiefer seconded. MCVV.

Meeting adjourned at 3:14p.

Respectively submitted,

Sarah Dillman

*MCVV – Motion Carried, Voice Vote