



Great Lakes Region 4 Regional Board Meeting
Pokagon State Park Interpretive/Nature Center
450 Lane 100 Lake James, Angola, IN 46703
January 11, 2019
Called to order at 9:08am

Present: Deb Nofzinger, Jenn Kirts, Michelle Fournier, Jen McDowell, Jason Szostek, Cookie Ferguson, Nora Sindelar, Laurel Zoet, Aaron Douglass, Kaitie Janecke Soltesz, Jill Vance, Bob Dispenza, Becky Parkin, Renell Roebuck, Angie Manuel, Vicki Basman

Not present: Kelley Bentley, Will Gosnell

Executive Committee Reports

Director Report – Deb Nofzinger

- **National Update**

- Check out the most recent issue of Legacy to see the Region 4 National Award winners and our Shining Stars.
- The National Workshop was held in New Orleans, which was amazing. We really got a taste of the New Orleans culture. The World War II museum was outstanding.
- The 2019 National Conference will be in Denver in November.
- National office did a matching gift promotion during the National Workshop. Region 4 made a \$500 donation, which was matched dollar-for-dollar by National. Other Organizational Units contributed more, but we do have some more financial risk (workshops) than other OUs. The goal is to pay it off so that those dollars (interest) could be used for scholarships and grants to support members' attendance at conferences and certifications.

- **Procedures Manual**

- Deb has passed out positions and committee descriptions and has asked everyone to edit their position and return them to her before you leave the meeting today. Please edit them based on your experience with the position and those things that are specific to our region. She will compile all of this and update the Region 4 Procedures Manual.
- Moving forward, the **Procedures Manual** will be reviewed and updated **annually**.
- Review the pre-requirements for Board positions and involvement. Currently to be considered for the Director position an individual must meet a number of requirements including having served as Deputy Director, Committee Chair, RIW Committee involvement and attending 4 RIW and 2 NIW in the last 5 years. The information from National shows a preferred qualifications: **. Deb added previously served as a member of the executive board, previously served as a member or chair of one or more standing committees, and assisted and or served as a chair member of a regional workshop.
 - It was proposed to swap the member of the executive board to be a member of an executive committee (not necessarily Region 4 board) or have professional management experience.
 - Motion: Make an ad hoc committee to propose the qualifications for the Executive Committee and the process for consideration to run for these positions. Propose these

prior to the March Board Meeting and discuss at that meeting. Moved: Jenn Kirts;
Second: Becky Parkin. Committee will be: Becky Parkin, Jenn Kirts, Renell Roebuck,
Angie Manuel. Passed unanimously.

- The other piece is to resurrect the Nominating Committee with a previous Director as the chair and a member from each state/province, possibly from the committee chairs and board.

Deputy Director Report – Jen McDowell

- **2019 RIW – South Bend, Indiana at the Century Center and Doubletree by Hilton – “Navigating the Waters of Interpretation”**
 - Co-Chairs: Garry Harrington, Hannah Teshka, and Scott Beam
 - Mobiles: Birding Indiana Dunes; Day at the Indiana Dunes; Experience Elkhart County: Gardens, Grist, and Grub; Fighting Irish, Freshwater and Fish; Hike and Paddle Beautiful Potato Creek State Park; Navigating Through Land and Air: St. Patrick’s County Park & Edge Adventures South Bend
 - The committee received more proposals than session times for concurrent sessions. The committee send out acceptances on December 19, 2018.
 - They have received sponsorships from the following organizations: Visit SB Mish (\$2400), Taylor Studios (\$500), Indiana State Parks (\$480), Indiana Master Naturalist (\$400), Acorn Naturalist (\$250), Wellfield Botanical (\$250), Wil Redding RARN (\$100), Kroger (\$40 gift card), Fresh Thyme (donation of fresh fruit), additional in-kind donations, waived fees, passenger vans.
 - The following items were donated for the auction: Nature Watch (gift card or basket), Acorn Naturalist (\$50 and \$100 gift card), United Federal Credit Union (gift basket)
 - The Registration Booklet is in draft form and was shared at the meeting.
 - Registration will be \$300 and online registration will begin soon (hoping for 1/23).
 - The committee members will be added to the GLR4 Dashboard on the National site so they can access registration information.
 - The next committee meeting will be Monday, 1/14.
- **RIW 2020 – Cleveland, Ohio at the Crowne Plaza Cleveland at Playhouse Square**
 - Co-chairs are Becky Parkin and Renell Roebuck
 - Proposed dates are April 20-24
 - They are currently working with National on the hotel contract and then they will recruit committee members.
- **RIW 2021 – Grand Rapids, Michigan**
 - We made the decision to skip Ontario in 2021 as we have not yet identified a host.
 - People interested in being involved so far are Kaitie Janecke Soltesz (Blandford Nature Center), Jeanette Henderson (Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve), Melinda Robinett (John Ball Zoo)
 - These folks will be meeting with Experience Grand Rapids in late January or early February. Experience Grand Rapids reached out to us in May about hosting the conference.
 - It may be held at the Calvin College Prince Conference Center.
- **Future Years**
 - **2022** – The National Interpretive Workshop will be located in Cleveland, OH so we will not host an RIW this year.
 - **RIW 2023** – Indiana
 - **RIW 2024** – Toronto, Ontario - Possible Chair Kelly Bentley (Toronto Zoo)
 - **RIW 2025** – Ohio
 - **RIW 2026** – Michigan

- Something we may consider is the timing of the conference. It's hard to know if there's a "best" time, but we don't want to get too late in the year. Deb proposed that we consider limiting the winter from Feb. 15 to April 15.
- With not being able to host in 2022, we are hoping that National will reimburse us for lost revenue. We are hoping National will provide funding for our scholarships to replace the funding we will lose due to not having the auction.
- We should make a request that National notify regions when a National conference will be held within the region. Vicki Basman may bring this up with National.

Treasurer Report – Bob Dispenza

- Several years we had \$44,000 we are now down to \$40,000. Sometimes workshops make money and sometimes they do not. We are spending money on workshops and scholarships, which is where we should be spending it.
- If it's not in the budget, don't spend it. If it's in the budget, then you can use it.
- For 2019, we need budgets submitted to Deb Nofzinger by February 20, 2019 so we can review and approve them at the March Board Meeting. This budget will be July 2019-June 2020. Our goal is a \$0 budget.
- **Important:** If you are submitting anything (reimbursement, dispersements) it MUST go through our treasurer (Bob Dispenza) who will sign off on it and send it to National. You must have an invoice or receipt in addition to the form. If it's greater than \$600 (for the year), we also need to submit a W-9. You can put multiple items on a dispersements form, it's preferred to compile them and submit it at one time.
- Review the current financial information. Through 3rd

Secretary Report – Jenn Kirts

Committee Reports

Archives Committee – Cookie Ferguson

- Cookie was not able to attend the 2017 and 2018 RIWs, so she needs someone to submit pictures and such to her.
- We will ask Victoria Zablocki, 2018 RIW Co-chair to send her the pictures to send along to Ball State for Archives and seek pictures from Ontario.
- Cookie will reach out to the 2019 RIW Chairs to gather and submit photos, etc.
- Ways and Means will also submit material to Cookie for inclusion.
- Cookie has questioned the need for an entire committee for Archives. We need someone to do this job, but probably do not need an entire committee.
- A recommendation was made to record key note speakers and workshop sessions as possible.
- Discussion also revolved around finding the rubber chicken from auctions that was lost at a silent auction at a National Conference. It was a fundraising tool what was used at the end of the live auction.
- Jason Szostek mentioned the value of getting recorded stories recorded and into the archives. This is something we should look into at RIWs. We should begin interviewing people who are retiring now.

Awards Committee – Laurel Zoet

- The budget increase is helpful for the purchase of plaques and the covering of the cost of Award Night meals (1 meal/winner).
- Cost of 2018 plaques was just over \$300, current budget is \$600. There's a potential for 10 awards each year if all awards are given.

- Bob Hinkle and Mindy Murdock's term has expired. Laurel has recruited two additional member **. Andrea Krava is interested in stepping down as she will no longer be able to participate in NAI. Becky Parkin will be starting as a committee member. Laurel will send Jenn Kirts an updated committee list.
- Laurel was approached to be a National Award Committee Chair, but has agreed to be a Member-at-Large for a year in 2018.
- Related to Awards, we want to do a recognition of people who were nominated possibly through Instagram or Facebook.

Communications Committee – Aaron Dougless

- 521 new people (new members) have been added to Mailchimp. 1,116 people are receiving emails currently and we can keep it free until we reach 2,000. We may need to do a purge in the future. Aaron proposes paying MailChimp to be able to reach more people.
- 22.79% open rate, industry average is 20%; 4.7% click rate for moving to the webpage
- Aaron has been updating the website. He verified that contact forms have been being received by committee members. The general contact form should go to Deb Nofzinger.
 - Pages that don't get much updating are: Links, Store. These will be taken down.
- Kaitie Janecke Soltesz will be on the committee as the Instagram manager.
- In exploring promoting RIVW through Facebook – we have to budget money for it and then figure out the credit card part of it.

Interpretive Project Grants – Submitted by Kelly Bentley, shared by Deb nofzinger

- 2018 Grants have been awarded and checks were sent to 4 organizations.
- Some past project reports have been received and she will pass them on for the website.
- Jen McDowell shared grant recipients: Stan Huet Hall and Gardens Living through History (\$500); Cope Environmental Centers interpretive Signage (\$1,000), Tahquamenon Falls *Bog Walkway Project* (\$500), and Friends of Rondeau's *Depths of Lake Erie* (\$1,000).

Membership Committee – Renell Roebuck

- 4 people will receive complimentary memberships this year. They are ***.
- Birdathon – We raised \$250-\$300 and Ontario won. Ohio recorded 170 species; Michigan logged 120 species and Ontario reported 173 species. Thank you to everyone who helped by contributing money which supports complimentary memberships. Cookie Ferguson will be the Indiana contact.
- There are two new people on the committee and Renell will send those to Jenn Kirts.

Ways and Means – Becky Parkin and Nora Sindelar

- Michelle Fournier will become the chair of this committee.
- The Interpretive Booklets have outlived their usefulness.
- We need to figure out our “new” thing and make sure our finances are in-line with National's policies.
- Is there a way to use the Square for Ways and Means stuff?
- What are the roles of the committee members for Ways and Means? This needs to be looked at and figured out as we are generally just selling things at specific times during the RIVW. It will be useful to have people to bounce ideas off other people.
- We also need to look into selling at outside conferences.
- If we are not going to do the mainstream NAI brand, we have to get it approved by Paul Caputo at National.

Scholarship

- With the transition of the fiscal year, it will be complicated to re-align the scholarship cycle with the fiscal year cycle.

- 2019-2020 cycle (2019 NIW, 2020 RIW, Professional) would be \$750 NIW, \$300 Professional, and the 2019 RIW. We need to approve the 2020 RIW (money is gathered 2 years prior). (Example 2016 auction funded 2018 scholarships.). She's proposing to eliminate the NIW Scholarship for Fall 2019 and filling the others to accommodate the shift as outlined below.
- Jill moves to allocate the following funds for 2019/2020 we allocate \$1,700 for RIW, \$300 for Professional and for 2020/2021 \$1,500 RIW, \$750 for NIW, and \$300 for Professional. Cookie Ferguson seconds and motion passed unanimously.

Fiscal Year	Source of Funds	RIW	NIW	Professional
19 (1/2)	2017 Auction	2019 RIW		
19/20	2017 Auction plus additional funds	2020 RIW	SKIP	19/20 Professional
20/21	2018 Auction	2021 RIW	2020 NIW	20/21 Professional

- In 2022 we move our RIW funds will go to the NIW in Cleveland.

Student Involvement – Report provided by Will Gosnell

- The budget for this year is \$500, he is planning to offer 4 1-day registrations to the RIW and will include a student membership.
- Jason Szostek from Hocking College will be joining the committee.
- The goal is to get more schools involved in it.
- Jason was able to take several students to National because the students fundraised through Interpretation Club. They manned the Living History side on campus and made money with that. They are skilled in fundraising and try to use interpretive programs to do the fund raising.

Other Announcements/Business

Jason Szostek is seeking members for his Advisory Board which meets via online conferencing. The Advisory Board helps identify objectives for student learning. Please contact Jason if you're interested in participating.

Laurel Zoet reached out to Ray Navotney and he believes he's submitted over 160 nominations.

Jenn Kirts Chippewa Nature Center is hoping to host a CIGT in 2020.

Adjourn at 1:40pm