

In attendance:
Aaron Douglass
Jim Witter
Brienne Warthman
Mandy Martin
Lindsey Harrell
Marie Laudman
Hannah Teshka
Stefanie Paeg
Kaitie Janecke Soltesz
Debbie Nofzinger
Renell Roebuck
Michelle Fournier
Karin Hostetter
Paul Cypher
Josh Dodson

2023 Annual Board Meeting

Pokagon State Park

January 13, 2023



Director Aaron Douglass-national board meeting, constitutional amendment updates and how to get more people to vote, as members remind people to vote

NAI staff restructure; added new some left. Emily Jacobs left and was working on the certifications and put the process on hold. Paul Caputo is now the director. An outside entity will become the editor of Legacy and will be contracted out. A program director would work on certifications and the presentation at national conference.

National website has contact information for everyone who is a member, but on regional all of the personal info is public. Great for accessibility but negative for hackers and spam. So what info should be on regional website and what is everyone comfortable with and how do we prevent the hacking and spam?

Kaitie: about concerns for internet security she would make a strong recommendation for pulling our personal information/work numbers off of the site. Using the Gmail accounts should work fine. Keep the locations of regional committee and board members and the Gmail

How many have used the interpreter's network and forum and it took off even better than national expected. They are working on adding more features including the mentor match following what region 4 has started. The network could also serve as a repository for documents. One drive to Google but no update if it will be uploaded to the national website. They also created a group for those who attend the national conference. They want to do the same for each region and section, but who would be the moderator for all of those threads?

Deb mentioned there has been a lot of changes at a rapid pace on national. Redo of personnel manual. Paul has presented a restructuring format. The CIG is being restructured, with the departure of Emily, she is still a contract employee thru April then it will get turned over to the new structure. Kat, Jean and Heather at national have done an excellent job with dealing with the changes. Paul is no longer editor for legacy, they hired a digital marketing person and just hired Yvonne who does the social media. There is a new office manager. Song is still on staff but it is unclear what is happening with her position. Her contract is for the calendar year and they extended it for fiscal year and will make the decision in June.

Aaron served as communications chair for 6 years, then became the Director for Region 4 for one year. Now that he is in South Dakota he does not feel he can accurately and appropriately lead the region and will be stepping down as Director. **The deputy director Michelle, has made a motion to nominate Renell. Mandy seconded the motion. All in favor. None opposed, Motion passed.**

Aaron will still sit on the advisory council board until a permanent director is elected. Debbie mentioned that Renell could be the representative in order to streamline this.

Deputy Director Michelle Fournier: Regional interpretive workshop update: Brian Forist from IU and Angie Manuel from Indiana State Parks are chairing that conference. They have been working with the lodge. Rates are reasonable considering inflation. Communication with Song is progressing. Monday welcome event to be decided. Tuesday/Wednesday will be concurrent session days, mobiles will be on Thursday. Awards and scholarship auction will be two separate evening. The cost will be about \$350. Registration will be live the end of January. It is \$100 off of the registration if you present a session. There was discussion how the \$100 will be deducted from the registration from the national office. Will a reimbursement be sent to chose presenters and what if they also are scholarship recipients?
Debbie mentioned putting a land acknowledgement on the webpage in reference to the Brown County State Park the site of the regional workshop.
2024 RIW will be in Ontario if they are able to secure chairpersons, otherwise it will be in Michigan. Debbie mentioned contact Toby and Sheila Webe?

Treasurer Renell Roebuck: Fiscal year is July 1 to June 30, 2023

update 2021 2022 budget,

2021: 43,276.62.

bird a thon: \$127

Merchandise sale: \$275

Expenses: just zoom payment \$158 for virtual

Awards: \$400

Scholarship: Mandy to national in California

Complimentary memberships: 3

IPG: \$2,000

2022-Started this fiscal year with: \$35,389.93

Oomi auction at national: haven't gotten that quarterly report back roughly \$1,165 will probably be a little higher- Total was \$2,015

\$336 in merchandise sold cash and \$158 from the square

Will get \$2,000 from national in place of no regional conference

5 scholarships to national total of \$3,750

IPG: \$2,000

Ways and means: \$679 towards new merch

If you drove here and used your personal vehicle and paid tolls you can be reimbursed for that, send mileage and receipts to Renell

Hannah asked that Renell double check the scholarship funds available currently to know how many scholarships they can give out.

Secretary Mandy Martin: secretary update: code of ethics form

Awards Paul Cypher:

Currently 5 members are on the awards committee:

- Mike Broughton (Huron-Clinton Metroparks in Michigan)
- Amy Christiansen (Indiana Archives and Records Administration in Indiana)
- Debbie Haubert (Sandusky County Parks in Ohio)
- Becky Parkin (Lake Metroparks in Ohio)
- Mark Read (Murphy Point Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada)

Becky Parkin and Mark Read are stepping away but are staying through the Regional awards in March.

The final date for submission for nominations is January 27, 2023

Request \$500 for awards

The Sandy McBeaeth award is finally on the website in the awards section.

2020 was on the awards committee and took over as the chair person in 2021. Paul will stay through 2024-2026. The national chairperson for awards Bradley has stepped down. Paul wanted to work with national award committee and find out why they don't have a part-time award and discuss how to provide more continuity in awards between national and regional.

Kaitie would like to add a list of region 4 members who have won national awards to our website.

Paul noted we are second in overall award options. Ray Novotny is responsible for 1/3 of award nominations.

The nomination submissions have been down. Pursue and keep up with the announcements and advertising.

Possibly a zoom how to or a short video how to along with an announcement at the riw to the entire group on how nominate.

Communications Kaitie Janecke Soltesz: There is still a large contingent of NAI members in our region who did not know there is a regional group. There is a lack of communication and needs more outreach. Brianne's committee member sent out emails to new members introducing them to our region. Hopefully with the restructuring that is going on at national it may alleviate the issue. Kaitie and Deb will hopefully do a session at the RIW on what all our region offers. A lot of new members have gotten their CIG certifications but do not recognize the benefits of the regions. Discussions about how to improve outreach include videos, emails, website updates, membership expiration reminders, verbal communication, possible virtual mini-workshops Website; updates including trainings, awards page, ipg is on her list to update, job postings page has been updated, would like to have email signatures

Unfortunately, the fourcast hasn't been great attendance, it's the quarterly zoom get together. Would like to continue them and see how they progress.

Kaitie is suggesting a restructuring how the communications committee works. She needs more committee members and is aiming to have 6-7 and currently has 3.

- member recognition/awards assistance
- events advertisements
- 4 Regional reporters
- Job board

Adjust volunteer page on website. Submissions will be sent to Brianne and she will compile them into a google form with more details.

So far, she would like 5 total committee members, right now she has 3.

Cherise Elliott, Sabrina Deschamps, and Stefanie Paeg

All committee members and board members review and update your job descriptions and send them to Brianne by March 13, 2023.

Interpretive Project Grants Jim Witter:

Distributed \$2,000

Darke county

Perry county

Chippewa nature center

Received updates from 2021 grants from one organization, Kaitie has a few updates as well

He has a couple people interested in serving on the committee and is looking to fill 2 spots

Membership Brianne Warthman:

3 committee members

Bird a thon: \$127

Sent out 3 complimentary memberships.

Is it ok that we didn't make enough from bird a thon to cover the cost of complimentary memberships?

There isn't a lot of bird a thon participation is there an idea of something that may generate more funds. Do bird a thon the same this year and see how the participation turns out.

As a way to share information with new members we can access the CITs and ask them to share a PDF with all of the regional opportunities.

Two complimentary memberships are from national. Region 4 can give out 1 or more but it depends on the amount of money the bird a thon raises and the quality of applicants.

Have a table at the Wildlife Diversity conference and we do have some merchandise for sale. Will like some updated pictures of region four for the display.

Mentorship program; Kaitie, Lindsey and Brianne worked on this program. There are 12 mentors 18 mentees. The individual relationships go through June. Now that it is going it's not a huge time commitment. Initially getting the matches together took the most time. The logistics of running the program as an on-going endeavor would take a lot more work than a specific start and end time. A change can be made to apply at any time to be a mentor or mentee knowing that there will still be a specific start and end date.

Scholarships Hannah Teshka & Marie Laudman:

17 applications for the 5 scholarships. Kaitie, Scott Beam, Jill Vance, Maria Jenkins, Sara W. Review articles have been sent in

4 regional scholarships are available. Should we have a student specific scholarship?

Should we also update the application to state that if you've won a scholarship in the last X amount of years you are not eligible.

Is it possible to adjust the application to weigh the criteria by the number of years in the field in a way to eliminate repeat scholarship recipients or is it better to readjust the scoring to target a more deserving group of people? The main goal is to put a limit on how many times someone can receive a scholarship.

Renell made a motion that the scholarship committee can add a clause to the application that the recipient can only apply if they have not received a scholarship from Region 4 in the last four years.

Michelle seconded. All in favor 0 opposed. Motion passes

There are funds to include a student scholarship. Currently there is 5,471.00 in the budget right now does not include the chicken auction funds.

Paul suggested we can offer a student scholarship of funds are available and if funds change in the future, we don't have to offer it again. It can be decided on a yearly basis. Hannah added one student scholarship for the 2024 regional.

We will hold off on the hiking challenge for this fiscal year.

The deadline for scholarship applications will be February 10, 2023.

Professional development application needs to be updated to include the turn around time is 4 weeks.

Nominations/Strategic Planning

Debbie N. as a past director is tasked with finding candidates for open positions

Future Director

Training Member Services

Karin inquired how many of those in attendance have taken part in the book club, webinars and interpretive naturalist trivia nights? One or two have attended some of these opportunities.

What other types of opportunities should we offer and what is the interest level? One day, 2 hours, what topics? It would be helpful to ask for feedback from the region members what type of opportunities they would prefer.

Mini workshops that are virtual can be uploaded on the webpage but it should it be 'free' on the webpage or

only for NAI members. Karin has agreed to be the chair for the training services. Karin will create a survey for the fourthought newsletter and have it ready for the RIW. A budget of \$500 should be sufficient.

Ways and Means Lindsey Harrell:

2 different types of hats and mugs are available.

How to adjust our logo. Paul suggested turning the 'I' on NAI into a symbol that represents each region. Great Lakes region would include a lighthouse in place of the I. Lindsey will have her friend come up with a few designs and the region board and committee chairs will make the decision on the new logo. Once logo is created Lindsey will work on finding a table runner. Previously the amount in the budget for ways and means was \$1,000.

The next meetings will be:

March-at RIW

June 13 3pm

October 11 9am

Be sure to keep all of the correspondence says Great Lakes Region Four and not just Region 4 to avoid confusion. Keep the awards as Great Lakes Region Four.

Renell made a motion to adjourn. Michelle seconded. Motion approved.