

**MINUTES, LIA ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 2016, 11:50 A.M. - 1:10 P.M.
DUKE'S SEAFOOD & STEAKHOUSE
DENHAM SPRINGS, LA**

President, Wes Gauthier called the meeting to order at 11:50 A.M., welcomed everyone and asked them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 40 voting Members and one non-voting Member present for a total of 41. In addition there were 17 guests present for a grand total of 58 in attendance.

Wes asked everyone to review the Minutes of the last Meeting and if acceptable, move that they be accepted. Ardis Tooke moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

Wes asked Severn to present the Financial report. Severn stated that total revenues for the 3rd quarter were \$4,743.84 and total expenditures were \$5,594.61 leaving \$850.77 in expenditures over revenues. For the year, however, we were \$6,621.73 in revenues over expenditures. Christopher Friedman moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to accept the financial report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Wes asked Severn to report on the Membership, Website and Newsletter, 'The Louisiana Irrigator'. Severn stated that as of yesterday we had 137 Memberships. Our webmaster, Bill Prudhomme, will be making some improvements to the site which will make it more user friendly. We needed more advertising for 'The Louisiana Irrigator' newsletter. "So please consider advertising," Severn said.

NEW BUSINESS

Wes then moved on to the Election of Officers and Board Members. Wes indicated that as of this morning there had been a Board Member resignation and consequently, Mary B. Mizell, whose name appeared as one of the Nominating Committee's recommendations, will not be an option. Wes then proceeded to ask the Membership if there were any nominations from the floor for any position especially the vacant Board Members' position. There being none, Wes asked the membership if they would move to accept the recommendation of the Board for Officers and Board Members which included:

- President, Christopher Friedman
- Vice-President, Ardis Tooke
- Past President, Wes Gauthier
- Director 2016-2018, Brooke Inzarella
- Director 2016-2018, Dan Johnson
- Director 2016-2017, vacant
- Director 2016-2017, Drew Andrews, by acclamation.

Wes asked the Membership that when we located a willing Board Member to fill the Board position would it be acceptable for the Board to approve and appoint that person? The membership indicated that it would be fine to do so.

Christopher Friedman moved, seconded by Brooke Inzarella to accept the slate of Officers and Board Members by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously.

Wes then passed the framed Proclamation to the Membership stating that 'July 2016 is Smart Irrigation Month in Louisiana' and signed by Governor, John Bell Edwards.

Wes then stated that there were several special awards to be presented. He read the first award to the Membership which stated; "Louisiana Irrigation Association 2016, Marshall (Mike) Goree Distinguished Service Award, Presented to Marshall (Mike) Goree. It Is the Highest Award Given and Reflects Lifetime Dedication, Long Time Professionalism and Long Time Support to LIA and to the 'Green Industry'." Mike came to the podium and graciously accepted the award with many thanks and with tremendous gratitude.

Wes went on to present the same award to Dr. Peter Gallagher for all his help and support he provided to LIA since its inception. Dr. Gallagher was unable to attend and Severn will mail the award to him.

Wes then called upon Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry, to present the Key Note Address. Dr. Strain stated that there were a number of issues of concern to agriculture. He said Louisiana needed to re-write the sales tax laws such that there would be no tax on irrigation equipment especially for production agriculture farmers. He stated that those who use H-2A and H-2B were having a difficult time with the regulations. He has supported a five year passport for guest workers to help alleviate their requirement of having to leave for a month during each year.

During his recent trip to Cuba with Governor John Bell Edwards, he was appalled to see how antiquated production agriculture was there. They were using practically no new technology such as seeds, pesticides, irrigation or fertilizers and he stated that we can sell these items to them and show them how to use them but we can't sell them food. He said they really needed our help with modernization. Dr. Strain indicated that now that he was Head of the National Association of Agricultural Commissioners, that farmers in Cuba could benefit from our technology.

Several new federal programs will be forth coming. New Federal Worker Protection Standards will go into effect in January of 2017 and there will be a new Food Safety Act coming soon. So, he advised us to look for some changes in these programs.

In closing he indicated that Louisiana would be facing a \$300,000 million deficit and he was not sure how it would affect his department. He asked everyone to reach out to their statewide elected officials and be sure to ask them questions about the landscape irrigation industry. "Contact your legislators regularly and keep in touch with them," he said. "It will help them make better decisions if you tell them how you feel about your business and your industry and get to know them," he concluded.

Wes indicated that this was his last official act as President of LIA and he has enjoyed working with everyone. So with that he asked the new President, Christopher Friedman, to come to the podium and accept the President's gavel.

Chris came, thanked everyone for their support and stated that his first official act was to ask Wes to return to the podium. Chris handed Wes the Presidential Plaque and read the inscription; 'President's Plaque Presented to Wes Gauthier For Outstanding Dedication as President of the Louisiana Irrigation Association for 2015-2016'.

Chris then asked Jack Hopper to come to the podium. Chris presented him with a framed certificate which stated; 'Presented This Day October 20, 2016 to Jack Hopper in Grateful Appreciation for the Years of Service As President and Serving on the Louisiana Irrigation Association Board'. Chris then acknowledged that Curt Bowman who was rolling off the Board and who was unable to attend today, received a certificate and Wayne Orton, also, who was rolling off the Board received his certificate last evening at the Board Meeting. He too was unable to be there.

Chris asked the Membership if they had any question or comments. Severn commented that he had to brag on Commissioner Strain for being willing and available to come to our Annual Meetings. When Severn was affiliated with LNLA, previous Commissioners' of Agriculture were invited to attend the Annual Meetings and never acknowledged it, much less attended. Dr. Strain has been truly committed to the agriculture community and to our industry specifically. "And We Appreciate You and We Thank You!", Severn said.

Chris asked Tina Peltier, Assistant Director of the LDAF Horticulture Commission, to give an update on the Commission. Tina stated that since last February there have been 31 Landscape Irrigation Contractors exams administered with a 68% pass rate. For the March Basics Class 19 took the exam for a 74% pass rate and for the June class 7 took the exam for an 86% pass rate. LDAF has issued 28 new Landscape Irrigation Contractors licenses for a total of 413 in 2016. Ninety one per cent of licenses were renewed in 2016.

The Horticulture Commission has met in March and June of 2016 so far. For a good review of the results, see Ansel Rankins' report in 'The Louisiana Irrigator', Vol. 9, No. 3, July, August and September, 2016, the Official Newsletter of the Louisiana Irrigation Association.

Ansel Rankins then handed everyone a copy of the Louisiana Plant Pathology, Disease Identification and Management Series, Citrus Canker leaflet, prepared by the LSU AgCenter.

There being no more business, Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Ardis Tooke to adjourn the Meeting. Motion passed and the meeting concluded at 1:10 P.M.

Note: After the meeting Rober Miller volunteered to take the Director, 2016-2017 position vacated by Mary B. Mizell. Consequently, Officer and Board Members, Wes Gauthier, Christopher Friedman, Brook Inzarella, Jack Hopper and Ardis Tooke, quickly met and discussed the nomination. Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Ardis Tooke to accept Robert Miller as Director 2016-2017. Motion passed.