

**MINUTES, LIA ANNUAL MEETING  
OCTOBER 26, 2017, 12:00 NOON – 1:17 P.M.  
DUKE'S SEAFOOD AND STEAKHOUSE  
DENHAM SPRINGS, LA**

President, Chris Friedman called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon, welcomed everyone and asked them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 62 voting Members and three non-voting Members present for a total of 65 Members in attendance. Non-voting members or guests present were 17 for a grand total of 82 present for the Annual Meeting – the largest ever!

Chris asked everyone to review the Minutes of the last Annual Meeting and if acceptable, move that they be approved. Ardis Tooke moved, seconded by Brooke Inzerella, to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

Chris asked Severn to provide the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Report. Overall, the income was \$6,929.41 and the total expenses were \$5,841.64 leaving \$450.77 in revenues over expenses. Total funds at end of Quarter were \$34,666.41. Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by L Wayne Guillot, to accept the financial report as presented. Motion passed.

Chris asked Severn to provide the Membership Report. Severn stated that as of October 10, 2017 we had 131 Memberships. However, after the Annual Meeting and as of October 31, 2017, we had 12 new Members and 14 renewing Members for a total of 157.

Chris stated that the website is mostly current and up-to-date with improvement being made on an ongoing basis.

Chris asked Severn to discuss the Newsletter. Severn stated that new Members should be receiving the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Newsletter, 'The Louisiana Irrigator', sometime before the New Year and if anyone would like an electronic copy to please call and he would email one to them or they can view the electronic copy in the Member's Only section on the LIA website.

Chris moved on to New Business and to the Election of Officers and Board Members for 2017-2018. He stated that the Board of Directors had approved and voted to recommend the following individuals for office next year. They included:

- President, Ardis Tooke
- Vice-President, Dan Johnson
- Past President, Chris Friedman
- Director 2017-2019, Drew Andrews
- Director 2017-2019, Robert Miller
- Director 2017-2018, Brooke Inzerella
- Director 2017-2018, Bill Fleming

Chris stated that, “Before we vote, are there any nominations from the floor for any Officer or Board Member's positions?” There being none, Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by L. Wayne Guillot, to accept the Board recommended slate of Officers and Board Members by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously.

Chris asked Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry to present the 2017 Proclamation that, "July 2017 was Smart Irrigation Month in the State of Louisiana," as signed by Governor, John Bel Edwards. Dr. Strain read the Proclamation and formally presented it to President, Chris Friedman.

Chris asked Ansel Rankins to come to the podium for a special award. Chris read the plaque which stated: "Presented This Day, October 26, 2017 to Ansel Rankins, The Professional Of The Year Award Which Reflects Long Time Professionalism in Business and/or Outstanding Long Time Contribution to the 'Green Industry' and to LIA". Ansel was both surprised and gratified to receive the award. This was the first award of this type given by LIA since its inception in 2004.

Chris call upon Brent Saltzman with LA One Call to make a brief presentation. Brent reminded everyone, "to please, before you dig, call 811 to notify the proper authorities so that the digging won't damage underground lines – especially gas lines which could be very dangerous". Brent then handed out to the audience, the 'Louisiana 811' 2017 Newsletter, refrigerator clips, a bumper sticker and a card showing typical markings and description of color coded flags.

Chris then called upon Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry for the Key Note address. Dr. Strain announced that he and Governor, John Bel Edwards were going to travel the state on November 14, 16, and 17 for an Agriculture and Forestry Listening Tour. This tour will give all agricultural and forestry producers and stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues, concerns and needs. He told the audience that they should get to know their state and federal representatives and express any concerns they may have with them. Discuss taxes with them and how much it affects your businesses. Also, express your concerns with immigration reform and if you use H-2B or H-2A migrant workers, impress upon them the importance they play with your businesses. He spoke of drainage and of WOTUS. Someone in the audience asked what WOTUS was. Dr. Strain explained that it meant Waters Of the U. S. During the Obama administration the EPA was given extra ordinary powers. It took control over all wetlands and any standing water or seasonally wet ditches which greatly restricted farmers and producer use of any land which tended to be wet. Now, with the Trump administration much of the restrictions have been lifted but more work needs to be done to insure that the EPA cannot take control of anything but navigable waters in which WOTUS was intended. He stated that his department has 60 program areas and LDAF is considered to be one of the largest state agencies.

Chris provided closing comments of his presidency and said that he has really enjoyed his role as president and felt honored to be the President of LIA. He thanked the Board, the Membership and LDAF. He felt that on his watch LIA mostly has Irrigation Contractors on the Board which was one of his goals and he felt that the website and newsletter were good and getting better. Lastly, he encouraged everyone to get to know their representatives. With that he turned the gavel over to incoming President, Ardis Tooke.

Ardis took the podium, thanked everyone and asked Chris to come back to the front. Ardis presented Chris with the Presidential plaque which stated, "President's Plaque Presented to Chris Friedman For Outstanding Dedication as President of the Louisiana Irrigation Association For 2017". Chris, again thanked everyone and said he will continue to serve LIA.

Ardis asked Wes Gauthier to come to the front. He proceeded to hand Wes a framed certificate stating, "Presented This Day, October 26, 2017, to Wes Gauthier in Grateful Appreciation for the Years of Service As President and Serving on the Louisiana Irrigation Association Board".

Ardis indicated that he was from Ruston, LA and was happy to be the new President of LIA. Severn mentioned that Ardis was a Charter Member of LIA back in 2004 and helped form LIA. Ardis asked the Membership if they had any comments or questions they would like to bring to the floor. There were none.

Ardis asked Tina Peltier, Assistant Director of the LDAF Horticulture Commission to present the LDAF update. Tina stated that there were 409 licenses renewed for 2017 which was steady over the past few years. Also, there were 45 exams given in 2017. LDAF was in the process of revising exams to transition to a computer based software program. Eventually, all exams will be offered on computer and the results will be reported immediately. Already, computers have been set up in all LDAF offices. Very soon LDAF will be launching a new mobile app. One will be able to search for licensed professionals as well as permit holders and it will work in real time. This app also will allow one to file a complaint to include up to three photographs and in the future more apps will be available.

Ardis thanked Tina for the report and asked for a motion to adjourn. L. Wayne Guillot moved, seconded by Wes Gauthier, to adjourn the Annual Meeting. Motion passed and the meeting concluded at 1:17 P.M.