

**MINUTES LIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING, MARCH 12, 2013
RALPH & KACOO'S RESTAURANT
BATON ROUGE, LA**

The meeting began at 5:07 P.M. with President, Julie Mouch Broussard welcoming everyone and asking them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Voting Members present were John R. Kavanaugh, Jack Hopper, Curt Bowman, Julie Mouch Broussard and Wayne Orton. Non-voting Board members were Dr. Peter Gallagher, and Severn C. Doughty, Sr. Guest present was Ansel Rankins. Four voting Board Members present represented a quorum and five were present.

Julie asked the Board to review the minutes of the last meeting and if acceptable, move that they be accepted. Jack Hopper moved, seconded by John R. Kavanaugh to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

Julie asked Severn to provide the 2012 year end financial report. Severn stated that dues collected in 2012 were \$11,393.76 and dues collected in 2011 were \$9,591.80 which was a sizable increase over 2011. Most notably we collected \$40,328.38 in revenues in 2012 and our expenses were \$38,705.45 which was \$1,400.70 in income over expenses. There being few questions, John R. Kavanaugh moved, seconded by Curt Bowman, to accept the 2012 financial report as presented. Motion passed.

Julie asked Severn to give the membership report. Severn stated that as of the end of February we had 13 new members, and 41 renewing members. There were 29 members who had paid through 2013 last year (2 year memberships) for a total 83 memberships this year. Second renewal notices will be mailed out around the first week in April.

Julie asked Severn to give an update on the Newsletter. Severn indicated that it was at the printer and will be mailed out so members will receive their copy around April 1st. Severn thanked Curt Bowman with Polydrip and Wayne Orton with Keeling for new ads that will appear in the 1st Quarter Newsletter, 2013. And there will be a surprise when everyone receives the first quarter edition.

Julie asked Severn to give the statistics for the website. Severn started out by asking the Board if they wanted to keep the classified section on the website. The classifieds have been the 2nd most visited section on the site. There never had been any postings and the section was very hard to find. After some lengthy discussion it was decided to remove the classified section.

The top page for page views was member login. Third was news followed by links, events, certification and lastly LDAF resources. Monthly page views starting October 1, 2012 was 11,589, November was 12,751, December 14,191, January 2013 15,280, and February 11,825 for a total of 65,636 page views over the period.

Julie asked Ansel Rankins for an update on LDAF. Ansel indicated that there were 396 landscape irrigation contractor license holders in Louisiana and of those 309 license holders have renewed their license for 2013 which was about $\frac{3}{4}$ of them. Of the total there were 16 new license holders in 2013. Ansel indicated that he would provide Severn with the updated license holder's list so Severn could send LIA information to the 16. Furthermore, Severn will have the updated list added to the LIA website.

Ansel thanked LIA for the training Mike Goree provided to the LDAF inspectors on February 7, 2013 in Alexandria, LA. Mike used $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day to train the inspectors on Irrigation Basics. Ansel indicated that the inspectors had a much better idea about irrigation and that it would help them as they deal with landscape irrigation contractors statewide.

Ansel indicated that he had sent a letter to Severn (in which Severn read at the meeting) requesting a donation from LIA to help LDAF host the 2013 Southern Plant Board meeting to be held in April in New Orleans, LA. This Board was made up of members from 13 southern state departments of agriculture and they discuss plant pest and health programs, share information, acts as an information clearinghouse on plant pest prevention and regulatory matters.

Julie asked Ansel if he would leave the room while the Board discussed their decision. After some brief comments John R. Kavanaugh moved, seconded by Wayne Orton, to donate \$500.00 to LDAF to help sponsor the meeting. Motion passed.

Julie asked Peter Gallagher to give an update on the progress he had made with the Education and Research Directors' position. Peter indicated that he had all the courses LIA had purchased from IA and now that the courses were virtually ours, he will begin to make updates on them. He indicated that he will be teaching the Basics Class over the following two days and will tweak the course once he finished teaching it. His contract as an independent contractor was similar to that of the Executive Secretary's contract and his was signed on October 5, 2012. He will be writing a column in *The Louisiana Irrigator*, the official publication of LIA which appears quarterly. He had been working on the master LIA membership list and once completed will send it to Severn. Lastly, Peter indicated that he would like to send a questionnaire out to the membership to see what courses they would like for us to offer.

Julie then led the discussion on the 2013 Budget Meeting and this year's budget. She indicated that she, Wayne Orton, John R. Kavanaugh, Peter Gallagher and Severn met at Lea's Restaurant in Lecompte, LA to prepare the 2013 budget. Some new expense items were added to help better track expense items so the Board would know exactly where the money was spent. There being little discussion, Wayne Orton moved, seconded by John R. Kavanaugh, to accept the 2013 budget as presented. Motion carried.

Julie then moved to Old Business and asked Severn to give an update on where we stood with IA and paying the yearly license fees for courses of which we have already purchased. On February 28, 2013 Severn called Bob von Bernuth at IA and discussed the classes LIA had already purchased. Managing An Irrigation Service Company and Predicting and Estimating Landscape Water Use were two courses IA was not going to update. Consequently, LIA can use them without paying an annual fee and we can update them as we wished. IA planed to phase out Irrigation Systems Installation and Maintenance so LIA can use it as we wished. However, Bob recommended that LIA purchase the Classroom Kit, Irrigation Components for Residential/Light Commercial Systems for \$200.00 from IA. For the other two Classroom Modules, Basic Electricity for Irrigation Systems and Electrical Troubleshooting for Landscape Irrigation Systems, there were no annual fees for them.

After some discussion John R. Kavanaugh moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to purchase the Classroom Kit, Irrigation Components for Residential/Light Commercial Systems from IA for \$200.00. Motion carried and the Kit was ordered on March 22, 2013.

Julie then led the discussion on Severn's evaluation over lunch at the Backflow Prevention recertification training, January 22, 2013. Julie stated that she had contacted the Board Members with a short evaluation and asked them to respond to the questions with a Likert Scale of 1 to 5; one being needs improvement and 5 being excellent. Julie indicated that everyone responded to the questions with a 5 rating. Consequently, on February 5, 2013 at the budget meeting in Lecompte, LA, Julie and Severn signed the one year contract.

Julie moved on to the Profit and Loss statements for the October 2, 2012 Annual Meeting/ Recertification training, November 7, 8, 2012 Basics Class and the January 22, 2013 Overview of Backflow Prevention class. For the October Recertification training and Annual Meeting, LIA received \$7,637.85 in revenues and spent \$2,459.88 in expenses for a total of \$5,177.97 in revenues over expenses. For the Basics Class in November, we received \$5,982.80 in revenues and spent \$2,552.04 in expenses for a total of \$3,430.76 in revenues over expenses. For the Backflow Prevention course held in January, we made \$7,238.52 in revenues and spent \$1,470.38 in expenses for a total of \$5,768.14 in revenues over expenses. The Board indicated that they felt we did very well and was glad to see the registrations were strong for all offerings.

Julie asked Severn to provide the evaluations for the above mentioned training classes. Severn indicated that for the Annual Meeting/Recertification and the Backflow Recertification there were 10 LIA members to 1 non-member at the Annual meeting; 12 members to 7 non-members at the Backflow Prevention Recertification. Conversely, at the Basics Class there were 2 members and 14 non-members returning the evaluations. Of the three classes there were a total of 21 who indicated that they visited the LIA website and 23 indicated that they did not visit the website.

Of the three classes only 2 indicated that they would like to advertise in the Newsletter and rates were sent to both of them. When asked if they found it harder or easier to operate a profitable business in the past 10 years, a total of 22 indicated that it was harder, 6 stated easier and 3 indicated neither harder nor easier. Concerning the courses a total of 41 stated that the courses were good to “the best class I’ve ever had” to one stated B- and 1 said OK. When asked about the instructors, a total of 36 said good to excellent and 2 said either “the book was hard to read” or “did not go through the problems well”. When asked about the lunches and refreshments, 38 indicated very well and 5 said OK. Lastly, when asked about the location, 30 said good, 10 said OK and one said bad. Three comments were centered on having training in North Louisiana.

Julie asked Severn about the AT&T Visa card. Severn had requested at the last Board Meeting to apply for another credit card because when he applied for the Visa card, he could not have the company automatically take the monthly payments out of the LIA bank account. However, when he called Visa late in 2012, he was able to set up an automatic monthly withdrawal and there was no need in having another credit card at this time.

Julie asked Severn to discuss the filing of the By-Law change voted upon at the last Annual Meeting. Severn stated that he filed the change with the LA Secretary of State’s office but was notified that filing for a By-Law change was unnecessary because they only made changes to the articles of incorporation. However, Susan Webb, CPA did file the change with IRS and was on file there. Severn stated that he filed our annual report with the Secretary of State’s office and we were active through 2013. On January 23, 2013 Susan Webb filed our 2012 income tax return via e-Postcard and we received receipt of the filing and have saved it in our files.

Julie moved on to New Business and led the discussion on the possibility of transferring funds from LIA checking account to LIA savings account. There being little discussion, Wayne Orton moved, seconded by John R. Kavanaugh, to move \$3,000.00 from checking to savings. Motion passed.

Julie then led the discussion pertaining to Severn assuming the duties of the administrative assistant until another one can be found. Julie indicated that Severn's hours had increased since Sophie Tolliver left as Administrative Assistant and Severn had assumed all her duties. She felt Severn should be compensated for the extra work. The duties have included: stamps & mails out 1st membership renewal notices in early January; stamps & mails out 2nd membership renewal notices the first of April; stamps & mails out renewing members' packets and new member packets on a regular basis as renewals and new memberships were received; prepares annual directory, stamps & mails them to the membership in July; keeps membership rosters up to date; stamps & mails out Annual Meeting notices prior to the Annual Meeting according to the Articles of Incorporation; and compiles evaluations after each training meeting. There being little discussion, Jack Hopper moved, seconded by Curt Bowman, to pay Severn the same hourly rate as was paid to Sophie which was \$16.00/hr. and Severn was to bill LIA monthly for the time he spent. Motion passed.

Julie asked Severn to discuss the Overview of Backflow Prevention class for the Annual Meeting in October 2014. Severn had spoken with Peter Gallagher about inviting Mitch LeBas to present the backflow class for the Annual Meeting on October 14, 2014 at Ralph & Kacoo's Restaurant. Peter thought it would be great if Mitch would agree to it. The Board agreed with Peter and indicated that if we could get Mitch again to teach it, then let's do it. Severn contacted Mitch on March 22, 2013 and he agreed to make the presentation at no cost to LIA and it will be on his calendar. So the recertification training for the 2014 Annual Meeting will be Overview of Backflow Prevention presented by Mitch LeBas.

Julie asked Severn to report on the LIA donation made to the Northwest Louisiana Green Industry Association meeting held on February 19, 2013 at the LSU AgCenter Red River Research Station in Bossier City, LA. Severn indicated that the organization had lain dormant for a year and there was interest in revitalizing it. So the name was changed and the meeting locations were changed to more neutral locations – the LSU AgCenter offices in and around Shreveport, LA. Severn asked Julie if LIA could donate stationary and postage to send notices out and she agreed until the organization could support itself. Consequently, LIA donated 51 stamps, letterhead stationary and envelopes at a value of \$39.03. Enough money was collected at the meeting to where LIA would not have to make another donation to the organization. Of the 29 people in attendance there were 6 LIA members present.

Severn had learned through the Nursery Executives of North America (NLAE) that the Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association was to undergo an audit of their 2009 990 and 990T records. Severn heard from the Executive Director on March 27th and the news was good. The IRS auditors only found several minor issues. The Executive stated that they put the auditor in a conference room in their CPA's office and it took IRS three days to review the files. But Severn indicated that he was very careful to be certain the LIA records were thorough, accurate, up to date and in compliance in the event of an audit.

Julie asked Severn about the class action suit. Severn indicated that he had received a Notice of Class Action Settlement. "The lawsuit was about claims that merchants paid excessive fees to accept Visa and MasterCard cards because Visa and MasterCard, individually, and together with their respective member banks, violated the antitrust laws." Severn indicated that we do nothing now. A claim form will be automatically mailed to LIA. It will be filled out and filed at a later date.

Severn asked for an add-on addition to the agenda. He had just received communication from ANLA about the Ag Workforce Coalition (AWC) and whether LIA wanted to be listed as a supporter. The coalition was centered on immigration reform and it had brought unity to a vast number of agricultural groups who supported immigration reform and other Ag related interests. The intense negotiations currently underway on Capital Hill were under the Ag Force Coalition name now as an effort in attempting to show Congress that agriculture was unified. Severn contacted the AWC and listed LIA as a supporter.

There being no more business, Jack Hopper moved, seconded by John R. Kavanaugh to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting concluded at 8:05 P.M.

