

**2LIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES, OCTOBER 13, 2014, 5:00 P.M.
RALPH & KACOO'S RESTAURANT
BATON ROUGE, LA**

The meeting began at 5:10 P.M. with President, John R. Kavanaugh welcoming everyone and asking them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Voting Members present were: Wes Gauthier, Jack Hopper, John R. Kavanaugh and Julie Broussard. Guest and or non-voting Board Members were Bill Prudhomme, Ansel Rankins and Severn C. Doughty, Sr. Four voting Members present constituted a quorum and four were present.

John asked the Board to review the Minutes of the last Meeting and if acceptable, move that they be approved. Jack Hopper moved, seconded by Julie Broussard, to accept the minutes. Motion carried.

John asked Severn to provide the 3rd Quarter financial statement. Severn reported that revenues were \$5,255.86 and expenditures were \$5881.48, leaving \$625.62 in expenses over revenues. However, the Friday before the Board Meeting, October 10, 2014, a bank deposit was made totaling \$1,800.00 and the PayPal account the same day amounted to \$2,580.00 but not transferred, totaling an additional \$4,380.00 in cash assets. An additional accounting recommended by our CPA, Susan Webb with The Firm of Lee Gray, CPA, was Proof of Cash for the 3rd Quarter. Proof of Cash represented total credits (deposits from the bank statements) and total debits (checks drawn on the account from the bank statements) which proved that the total checking balanced with the bank statements and was \$10,423.92. Severn reiterated that Julia Ann Dickerson was doing an outstanding job with the book keeping and he appreciated the Board's approval of her appointment as Administrative Assistant. There being no questions, Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to accept the financial report as presented. Motion carried.

John asked Severn for a Membership update. Severn indicated that as of today we had 138 Members which were the most we have ever had at this time of year. He hoped that tomorrow would top the highest ever Membership total of 144.

John asked Severn to report on the newsletter. Severn indicated that the newsletter was getting more technical as Dr. Stacia Davis, Irrigation Specialist with the LSU AgCenter, will be contributing an article in each edition along with Dr. Gallagher's column.

John welcomed Bill Prudhomme our webmaster to the meeting and asked him to provide the website update. Bill handed everyone a statistical overview of visitors to the website since April, 2014 when he revamped the site and procured a new address, www.l-i-a.us. He continued by stating that the page views have been rising since June, 2014 from 1065 to a high of 1365 at the end of September. He felt that the site was easier to navigate and easier to find information.

John asked Ansel Rankins to provide the LDAF update. Ansel began by stating that the Emerald Ash Borer was very close to Louisiana and by being reported in Arkansas about 45 miles from the Louisiana border, inspectors were busy monitoring North Louisiana for its presence. It was primarily spread in fire wood. So it was recommended to only purchase firewood from local sources. Ansel stated that LDAF hired two new temporary inspectors to monitor Citrus Canker in South Louisiana. He further stated that there were 401 current, licensed Landscape Irrigation Contractors – 384 who live in Louisiana, which made for a 92% renewal rate this year. The overall pass rate for those who attempted to take the license exam was 58%. As far as LIA's Basics Classes, the March class had a pass rate of 67% and the June class had a pass rate of 100%.

Ansel met with Mike Goree, Dr. Peter Gallagher and Dr. Stacia Davis twice since August to revamp the Landscape Irrigation Contractors License Exam and were making great progress. He further stated that LDAF had revamped their website and it should be easier to navigate through it. LDAF also was able to hire five new inspectors. Some Board Members asked how many states required irrigation contractors to be licensed. Ansel stated that Texas, North Carolina, New Jersey and Louisiana were the only ones.

John moved on to Old Business and asked Julie to report on the Nominating Committee's recommendations for Officers and Board Members for 2015. Julie stated that the Nominating Committee's recommendations were:

Jack Hopper, President
Wes Gauthier, Vice-President
John R. Kavanaugh, Past President
Chris Friedman, Director 2015, 2016
Chris Braud, Director 2015, 2016
Wanda Tiblier, Director 2014 2015
Curt Bowman, Director, 2014 2015

John asked if there were any more nominations from the floor. There being none, John then asked if there was a motion on the floor to accept the slate of Officers and Board of Directors recommended by the Nominating Committee by acclamation. Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to accept the slate of Officers as presented. Motion carried.

John asked if anyone had any last minute agenda items for the Annual Meeting tomorrow. Wes stated that he had some Rainbird equipment boxes and asked if he could give them out as door prizes. Everyone indicated that it would be a good idea and thanked Wes.

Severn stated that he had hats, T-shirts and shirts for sale if anyone wanted them. Severn then asked the Board if we should give T-shirts to all members next year or to only new Members. Julie Broussard moved, seconded by Wes Gauthier, that starting in 2015 all New Members and only New Members were to receive T-shirts. Motion carried.

John moved on to New Business and reported on the meeting held at the LSU AgCenter Red River Research Station on July 29, 2014. He indicated that he was excited about the LSU AgCenter hiring four new Assistant Professors whose responsibility would be working in soil & water quality management, soil fertility and irrigation and water policy and economics specialty areas. He was especially pleased with Dr. Stacia Davis' background and indicated that she was to ultimately replace Dr. Bill Branch and Dr. Ron Sheffield doing homeowner and Green Industry irrigation work statewide and working closely with LIA. She had agreed to be a columnist for our newsletter, agreed to develop several recertification courses and to be on the LIA Board to represent the LSU AgCenter.

John indicated that in speaking with Jay Robbins, President of Irrigation Mart in Ruston, LA, Jay asked that in addition to LIA serving the Landscape industry why couldn't LIA also serve production agriculture irrigators. This brought a lively discussion to the Board and all thought it would be a great idea. Severn indicated that he would schedule a meeting with Jay Robbins and get his thoughts as to (1) how to procure names of potential members, (2) ways LIA could help Ag. Irrigators, (3) training to help irrigators better utilize technology, (4) identify distributors and (5) see if an Ag irrigator certification program would be beneficial. Severn indicated that perhaps Dr. Stacia Davis could help.

John then moved on to the possibility of LIA setting up a certification program for Landscape Irrigation Contractors. Again, the Board thought this was a good idea. Severn stated that LNLA had a good one called Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional Review and Exam resulting in those who took the two day training and who passed a rigorous five part exam, they would become named a Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional. LIA could create a similar program first by writing a manual, (2) create a course curriculum following the manual, (3) create an exam, (4) create a training schedule and (5) create a fee structure. LIA could name the certification program "Certified Landscape Irrigation Professional". Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to do more research on a certification program, perhaps with Dr. Stacia Davis' help and bring the results to another Board Meeting for further discussion.

John then stated that since Dr. Stacia Davis' name had appeared so much in the previous discussions, would it be appropriate to ask her to be on the LIA Board as a Board Member at Large representing the LSU AgCenter. There being little discussion, Jack Hopper moved, seconded by Wes Gauthier, to ask Dr. Stacia Davis to serve on the LIA Board as a non-voting Board Member, indefinitely, as a Board Member at Large representing the LSU AgCenter. Motion passed.

John asked Severn to discuss the letter to Melbourne IT. Severn stated that Bill Prudhomme had suggested that LIA contact Melbourne IT to gain control of the old website domain. Severn read the letter he wrote stating exactly what Bill had suggested he write but Melbourne IT declined the request. Several Board Members asked what to do next. Bill stated that when Melbourne IT invoices us later in December that we might try again to gain control of the website domain. It was felt by everyone to try to gain control over the website domain.

Severn then stated that Southeast Computer Repair invoiced us for another year's contract to host the old website for \$360.00. The Board asked Bill how to respond to the request. Bill said to contact them and state that we no longer are interested in his company hosting the website. On November 8, 2014 Severn wrote on the Southeast Computer Repair invoice; "The Louisiana Irrigation Association is no longer interested in you hosting the website, www.l-i-a.org ", signed and dated.

Severn had a couple of add-on agenda items to discuss. First, he mentioned that IA was now offering on-line certification courses and partnering with California Polytechnic University's Irrigation Training & Research Center. Each new course qualified for continuing education units through IA. Also, the North Carolina Irrigation Contractors' Licensing Board and the New Jersey Landscape Irrigation Contractor Examining Board have approved these courses, allowing licensed individuals in those two states to earn CEUs for licensure. The Board asked Ansel where Louisiana was with on-line courses. Ansel stated that according to the way the law was written, recertification in Louisiana was to be done with a proctor present. Unless the law was amended, it would have to be done the way it was now but he added that eventually he expected there to be on-line courses offered.

Severn announced that the Rainbird Academy had scheduled a training course in New Orleans, LA for November 3-7, 2014. Ansel stated that he was unaware of the training. The training course was cancelled and other Board Members stated that the Rainbird courses were very expensive.

Severn stated that he felt it would be a good idea to have petty cash available in the event he needed it. Consequently, Wes Gauthier moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to put \$600.00 into petty cash. Motion passed. Severn then wrote a check for \$300.00 and put it into petty cash and stated that if he needed the other \$300.00 he would write a check for it later.

There being no more business, Julie Broussard moved, seconded by Jack Hopper, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting concluded at 7:46 P.M.