

Minutes of the AIS Board of Directors Videoconference, Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Present:

Jody Nolin (6) - President, Affiliate Chair

Andi Rivarola (15) - 1st VP, Convention Liaison (temporary), Public Relations Social Media,
Public Relations 2020 Convention, Strategic Planning

Bonnie Jean Nichols (17) – 2nd VP – Judges, RVP 17

Michelle Snyder (15) – Secretary, Insurance

Jill Bonino (15) – Treasurer, Foundation Liaison

Gary White (21) - Immediate Past President, Honorary Awards, Finance

John Jones (14) – Registrar/Recorder

Tom Gormley (5) – Membership

Claire Schneider (15) – Director, Recording Secretary

Gerry Snyder (15) – Director, Awards

Howie Dash (23) – Director, RVP Counselor

Janis Shackelford (15) – Director, Policy

John Ludi (13) – Director, Publication Sales Director

Lorene Crone (7) – Director, Asst. Electronic Services

Neil Houghton (2) - Director, Image Coordinator, Iris Program Resources Digital

Phyllis Wilburn (14) – Director, Section & Cooperating Society Liaison

Susan Driver (7) – Director, Calendars

Wayne Messer (21) - Director, Exhibition Show Reports, News & Notes, RVP 21

Bob Hollingworth (8) – Scientific Advisory

Bryce Williamson (14) – Electronic Services

Lois Rose (4) – Exhibitions Schedules

Mike Reed (17) – asst RVP 17

Marcia Connolly (1) – RVP 1

Eva Barry (23) – RVP 23

Mary Ann Campbell (18)

Jeanette Graham (11?)

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 5:00 PM PDT.

A quorum was present.

1. Approve the minutes from the previous meeting – Claire Schneider

Motion 1: to accept the minutes of the May 27, 2020, teleconference, as amended.

Motion by Michelle Snyder and seconded by Howie Dash. Passed unanimously.

2. AIS Spring Reports

The spring reports classified as “information only” have been posted in AIS documents from the following sources: President, Secretary, Honorary Awards, Affiliations, Convention Liaison, General Counsel, Recording Secretary, Registrar-Recorder, RVP Counselor and Section and Cooperating Societies. All these reports were marked “Information Only.”

Motion 2: to approve the RVP representative, Jean Richter.

Motion by Janis Shackelford and seconded by Michelle Snyder. Motion passed.

The Policy report included a question, but Janis Shackelford said that since filing this report, she had answered that question. The Motions Index has been updated from 1988 through 2019.

Janet Smith has finished the Bulletin index from the beginning to the current issue. This index is on a giant spreadsheet that is searchable by topic, author and date. Soon, it will be posted on the AIS website. This is an amazing accomplishment and Janet deserves a very loud, “Thank you.”

3. Membership Secretary – Jody Nolin

Tom Gormley has been membership secretary for 16 years and is ready to move on to new experiences (involving irises, hopefully). Pam Messer has volunteered to take over this position. Tom will work with Pam during the transition. John Jones will assign one of the five File-Maker Pro licenses to Pam. Jill Bonino will oversee the transfer of the financial aspect of this position. Members of the board thanked Tom for his years of service to AIS. The recording secretary would like to add a thank you for his numerous colorful graphs in his bi-annual membership reports which always made clear the history of AIS membership.

4. Website hosting – John Jones

Host Papa has moved the AIS website to a new server. Part of the problem has been email addresses on the website for the AIS Storefront and the membership secretary. Host Papa has proposed a new plan with rates for one, two and three-year subscriptions. John recommends that AIS purchase the three-year subscription from Host Papa which must be paid in full up-front.

Motion 3 – to accept the offer from Host Papa for a three-year service plan.

Motion by Gerry Snyder and seconded by Jill Bonino. Motion carried.

John Jones was instructed to, “Make it happen.”

Discussion: There is enough bandwidth in this new server to support the webinars, even with all their pictures. In case there isn't enough bandwidth, the webinars could be posted in YouTube. The Wiki is hosted on a separate server. John Jones has been the primary AIS contact person with the website host server. A suggestion was made to create a “rolodex” of people who would be able to contact and work with Host Papa, the new website host server, but with John Jones

continuing to serve as the primary contact. The “rolodex” could include John Jones, Michelle Snyder, Bryce Williamson, Lorene Crone, Jodi Nolin and Andi Rivarola.

5. Webinars – Andi Rivarola

Through AISTalk, Andi has asked for volunteers to present in AIS webinars. The plan is to have a summer series of webinars with another series next winter. Everyone is encouraged to create a presentation or judges training session then contact Andi or Jody about putting it into the webinar schedule. We’d love to see a variety of topics in these webinars.

By the way, what is a webinar? “An engaging online event where a speaker or small group of speakers deliver a presentation to a large online audience.” Because you can’t attend a convention or regional meeting to hear iris presentations, the presentations (i.e. webinars) are going to come to you!!

6. Membership Development – Andi Rivarola

As it stands now, AIS offers a print membership, e-membership, overseas and lifetime memberships. The committee proposed that a full membership option be added that is a combination of print and e-membership. The committee also proposed that the overseas membership and senior discount be eliminated. They suggested that any increase in membership fees be addressed in the future.

Discussion: If AIS wants to encourage the purchase of full memberships, then the full membership should cost less than the sum of fees for the print and e-membership. Ditto for the purchase of a three-year memberships: it should be less expensive than the sum of individual years. The primary benefit of e-membership is access to the Iris Registry. The fees for AIS memberships are less expensive than other horticultural societies. It will be a complicated process to align the start and expiration dates of the renewal of the combination memberships with the three-year e-memberships. And there is the potential of revenue loss during this transition. A suggestion was to consider implementing auto-renewal of membership. PayPal could be programmed to collect membership fees automatically. This would be most helpful for AIS judges whose memberships must be continuous. Perhaps the new membership secretary should be settled in her new position before we dump all these changes in her lap. Regarding overseas membership fees: Earlier this year, the postage for one issue of the Bulletin being mailed overseas was \$8.81 compared to \$0.58 for domestic mailing per issue. (148 Bulletins were sent overseas for \$1303 compared to 2417 Bulletins sent domestically for \$1413.) The overseas membership fee does not come close to covering the cost of mailing their Bulletins. This topic was tabled for a future AIS meeting.

7. AIS non-discrimination statement – Jody Nolin

Volunteers who will work with Jody to develop a statement and policy regarding non-discrimination are John Jones, Mary Ann Campbell, Lorene Crone and Andi Rivarola.

8. Pandemic Contingencies – Wayne Messer

Three contingencies enacted by AIS in 2020 for the COVID-19 pandemic were (1) the cancellation of the 2020 convention in New Jersey, (2) the cancellation of the 2020 AIS Ballot and (3) the suspension of annual requirements for judges. In addition, many regional groups and affiliate clubs cancelled shows, spring sales, garden visits and judges training sessions.

Discussion and suggestions: For 2021, the AIS Ballot and judges training sessions should be reinstated. We won't know the status of the 2021 convention in Las Cruces until early next year. Wayne will post "help wanted" ads in News & Notes and the Bulletin asking for ideas and creative solutions to the COVID-19 restrictions and subsequent cancellations. The affiliate club presidents and RVPs should be included in the search for ideas and creative solutions. These should be POTENTIAL solutions and not mandates from AIS. The affiliate clubs should make decisions about which events to hold and in what format.

Perhaps many solutions will make use of the Internet: judges training through webinars and garden visits through social media. Some clubs are holding internet sales. A list of available irises was posted online or emailed, and arrangements were made to pay for and pick up those irises. There will be a new protocol for voting the AIS Ballot which could be introduced via a webinar. In order to vote the AIS Ballot responsibly, judges should visit gardens to evaluate clumps of irises. In lieu of visiting gardens, perhaps the judges could view photos of recent introductions taken in various gardens across the country. Other possible solutions are to hold virtual spring shows and webinars of judges training.

Since most spring sale events have been cancelled, many clubs are facing financial crises and might be unable to pay their affiliation fees next year.

A recommendation was that the AIS counsel write a non-liability statement to be distributed to regions and affiliate clubs. This discussion will continue.

9. Announcements

The hundred anniversary medals will be available in three to four weeks.

The next teleconference will be July 22nd. Please have all agenda topics to Jody the week before.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Schneider