

Minutes of the AIS Board of Directors Videoconference, Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Present:

Jody Nolin (6) - President, Affiliate Chair

Andi Rivarola (15) - 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Convention Liaison (temporary), Public Relations Social Media,  
Strategic Planning

Bonnie Jean Nichols (17) – 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

Cheryl Deaton (15) - Director, Youth

Claire Schneider (15) – Director, Recording Secretary

Doug Chyz (5) - Director, Public Relations & Marketing

Howie Dash (23) – Director, RVP Counselor

Janis Shackelford (15) – Director, Policy, RVP 15

Lorene Crone (7) – Director, Electronic Services

Mike Reed (17) - Director, Awards (incoming)

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

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

Scarlett Ayres (23) - Director, AIS 2021 Convention Co-Chair

Susan Driver (7) – Director, Calendars

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

Jean Richter (14) - RVP 14, RVP Representative

Gerry Snyder (15)

John Ludi (13) – RVP 13, Publication Sales Director

Catherine Mason (10) - RVP 10

Linda Baumgartner (20) - RVP 20

Christine Dickinson (14)

Carol Cullen (14)

Jeannette Graham (11)

Joshua Winzer (22)

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 5:02 pm PDT.

A quorum was present.

1. **Motion 1:** To approve the minutes of AIS Board of Directors meeting, March 24, 2021, with a clarification by John Ludi and a correction by Wayne Messer.

Motion by Bonnie Nichols and seconded by Howie Dash. Motion passed.

2. **Motion 2**: To approve the minutes of a special *Handbook* meeting, March 30, 2021.

Motion by Janis Shackelford and seconded by Bonnie Nichols. Motion passed.

3. **Motion 3**: To approve the minutes of a special *Handbook* meeting, April 13, 2021.

Motion by Bonnie Nichols and seconded by Phyllis Wilburn. Motion passed.

4. **Motion 4**: To approve the minutes of a special *Handbook* meeting, April 27, 2021, with one correction.

Motion by Neil Houghton and seconded by Gary White. Motion passed.

## REPORTS

The following reports, marked “for information only”, were posted in AISDocs: Advertising (Dawn Boyer), Affiliate Liaison (Jody Nolin), Bulletin Editor (Jane Milliman), Calendars (Susan Driver), Electronic Services (Lorene Crone), Image Coordinator (Neil Houghton), Iris Programs - Speakers, Iris Programs - Digital (Neil Houghton), Photo Contest (Susan Driver), Public Relations and Marketing (Doug Chyz).

### 5. Affiliate Liaison - Jody Nolin

An update: 135 out of 153 affiliates are now up to date with AIS.

### 6. Calendars - Susan Driver

An order form is also included in AISDocs and is easy to use.

### 7. Website - Wayne Messer filed an electronic report

According to the 2017 & 2018 Electronic Reports, goals were to make the website easy to update, to be mobile-responsive (look good on cell phones & computers), be integrated with social media and blogs, have a better integration of member services, be easy to navigate, have a search function for the Iris Encyclopedia, include sign-up forms for email lists.

There are ten people who have editing privileges for the website, currently at 123 pages with over 700 documents and images. There are between five and six thousand visitors a month to the AIS website. Recent changes and additions to the website: links to regions and local clubs, and an update of AIS membership options.

Discussion: Errors and broken links in the AIS website should be checked and repaired in a timely manner. A suggestion was that each of the ten members of the Electronics Team be assigned to monitor a section of the AIS website for errors and out-of-date information and make

appropriate corrections. In the future, names, AIS positions and contact information will be shared by Michelle Snyder with Jane Milliman for the Bulletin and Wayne Messer for the AIS website. It might be helpful to establish a timeline of changes of AIS positions (e.g., new RVPs, new directors) so these changes can be posted and published more expediently.

Wayne proposed expanding the scope of the AIS website. For example, one of the AIS mission statements is to support the conservation of irises. He suggested that a page of information and hotlinks to HIPS, the Louisiana Iris Conservation Project, the Species Preservation Project, and other programs, some not even part of AIS, could be set up. It was suggested that directors and other Board members should periodically review the entire website with the objective of making a list of things to ADD to the website.

Wayne's summary of potential website actions:

- 1) Include conservation in the AIS website.
- 2) Use the AIS Vision Statements to add more website topics.
- 3) Form an Electronic Presence working group.
- 4) Identify ways to help regions, sections, affiliate clubs and other groups to increase their website presence.
- 5) Identify ways that would encourage discussion within AIS.

Jody Nolin proposed establishing a new standing committee to address these website actions. A small group should begin by writing a charter to include membership, functions, and responsibilities. Membership might include the Electronics Committee people plus representatives from other online services such as the AIS Encyclopedia, webinars, social media, etc.

#### 8. Image Coordinator - Neil Houghton

Neil encouraged everyone to read his report.

#### 9. Membership Development & Social Media - Andi Rivarola

During the last year, the membership secretary and membership options have changed. Membership Development and Social Media are related. Andi explained that after his presentations about social media, membership does increase. But more needs to be done. For example, 20 to 30% of affiliate clubs do not have any online presence. There should be an AIS, regional or affiliate club presence at all local garden events to publicize the culture of iris and membership in an iris society.

Discussion: There is a disconnect between AIS and local affiliate clubs. Some affiliate clubs are very isolated from AIS, without any online presence. On the other hand, the COVID pandemic has created an opportunity for the growth of online meetings and workshops. Perhaps the

reluctance of some members and clubs to make use of online meetings and webinars is lack of skill and experience using the internet and programs such as Zoom.

10. Life membership to include an e-membership?

There are 35 people who are life members and e-members. Pam Messer, membership secretary, proposes that these 35 members be given full memberships which would include the e-membership. A suggestion was made to make all life memberships include an e-membership. However, currently, there are 479 life members and 254 of those have email addresses on record. Before making a motion about adding e-membership to the life membership, more information is needed.

11. Photo Contest - Susan Driver

Susan received a tip sheet and timeline for the Photo Contest from Janet Smith, previous photo contest chair. Because she is new to this position, Susan asked for advice and insight about coordinating the Photo Contest.

12. News & Notes - Wayne Messer

In addition to the announcements in News & Notes, additional notices have been sent out via Constant Contact for surveys, webinar registrations, and other updates. This has required creating new mailing lists for each topic.

13. Public Relations and Marketing - Doug Chyz

In the AIS membership voucher program, one nursery was added and five have resigned. A search of iris related Facebook Groups found more than 100 groups with 175,000+ members that are NOT related to AIS. There were 15 groups with almost 64,000 members that ARE related to AIS. Of the twenty AIS regions, only 7 have a Facebook group with just over 3,500 members.

14. Registrar - John Jones

The charts in his report are updated for 2020. Registrations are increasing while introductions are declining. Approximately 55% of registrations are from North America. The 2020 R&I has been submitted and print copies will be available from the Store Front in mid-May. Print-on-demand continues to work well. The 2020 list of reserved and registered names is posted on the AIS website. Janis Shackelford is learning the registration process. Progress is being made in the redesign of the registrar/recorder job, the division of the workload among several people. A formal proposal for this redesign will be made to the Board at a future date. The Iris Register should be finished and uploaded by next week. Instead of being printed, the R&I appendix will now be posted as an Excel file on the AIS website. This will reduce the number of pages and the cost of printing the R&I.

OLD BUSINESS

15. Update of the *Handbook for Judges* - Bonnie Nichols

Phase 1 is almost finished, that is the writing and approval of the chapters. Only a few chapters remain to be approved, in one wrap-up meeting. Phase 2 will be the publishing of the *Handbook* in its various forms. The goal is to have the *Handbook* finished by late summer.

16. Trophies - Mike Reed

Mike's project was to investigate replacement trophies for the Franklin Cook Memorial Cup, the Ben Hager Cup and the President's Cup. The latest plan is to purchase one prop trophy that would be used in photos with the winners during the awards ceremony at the convention. A photo-plaque would be sent to each winner after the convention. Each plaque would contain a 4 by 6 inch photo of the winning flower, the AIS logo, and be engraved with "the name of the winning iris by the hybridizer." Mike suggested a three-step timeline. First, ship or carry the one prop trophy to and from the convention. After the winners are known, order the 3 plaques (or more if there is a tie) with appropriate engraving and have them shipped to Mike's home where he can insert appropriate photos. Third, send the plaques to the winners. There was a long discussion about the source of the photos including the Iris Wiki, the image coordinator (Neil Houghton), the hybridizer, or some other skilled photographer at the convention. Shipping of the photo-plaque could be via Priority Mail. These trophies and plaques would be used for the first time at the 2022 convention, in Las Cruces.

**Motion 5:** to purchase one prop trophy, a nickel-plated cup, 12 ¾ inches and to purchase 3 photo-plaque awards, black & silver, 10.5 X 13 inches from Metcalf.

Motion by Neil Houghton and seconded by Bonnie Nichols. Motion passed.

17. The AIS Ballot - Mike Reed

Mike continues to confer with Gerry Snyder about the Ballot and about the software used to compile results. The Ballot will be out shortly.

18. MemberPress - Wayne Messer

This is software that would be used on the AIS website. It can be upgraded or downgraded as necessary. The price is \$249 with an annual fee of \$399 for updates, also called a maintenance contract.

**Motion 6:** to purchase MemberPress software for use on the AIS website for \$249.

Motion by Wayne Messer and seconded by Michelle Snyder. Motion passed.

19. Purchase order policy - Jill Bonino

When an AIS Board approved purchase exceeds \$1000, Jill will pay the invoice before receiving the item. For purchases less than \$1000 (e.g., Mike Reed's purchase of the trophies), a person

will make the purchase, then submit the receipt to Michelle Snyder to go through the voucher system where in the end, Jill will issue a check for reimbursement.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 20. Silent Auction at the 2022 convention - John Ludi

Howie Dash and his 2022 Convention committee have not yet made a decision about the silent auction. Howie invited AIS to take on the silent auction.

### 21. International Competition update - Jill Bonino

Nancy Skjei, president of the Presby Memorial Iris Garden, reported to Jill that the flowers bloomed very late last year. (These irises were planted back in 2018.) From May 31 to June 4th, the Presby irises will be judged by five American judges: Jody Nolin, Andi Rivarola, Kathy Chilton, Bonnie Nichols, and Gary White. There are funds from the 2020 Convention that will pay for hotel and food for the judges. Certificates will be issued to the hybridizers of the winning flowers. Digging of the Presby irises is planned for later in the summer. An excursion to the New York Botanical Garden is being scheduled for the judges to see the guest iris planted there.

### 22. Fall Meeting - Janis Shackelford

The Fall Meeting will be in San Diego, November 6, Saturday, one day only.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The RVP Counselors meeting will be Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be a webinar, May 5<sup>th</sup>, on Siberian irises that will include a Judges Training opportunity.
- The next special AIS Board meeting for Handbook review will be Tuesday, May 11 at 5 PM Pacific time.
- The next monthly AIS Board meeting will be **TUESDAY, May 25 at 5 PM PDT**. This will be the official Spring Meeting which requires the appointment of the RVP rep to the Board, the nomination of new directors and the Treasurer's report. Also on the agenda but which might be postponed until the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, are reports from Audit, RVP, Section-Cooperating Societies, Finance, Foundation Liaison, Membership, and Storefront Sales.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM PDT.

Respectfully submitted, Claire Schneider