

AIS Board Meeting via teleconference

March 23, 2017

Meeting commenced at 7 PM Pacific time.

Gary: Thank you to all for joining this first teleconference

Roll Call:

13 voting members present, and a quorum.

Present were AIS Officers: President, Gary White; First Vice President, Jody Nolin; Second Vice President, Andi Rivarola; Secretary, Michelle Snyder; Treasurer, Dwayne Booth. Administrative Officers: Recording Secretary, Claire Schneider; Publication Sales Director, John Ludi. Directors: David Cupps, Howie Dash, Al Elliot, John Ludi, Bob Pries, Lois Rose, Claire Schneider, Gerry Snyder. Committee Chairs: Cheryl Deaton, Paul Gossett, Susan Grigg, Betty Roberts, Janet Smith, Debbie Strauss, Wayne Messer.

Gary: a few guidelines for participating in the tele conference

1. Try to limit extraneous noise. Use the “mute” button on your phone.
2. Announce yourself before you speak.
3. Because we want everyone to be able to speak, after you make a statement or comment, we will ask for others to speak before you get your turn again.
4. Limit the tele conference to one hour.

Gerald Richardson Bequest

Gary: AIS received a large check \$480,000 from the Gerald Richardson estate. The funds were received by the AIS Foundation (for the AIS), and were forwarded to the AIS Treasurer.

Suggestions have been made about use/disbursement of these funds including redesign of the website, support for the Celebration 2020, a financial audit and development of new affiliates.

Dwayne: Because this is likely a one-time infusion of funds, we should invest the majority of the bequest, treating it as an endowment. But there are current expenditure needs, an estimate of \$30,000. That would leave \$450,000 to invest.

Helping new affiliates get started in places where they don't exist. E.g. paying for speakers to go out into the “countryside” to help create new affiliates, offering programs that would draw new members.

There was a motion at the Fall meeting to set up a rainy day fund. Perhaps a portion of the money could be used to set up the Rainy Day Fund from this bequeath?

Jodi: suggests we consider the liquidity of the investment. In case of an emergency AIS would be able to access the funds. Regarding new affiliate development, yes. Also we should invest in existing affiliates. Develop new programs. At the Spring Board meeting, Jodi will present a motion to establish a new AIS award, the Richardson Award, a trophy for the host garden with best integration of iris with other plants.

Bob Pries: Due to recent austerity, there are probably lots of needs at the AIS level. Perhaps to keep liquid about 10% of this endowment for quick access.

Howie: would like to see estimates of costs of proposed website reconstruction and the 2020 Celebration.

David: Has put together a rough estimate cost of constructing a new website. Plans to survey the leadership to see what is needed on the website. Will present a more formal proposal along with cost estimate.

Paul Gossett: The 2018 AIS Convention which is being co-hosted by SLI. Still working on costs of buses and porta-potties. There is a \$12K obligation for hotel. Plus costs of AV equipment.

There is now some money left over from 2016. There are plans to sell iris to people around the country. George Hildenbrandt proposed a price of a certain amount for a package of 50 rhizomes. Jill Bonino suggested a package of fewer rhizomes so smaller clubs and/or people can afford to purchase.

Dwayne: Will Paul have better idea of costs of the 2018 AIS Convention by the time of Spring Board meeting?

Paul: yes. However not everything is final and there may be changes. Will bring best estimates of costs for the 2018 convention to the Spring Board meeting. Will take brochures of the 2018 convention to Des Moines.

Gary: Des Moines convention. Planning is going well. 277 have registered at this point. Need 300 to 325 to break even. Food (menus) planning is doing well. Buses are under budget. Planning to video tape the programs at the convention. Will cost about \$8,000. Some of the programs will be unusual and will never be repeated e.g. Tony Hall, Saturday, from KEW Gardens in Great Britain, will talk about Juno irises. The Des Moines convention is sharing the cost of Tony Hall's travel with the Denver Botanic Garden. The AIS or the Foundation might be asked to help pay part of the costs of videotaping the programs.

This convention is adding a second income source to the 2017 Convention (in addition to the Silent Auction), a live auction. AIS would receive half the proceeds and Region 21 will keep the other half of the proceeds of the Live Auction, AFTER all convention bills have been paid.

Bob Pries: Proposal of Webinars (for instruction and/or programs). Approximate cost of equipment and training is \$2K

Janet Smith: Are we printing books for 2020? Printing on demand? Are we printing a minimum number?

Bob Pries: Still working on format of the book. Softbound or hardbound. Need the upfront money. Hope to pre-sell copies to help fund this project. Won't know the real cost for a couple of years.

Andi Rivarola: Nancy has lots of great ideas about the book. The book will need lots of work over the next two years. Will have more discussion of this in Des Moines. And other 2020 Celebration issues.

Gary: There will be another (much smaller) check from the Gerald Richardson estate, later. We need to think about a motion about how to allocate money for appropriate projects/needs discussed tonight. To be presented at the Spring Board meeting.

Betty Roberts: I hold a seat on Board of Trustees of Denver Botanic Garden. Will there be minutes of this meeting?

Gary: Yes. Available by the Spring Board meeting in Des Moines.

Future Meetings as tele-conferences

Gary: Impressions of the tele-conference? How should we proceed? Maybe to schedule one or two teleconferences between Board meetings.

Michelle: Isn't purpose of teleconference to eliminate Fall meetings? Having teleconferences would eliminate costs of attending these Fall Board meetings. This might entice more people to become members of the Board.

Gary: Maybe at some point the Fall meetings could be eliminated. However Fall Board Meetings have already have scheduled in Dallas 2017, Portland 2018, and Tulsa in 2019.

Jodi: Maybe publish a schedule for these tele-conferences. How about one teleconference per month on a regular day/date and time. We could get into the habit being at the meeting. Put

notices of the tele conferences in the bulletin so all AISmembers will know and be able to “attend.” By having a schedule of several meetings, we could be sure to have a voting quorum.

Bob: That’s a good idea to have teleconference meetings on a regular basis.

Paul Gossett: It won’t break my heart to eliminate Fall Board meetings!

Andi: An hour for a tele conference is doable.

Michelle: What about the written reports that are submitted at the Spring and Fall meetings?

Gary: We still need bi-annual reports. Maybe to spread out the reports over the monthly tele-conferences instead of trying to hear all of them at the Fall and Spring meetings. Maybe to hear a few reports per month? This would leave time at the meetings to discuss other items and ideas.

Jodi: There are some committee reports geared to certain time of the year. E.g. Exhibition reports could be presented after the shows. Many of the reports are time sensitive. Other reports are not.

Gary: quarterly updates of committees might work. E.g.membership. Need to come up with a schedule for hearing the reports. Will need to speak with each of the committee chairs to find out best time for them to submit.One report per year, two or four? When would be best month to present each report? Then devise a schedule.

Andi: teleconference calls could be expanded. Lots of technology out there. Google suite is free for non profits. There is so much more we can do. We could attach reports and talk about them during tele conference. Having the reports ahead of a tele conference would help the meetings to run more efficiently.

David: runs a webinar, once a week, for the company for whom he works.Where a small group of people would be able to discuss an AIS topic of concern then report back to the Board. Our email system (after consulting with John Jones) will be modified, making it “less ugly.”

Bob: Communication system for non members. Nobody is using the Iris Talks anymore

David: Has ideas for employing more technology to make conference and communication easier, less cumbersome.

Lois: Do we need to alter the bylaws to reflect change in meetings and presentation of reports? Do our bylaws permit e-meetings? Are we permitted to alter the schedule of department reports?

Jodi: A committee two years ago looked at the bylaws. The existing bylaws do not exclude any the technology. But doesn't specifically include it either.

The Bylaws Group recommended and the Board accepted a change of wording to include "electronic media" to replace snail mail and printed notices.

We hope to have the reworked bylaws printed and available to members in the coming year.

Gary: Susan Boyce was concerned that this teleconference wasn't announced to all membership by mail 30 days in advance, as required in the bylaws for regular board meetings. Veronica Johnson, attorney, was asked to look at our bylaws to make sure this teleconference is permitted by the AIS bylaws.

Two separate types of Board Meetings are described in the bylaws. 1) Business meeting and 2) general meeting. Both are held in Fall and Spring. AIS president can call a business meeting, such as this one, whenever he or she wishes. In addition, any 40 members of AIS (no more than 15 from one region) can petition the president to call a meeting. That meeting must be announced to the membership 30 days in advance and the agenda consists only of the item(s) for which the meeting was called. So, these teleconferences, called by the AIS President, do not violate our bylaws.

Howie: Is there any problem with posting an announcement of these meetings on the website.

Gary: This meeting was posted on the website.

Susan Grieg: From discussions on bylaws committee: The bylaws should cover what we want done. But not be so explicit as to keep us from doing what we want to do. Keep the bylaws less specific.

Gary: Next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 26.

5 PM Pacific, 6 PM Mountain, 7 PM Central, and 8 PM Eastern Zone.

Adjourned 8:08 PM Pacific Time

Respectfully submitted by
Claire Schneider