



Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture

Board Meeting

Hyatt Regency Mission Bay, San Diego, CA

Friday, October 27, 2023 – 1:00PM – 5:00PM

Saturday, October 28, 2023 - 8:00AM – 12:00PM

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1:00 PM - Convene Meeting – Kevin Eckert – President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement

- **Present, in person:** Kevin Eckert, President; Sarah Maitland, President Elect; Daniel Goyette, Past President; Tracey Takeuchi, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Justin Barrios, Director; Julia Gowin, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Ken Knight, ISA Council Representative; Jonathan Flournoy, Secretary; Ian Campbell, Commercial Chair; Joey-Lynn Watt; Marketing Chair; Kathleen Falamino, Staff
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Preston Goodman, Treasurer; John Crandell, Director; Jessika Mitchell, Women in Arboriculture Chair; Igor Lacan, Education Chair; Ryan Gilpin, Tree Care for Wildlife Chair; Linda Chalker Scott, Editor

Action Items

- Consider a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda
 - Motion put forward by Kevin Eckert to approve meeting agenda. Seconded by Sarah Maitland. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Consider a motion to approve the consent agenda (*written reports received*)
 - Alison Lancaster motions to approve the consent agenda. Motion seconded by Julia Gowin. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Consider a motion to approve the July 21-22, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Motion put forward by Alison Lancaster. Motion seconded by Daniel Goyette. Motion carried with no opposition.

Officer Reports

- Executive Director's Report – see submitted report, summarized by Rose Epperson
 - Membership numbers are relatively static overall. Credential numbers are staying healthy, but CTW is very low. TRAQ gained numbers, especially in Nevada.
 - Overall number from membership survey went up from 4.3 to 4.4 from last year.
 - Many people providing feedback had over 11 years' experience. It would be good to get feedback from more junior arborists and practitioners.
 - There is good peer-to-peer activity on Tradewing.
 - TRAQ expenses have gone up but the fee for members has stayed constant. Our programs are cheaper than other ISA chapters.
- COR Representative – see submitted report, summarized by Ken Knight
 - This will be Ken's last term since the COR will be disbanded as of January 1, 2024. It will be replaced with a new leadership council. Governance will be done more by the ISA board of directors. Ken thinks that then, chapters won't have input on governance of the ISA board.
 - Ken thinks the ISA board should delay implementation of this change until the ISA board provides more details about their plans.
 - Motion put forward by Justin Barrios to draft a letter to the ISA Board to delay the disbanding of the COR based on Ken Knight's recommendations. Tracey Takeuchi seconded.



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- Discussion: the letter must be timely. Ken Knight can draft a letter and the board reviews it.
- Motion carried with no opposition.
- Treasurer's Report – See submitted report, summarized by Preston Goodman
 - The chapter continues to be in a healthy financial condition and cash flow is increasing. However we are down \$15k from our last board meeting—it's not just us, it's market-wide due to worldwide conflicts. However, our investments, at \$400k, are still higher than when we started the calendar year.
 - Motion put forward by Ken Knight to accept the Treasurer's Report. Justin Barrios seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Editor's Report – See submitted report, summarized by Linda Chalker-Scott
 - They made a structural change in what they designate as features and departments to follow the industry standard. A magazine survey from earlier that year was attached to the report, with a few trolling/personal snipe comments removed.

Dialogue Session

- Micro-credentialing Discussion
 - Kevin Eckert had sent out document laying out a plan for the micro-credentialing (MC) program. He also published a letter in Western Arborist, from which he got a lot of feedback. Kevin said the plan would move forward with subject matter experts (SME), but the board would be involved in the policy overview.
 - Many people liked the overall plan, but wanted to see more details about how the program would be structured. Some of the questions posed were:
 - What would SME's and ISA's liabilities be?
 - Who owns the program? WCISA, some other party? Will WCISA administer the program?
 - Kevin Eckert sees the ISA as the eventual owner of the program, but we would need to develop the leadership. We could develop it and give it to ISA, like what the PNW chapter did with the TRACE program.
 - If the MC holder is out of the USA, their personal data would need to be managed under their country's rules.
 - Kevin Eckert: some possible MC's that aren't already out there are vegetation management, tree felling, chainsaw safety, maybe Gilman's pruning program in Florida.
 - How will the program be funded? Kevin Eckert doesn't think it will be as expensive as other programs, and they may be able to find many volunteers. Ken Knight said maybe the tree fund can provide seed money.
 - It doesn't seem like TCIA or other organizations have a similar program.
 - Igor Lacan suggested focusing on one or a few MC's to see how they develop, and model subsequent MC's on that experience.
 - Kevin Eckert suggested looking into how TRAQ was created and then replicating the process with the MC's.
 - The board then discussed creating a committee to provide support and research into MC implementation.



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- Motion put forward by Tracey Takeuchi that the board approves forming an ad-hoc committee to consider and develop a micro-credential program. Ken Knight seconded.
 - Discussion: Maybe we can have the committee create a framework for the MC, and then suggest a subject for a pilot MC program?
 - Motion carried with no opposition.
 - People volunteering for the ad-hoc committee were: Igor Lacan, Jessika Mitchell, Ken Knight, Julia Gowin (although she may bring in someone else from CalFire).
 - Rose Epperson: it may be useful to get people from other states as well for the ad-hoc committee.
- Speaker Honorarium Discussion
 - The following question was posed: is there a chapter policy on caps for speaker honorariums?
 - Rose Epperson: it's in the policy manual. Chapter members are expected to give their time. Members may be compensated for full-day programs when they're the sole speaker, like TRAQ instructors. However, for hour-long sessions there are typically no honorariums.
 - Igor Lacan: there is an issue with an upcoming workshop with multiple speakers, where some speakers wanted a larger honorarium and would pull from the talk if their request was not met. How the chapter responds may set a precedent for future speakers requesting honorariums.
 - Rose Epperson: this is a volunteer organization which thrives on some volunteers getting compensated, some less. It is a flexible policy.
 - Motion put forward by Tracey Takeuchi to adjourn for the day. Justin Barrios seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.



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8:00AM: Convene Meeting – Kevin Eckert, President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement

- **Present, in person:** Kevin Eckert, President; Daniel Goyette, Past President; Tracey Takeuchi, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Justin Barrios, Director; Julia Gowin, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Ken Knight, ISA Council Representative; Jonathan Flournoy, Secretary; Joey-Lynn Watt; Marketing Chair; Kathleen Falamino, Staff; Todd Walker, Utility Chair (arrived at 9:13 a.m.)
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Sarah Maitland, President Elect (logged on around 9:40 a.m.); John Crandell, Director; Jessika Mitchell, Women in Arboriculture Chair; Ryan Gilpin, Tree Care for Wildlife Chair; John Leffingwell, TREE Fund Chair; Madeleine Rauhe; Robert Phillips, Historian; Gordon Matassa, Membership Chair

Strategic Committee Reports

- Student Committee – Madeleine Rauhe
 - Forest Service grant for student scholarship Alternatives-
 - A line item in the budget as a reserve (\$3000.00)
 - Britton Fund
 - Fundraise with product item-promotional event
 - Dinner, Class, Hiking Event, etc.
 - Motion put forward by Julia Gowin to approve the requested \$3,000 as an annual budget for the Student Committee. Motion seconded by Tracey Takeuchi.
 - Discussion: What happens to unused funds? Answer: they stay in the general fund.
 - Motion carried with no opposition.
- TREE Fund – John Leffingwell
 - See submitted report, summarized by John Leffingwell.
 - John Leffingwell said the purpose of his presentation was to extend his thanks to the board for supporting their events.
- Tree Care for Birds and Wildlife – Ryan Gilpin
 - See submitted report, summarized by Ryan Gilpin.
 - Ryan Gilpin: The committee is creating a wildlife-trained arborist list. To be on the list, you need to be a certified arborist, take a workshop, be aware of the migratory bird treaty act and its protections, and want customers to directly contact you. They're trying to narrow their scope, and so the list does not have consulting arborists on it yet. Also, setting up a system to find "nearby" arborists is surprisingly difficult for now, so they list the arborists on a map instead.
- Utility Committee – Todd Walker
 - Todd Walker: many utilities aren't adept at making the best decisions regarding vegetation management. A major initiative for the committee is to engage with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to help them with policy and procedure decisions, and to better understand utility vegetation management (UVM). They were hoping to have a full-day seminar in the spring with speakers with representation from



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the CPUC. The seminar would be open to WCISA members.

- Discussion: The CPUC is a smart group but they don't understand vegetation management well—the WCISA would be a great 3rd party resource for them. Perhaps we can offer help to other states as well.
 - Rose: we try to set up the calendar 6 months in advance, and already have a lot of planned workshops. Can this be pushed to late February or May?
- Britton Fund – Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson gave a short update. 3 big things are happening now: year-end appeal, Hawaii arbor day, 2023/2024 research RFP.
 - Few WCISA members donate to the fund. They are trying to increase those numbers.
 - Governance Committee has asked John Crandell if he would serve on the Britton Fund to have someone there from WCISA board.
 - Britton Fund can fund smaller projects as opposed to other arboricultural research funds.
 - Ken Knight: maybe the Britton Fund can make a video or other media to take credit for what they've done.
- (not committee report) Ken Knight: The Council of Representatives (CoR) position at ISA is ending. How would the WCISA board feel about him running for 1 of 6 positions on the ISA leadership board?
 - Discussion: If the CoR position ends at ISA, the WCISA would keep the CoR board position, but change the title to match the ISA.
 - Informal Board consensus is that there is no conflict with Ken running for ISA Board and CoR position. If he wins ISA Board position, he would need to resign as CoR and WC Board could fill that position as with any vacated Board position.

Old Business/New Business

- Julia Gowin: instead of just talking about the *quantity* of jobs in our industry, should we talk about the *quality* of jobs in our industry in terms of compensation and benefits? Is the industry meeting the needs of the workforce?
 - Discussion was diverse. Some comments were:
 - PG&E raised their salaries recently which has disrupted the industry.
 - End users/clients need to demand higher qualifications/certifications.
 - TCIA does a membership survey every year of wages and benefits.
 - Clients often ask for bad work (improper pruning), and tree contractors often comply.
 - This may be 2 separate issues. Many decision makers go with the lowest bid. How do employers improve cultural conditions if they can't get contracts to cover those expenses?
 - Joey-Lynn Watt: the Marketing Committee is working to educate the public—in Nevada, their no topping campaign has been working. Marketing should get involved in social media. The committee discussed hiring a marketing consultant.
 - Discussion:



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- How about a PSA on public TV or news radio station? Answer: production costs are high, in the hundreds of thousands.
- There's grant money from NDF to produce public information.
- We need to get moving on a marketing consultant.
- Joey-Lynn Watt wants to create a subcommittee that meets more often than the Marketing Committee's 1x/2 months for an hour.
 - Sarah Maitland: Monica Hemmingway offered to meet with the marketing committee at no cost.
 - Joey-Lynn Watt: they are working on that meeting right now.

Dialogue Session

- Continued Micro-credentialing Discussion
 - John Campbell was added onto Kevin Eckert's list for the micro-credential team.
- Marketing
 - See previous section, under old business.
- Open Dialogue
 - Robert Phillips is putting together a list of significant contributions to the chapter for its 90th anniversary and asked for suggestions from the chapter.
 - Alison Lancaster suggested the women's workshop with WCISA, the Spanish Committee, and professional scholarships. The young professional award was a nice addition in the ways we recognize membership.
- Meeting Schedule
 - We will meet remotely on February 2, 2024, all day 8am-5pm.
 - Then we will meet remotely on April 12, 2024 all day 8am-5pm.
- Motion put forward by Alison Lancaster to adjourn the meeting at 11:01am. Daniel Goyette seconded. Motion carried with no opposition.

11:01 AM ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Flournoy, Board Secretary
December 26, 2023