



Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture

Board Meeting

WCISA Chapter Headquarters, Porterville, CA

Friday, April 4, 2025 – 1:00PM – 5:00PM

Saturday, April 5, 2025 – 8:00AM – 1:00PM

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1:00 PM - Convene Meeting –Sarah Maitland – President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement

- **Present, in person:** Sarah Maitland, President; Tracey Takeuchi, President Elect; Rhonda Wood, ISA Council Representative; John Crandell, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Kathleen Falamino, Staff; Jonathan Flourney, Secretary; Erik Maue, Membership chair; Cristian Garcia Arcos, Spanish co-chair
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Julia Gowin, Director; Gordon Matasa, Director; Alden Justin Barrios, Director; Beverly Babb, Annual Meeting 2025 co-chair, Josh Gevertz, Education co-chair; Ryan Gilpin, Tree Care for Wildlife chair; Terri-Ann Koike, Credentialing chair; James Komen, Consulting chair; John Leffingwell, TREE Fund chair

Action Items

- Consider a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda
 - Tracey Takeuchi motions to approve the meeting agenda. Rhonda Wood seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Consider a motion to approve the consent agenda (written reports)
 - Alison Lancaster motions to approve the consent agenda, Rhonda Wood seconds.
 - Discussion: Rose Epperson said they would like to pull the finance report off the consent agenda for today.
 - Motion carried with no opposition.
 - Committee Reports Received:

▪ Finance Committee	▪ Municipal Arborist Committee
▪ Membership Committee	▪ Utility
▪ TREE Fund Committee	▪ Student
▪ Credentialing Committee	▪ Pride Network
▪ Education Committee	▪ Britton Fund Report
▪ Consulting Arborist Committee	
- Consider a motion to approve the January 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes
 - Rhonda Wood motions to approve the meeting minutes. John Crandell seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.

Officer Reports

- President's Goals Update – Presented by Sarah Maitland
 - Sarah Maitland: the Women in Arboriculture committee has not had meetings for a couple of years. Rhonda Wood is the board liaison. But they have an initial meeting planned on April 22 before the conference, and already have 18 people signed up to be part of the committee.
 - There are new people on the marketing committee. But they still need a marketing chair.
 - Policy and Procedures is getting close to completion.
- Executive Director's Report – See report, summarized by Rose Epperson



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- Rose Epperson: membership and credentialing update: it looks like we may have gone down by 90 members, but as mentioned many times in the past, our numbers fluctuate a lot throughout the year and depend a lot on when people pay their membership fee. She's been trying to combat the number fluctuations by pulling the membership reports at the same time every month.
- There are 827 ISA members in our geographic area who aren't in the chapter. These are low-hanging fruit for recruitment.
- Discussion: at a lot of TRAQ and other certification events, most people taking the exams are not part of WCISA because they're from other parts of the country or they're not interested.
 - Tracey Takeuchi: maybe can reach out to people's employers to show them the benefits of their employees joining the chapter.
- TRAQ numbers are up slightly. Pass rate is still good (80%), and the program is popular and steadily increasing over the last 5 years.
- Financial profit and loss are healthy for right now.
- There are great conversations every day on TradeWing. People are also watching webinars on the platform as well.
- The same posts are made on the Facebook and Instagram pages, but the views on each post are different. Also, members tend to be younger on Instagram than Facebook. The rate of opening on YouTube channel is much higher than the industry standard.
- There is a leadership workshop in October in New Zealand.
- Z133 Update is completed.
- Multiple "memo of understanding" agreements are up for renewal soon.
- We got the green light on all our grant funding.
- Treasurer's Report – See report, summarized by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: Jeff Spohn couldn't make it today. The finance committee met and the WCISA continues to be in healthy financial condition with \$1,337,000 combined balance of checking/savings.
 - Everything from the US Forest Service was on hold, but it has since been released and our forest service funding is coming in.
 - Numbers are a bit messy around June, which is the end of our financial year, because we are paying for things that are happening later in the fall past the financial year.
 - There's been a big increase in book sales due to the "Botany for Arborists" book. The ISA will also start selling this book too.
- Component Council Representative (CCR) Report – See report, summarized by Rhonda Wood
 - Rhonda Wood: There hasn't been much on activity Microsoft Teams, possibly because it's all still new. But she's still happy to start some conversations if we have things we'd like her to talk about. She's had some issues getting notifications from Teams.
 - Discussion: maybe Rhonda Wood should bring up the issue of notifications and Microsoft Teams with ISA. If people don't have notifications turned on correctly, then it's hard to get participation. Also, due to the way the Component Council (CC) was set up, participation is more up to the individual CCR's initiative.



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- In the past it seemed like the CC was partially meant to find people to become future ISA board members. However, the background they're looking for in board members may be too stringent.
- Editor's Report – Linda Chalker-Scott
 - This report was shelved for today.

Strategic Committee Reports

- Membership – see report, summarized by Erik Mael
 - Erik Mael: one of their goals is to engage with non-WCISA member arborists. They are getting good data by seeing who's actually opening the emails they send out.
 - They're setting up raffles with different prizes like a coffee tumbler and keychain and mouse pad. However, the tumbler required more postage and was harder to ship. So, the tumbler will be removed in the future. They will be raffling away the remaining tumblers at the conference. At this raffle, they can also introduce people to the committee, and traffic people to other committees as well.
 - They're looking at an LED magnifier with our logo and will order those.
 - They've selected featured membership profiles to Western Arborist.
 - Rose Epperson: all committee chairs are invited to give a presentation at the business meeting on Friday of the conference.
- Students – see report, presented by Tracey Takeuchi, board liaison
 - Tracey Takeuchi: they were able to find six scholarships for students.
 - It's been difficult to get students to apply.
 - They're trying to give the scholarship and a plaque to the students at the annual conference to encourage attendance. They also get a swag bag from membership. Rose Epperson: it's been difficult to get faculty to respond when we send them information about the scholarship.
- Marketing – Open, presented by Sarah Maitland
 - Sarah Maitland: A lot of Marketing was covered during the Executive Director's report.
 - Rose Epperson: please, like, read, and share our social media posts.
- Awards – Rebecca Senior, presented by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: the mayor of Tucson will be introducing the awards ceremony. Things are chugging along.
- History – Robert Phillips, presented by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: Robert Phillips won't be able to make the conference, but Rose will bring some cool posters from him to the conference.
- Bylaws – Dennis Yniguez, presented by Sarah Maitland
 - Sarah Maitland: our bylaws update will be part of the nominations and election report tomorrow morning.
- TREE Fund – See report, presented by John Leffingwell
 - John Leffingwell: TREE Fund continues to try to find new ways to increase awareness of the TREE Fund. They're trying to publish the results of a survey they recently did of membership. They are looking for researchers who will most benefit from TREE Fund grants.
 - Generally, the WCISA provides \$2,500 for riders on their Tour de Trees, but he wants to



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know what to do about “virtual riders” who will be doing their own different activities remotely.

- Discussion: yes, we (the board) will support the virtual riders.

- Britton Fund – see report, presented by John Crandell, board liaison
 - John Crandell: the Britton Fund put out a fire guide very quickly after the Los Angeles area fires in January.
 - You can go on the Britton Fund website to sponsor a rider. There are several mileage options.
 - The Britton Fund helped sponsor the research of 2 speakers at the upcoming annual conference.
 - People should donate at the silent auction at the conference.
 - Discussion: maybe you can bundle a Tree Care for Wildlife BMP along with a Wildlife Snag sign and a pair of binoculars at the silent auction.
- Credentialing – see report, presented by Terri-Ann Koike
 - Terri-Ann Koike: Doug Anderson is now co-chair of the committee.
 - An exam near Las Vegas after the Arizona community tree council was cancelled due to lack of registration.
 - It turned out that very few of her Honolulu Certified Tree Climber (CTC) evaluators completed paperwork 2 years ago on the CTC rules, so they weren’t put on the ISA’s list of evaluators. So, she’s encouraging them to fill it out and get back on the list.
 - You no longer need to be a Certified Arborist to apply to be a Certified Urban Forest Professional.
 - They’re thinking about putting together a survey for members to see how they benefited from getting credentials (did they get a raise, etc.).
 - They’ve filled their schedule for the rest of the year.
 - Discussion: a question was posed about whether you still need to complete the CTC practical exam if you participate in the Tree Climbing Championship (TCC). The answer was yes, but you need to complete the events in the TCC and do a series of knots with an evaluator.
- Education – see report, presented by Josh Gevertz, co-chair
 - Josh Gevertz: Pretty much all educational offerings were given over a 4.5 average rating with a couple of exceptions.
 - They’ve kickstarted a tree species-specific series of webinars for the rest of the year. They’re going to start an experimental evening webinar series in June. The slate of programming for this summer is full and diverse.
 - Josh suggested more integration of the education committee with other committee leaders.
 - Discussion: from Membership Committee, a lot of members have wondered why the programming is so California-heavy? The answer was that each state in the chapter commits to doing a certain number of educational programs every year, and there is significant programming in each state. So maybe there’s a disconnect between member sentiment and the actual programming. Also, sometimes programming in areas with less draw are subsidized by other, better-attended events.



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- Tree Climbing Championship – Jared Abrojena, presented by Rose Epperson
 - Rose Epperson: She gave a brief update in her Executive Director's Report that they'll be going to Sacramento, with a day of safety before the Tree Climbing Championships.
- Annual Meeting 2025 – Presented by Beverly Babb
 - Beverly Babb: They're on the home stretch.
 - They have 6 golfers signed up. Full conference registration was 179 full registrants and several for single day. Spouse guest program has 2. The wood workshop has 15. Many people signed up for the tree ring workshop, TRAQ program, and others.
 - All volunteer members are working on bringing silent auction items.
 - Discussion: There will also be a Tree Circus event in Tucson the day before the annual conference.
 - Rose Epperson: Every year we have a small local group that volunteers and puts a lot of work into the conference. Rose asked if we could provide a \$150 discount on conference registrations for volunteer members of the committee. As in a committee registration rate, for conference committee volunteers.
 - Alison Lancaster motions to approve a \$150 discount on registration fees for conference committee members. Tracey Takeuchi seconded.
 - Discussion: is a \$150 discount enough? Answer: yes it puts it in the range of student and senior registrations.
 - Also are we making a decision for just the Arizona conference, or for all future conferences? Answer: this is for all future conferences, Alison didn't specify just one date in the motion.
 - Motion carried with no opposition.
- Commercial – Ian Campbell, presented by Julia Gowin
 - Julia Gowin: Ian isn't present, but he asked her to say that the report from the last board meeting applies because not much has happened since then.
- Consulting – see report, presented by James Komen
 - James Komen: there has been substantial collaboration between the consulting and education committees.
 - They did tree inventory workshops in Colma, CA and Los Angeles, CA and got good responses. They've got several articles coming to Western Arborist. They also have many online offerings including roundtables. James wanted to extend thanks to Rose Epperson for offering CEU's to some roundtables, it helps a lot with attendance. There's a lot of good content coming between in person events and online offerings. Also, a lot of the roundtables make good content for articles.
 - Discussion: Tracey asked how CEU's are tracked in roundtables. Also, she's had trouble getting into a roundtable.
 - Answer: we do participation reports that come from the zoom, then record CEU's from that. Also, we had an issue before where our zoom meetings had a 100-participant limit. So, they will increase the limit in the future if they get an event with more than 100 sign-ups. However, most of the time only a fraction of people who sign up actually attend.
 - James Komen will be giving a report at the business meeting after the conference.
- Municipal – see report



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- Spanish – presented by Cristian Garcia Arcos
 - Cristian Garcia Arcos: The committee continues to have regular meetings. They celebrated their February 2025 Costa Mesa event. It was a great event catered to local gardeners to teach them how to prune trees. They also planted a tree. They discussed tips on staying safe while pruning palm trees. The talks were also recorded so they're hoping to put the talks on YouTube.
 - Wister Dorta has been working with Target Chemicals who can present on some pesticide information at a future event.
 - Tree of Life Nursery will also help host an event with them targeted toward gardeners.
 - They're forming a subcommittee to get some swag for the committee.
 - Discussion: Rose Epperson: the Britton fund is interested in having the Spanish committee translate their technical sheets. They did a good job on the translations they did for Western Arborist.
 - Rose Epperson: it's great that the Spanish committee is doing outreach outside of the chapter. Also, there are many large companies, like chemical companies, that would be willing to sponsor these events to keep them free for attendees.
- Tree Care for Wildlife – See report, presented by Ryan Gilpin
 - Ryan Gilpin: 100 wildlife snag signs are being printed now and will be brought to the conference. They cost \$27.50 each right now.
 - Discussion: do we want to sell these at a profit or at cost? It sounds like we need to figure out shipping and handling costs first to come up with a price point. The consensus was to sell it at cost, not make a profit.
 - Ryan Gilpin: They've had successful events. Unfortunately, they had to cancel a Spanish workshop due to low sign-ups. Also, several people wanted to bring Tree Care for Wildlife to Colorado.
- Pride Network – see report, presented by Gordon Matassa, board liaison
 - Gordon Matassa: they're going to do a meet-n-greet style event at the swing suit at the annual conference. And put a blurb in the 5-minute update.
 - They came up with some logos from a graphic designer and presented it to the board.

5:00 PM Adjourn



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8:07AM: Convene Meeting – Sarah Maitland, President

Roll Call & Anti-Trust Statement, read by Sarah Maitland

- **Present, in person:** Sarah Maitland, President; Tracey Takeuchi, President Elect; Rhonda Wood, ISA Council Representative; John Crandell, Director; Alison Lancaster, Director; Rose Epperson, Executive Director; Kathleen Falamino, Staff; Jonathan Flournoy, Secretary; Cristian Garcia Arcos, Spanish co-chair
- **Present, remote (not all present for entire meeting):** Julia Gowin, Director; Gordon Matasa, Director; Kevin Eckert, Past President; Walt Warriner, Finance chair

Committee Reports (continued)

- Finance – see report, presented by Walt Warriner
 - Walt Warriner: Their report is from before the market crash.
 - The stock market doesn't respond well to the large tariffs, now at levels not seen since the 1930's. However, the chapter's portfolio was well-diversified, which helps absorb the shock to the stock market. Francine Lai is available if we need to talk to her more.
 - Walt still recommends we continue to invest in stocks, especially since prices are now low.
 - Tracey Takeuchi: recommends pausing the regular contributions to the money exchange fund for 3 months to see where the market is going. A cautionary pause is in the chapter's interest.
 - Tracey Takeuchi motions that we pause Francine Lai's authority to invest for 3 months but continue the \$5000 a month contribution into the money market account. Julia Gowin seconds.
 - Discussion: Kevin Eckert said that it took less time, like 6 years, for the 2008 crash to recover. Walt Warriner: the issue with pausing Francine's authority would add a layer of complexity. How does that work? Tracey responded that Francine would just pause stock investments (additional investing) for 3 months for us to see what happens. This will not have much effect on cost averaging over time. Francine just can't take additional funds from the money market account to invest for 3 months.
 - Tracey Takeuchi revised the motion to clarify that Francine will retain the authority to move existing investments, just not contribute more. Julia Gowin seconds the amended motion.
 - Motion carried with 8 voting in favor and 1 opposed.

Old Business

- P&P Manual
 - The outstanding item is for each group to review what Kathleen Falamino put in for their section.
 - They are adding a change under Section 2, B. Elections:
 - "Election results are held in confidence by the Nominations Chair, Past President, and Executive Director, until approved by the board. Once approved



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by the board, the nominees will be notified, and an announcement will be made by the chapter". Basically, the Nominations Committee is not notified until the board approves the candidates.

- What's confidential is the discussion at the board around the results.
- What's still outstanding is committees are not included in the document yet.
- ISA Agreements – Memo of Understanding (MOU)
 - The ISA wants our feedback by April 25, not a signature yet. Feedback would be an email to Caitlyn Pollihan.
 - The board then looked through the Certification Partner Agreement.
 - Tracey Takeuchi motions to accept the Certification Partner Agreement. Rhonda Wood seconds. Motion carried with no opposition.
- Women in Arboriculture (WIA) Equipment Transfer
 - Sarah Maitland: They've been working on a WIA pre-conference activity. It's difficult for us as a chapter to move the equipment to different events. She talked with Christina Cloer with Arizona Community Tree Council (ACTC). They think it's better to have instructors bring the equipment to each event. It's a lot of effort to manage the gear, as items expire, and they need to bring the gear to each event. The chapter attorney is working on a release of liability for using this equipment.
 - Kevin Eckert motions to donate the serviceable climbing equipment from WIA to ACTC, once we have an executed release of liability. Justin Barrios seconds.
 - Discussion: we clarified that the release of liability will be signed *before* donating the equipment.
 - Motion carried with no opposition.

New Business

- Contract Renewal with Epicenter
 - Rose Epperson: The main changes to the contract will center around the Western Arborist magazine and social media. But she does not yet have a contract. She would like to consider a 3-year contract this time.
 - Tracey Takeuchi: wanted to bring into consideration that Epicenter Management should work on a succession plan in case Rose Epperson needs to step down as Executive Director. Rose said that the contract is a business contract and shouldn't involve this. Julia Gowin clarified that this was just for us to communicate with Rose that Epicenter is welcome to think about what to do with a succession plan, not that we think she will have an issue leading Epicenter. Rose is now under the understanding that she needs to go through and write up the proposed changes to the contract, for review by the board.
 - Rose recommends the board motions to extend the contract while we are renegotiating a new contract.
 - Kevin Eckert motions to extend Epicenter Management's contract for 3 months to permit renegotiation without a lapse in contract. Tracey Takeuchi second.
 - Discussion: Justin Barrios: is Epicenter going to accept that contract? Rose said that yes, she accepts the extension. Sarah Maitland mentioned that the renegotiation of the contract on the items of the Western Arborist magazine



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and social media is valid.

- Motion carried with no opposition.

- Conference Activities

- The board chose moderators for the conference talks.
- Tracey Takeuchi: there will be a student meetup but it got too large and diluted last year, this year it will be on an invitation basis.
- The Business Meeting will be Friday morning after the conference, 1.5 hour duration.

- Schedule meetings 2025/26

- July: Sacramento
 - Our next board meeting will be July 17-18, 2025 on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning.
- October: Yosemite (next conference site)
 - Board meeting will be October 9-10, 2025, 2025 Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, at the Tenaya Lodge near Yosemite National Park.
 - The ISA Conference is October 18, 2025 (October 17 PST) through the following week.
- January: Virtual
 - Friday January 16, 2026 all day virtual meeting
- April: Hybrid (virtual or chapter office)
 - April 10-11, 2026 Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, virtual or in Porterville

- OPEN DISCUSSION

- The board thanks Kevin Eckert for his service with the chapter.

- NEXT MEETING

- Board calls will be scheduled on Wednesday May 14, 2025 12:00-1:30 PST, and June 18, 12:00-1:30 PST

11:58 AM ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Flourney, Board Secretary
June 9, 2025