**ILLINOIS CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of a Meeting**

**Held March 14-16, 2021**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Corn Growers Association was held in the Illinois Corn office on March 14-16, 2021.

 Directors present were:

 Bill Leigh Randy DeSutter

 Sarah Hastings Don Guinnip

 Dave Rylander Jason Bunting

 Marty Marr Mike Shane

 Keith Sanders Terry Smith

 Matt Rush Joe Murphy

 Mark Bunselmeyer Ellen Rahn

 Garrett Hawkins Steve Koeller

 Also present were:

 Rodney Weinzierl Jacqueline Muhammad

 Kayla Veeder Dave Loos

 Ashley Deal Collin Watters

 Laura Gentry Travis Deppe

 Jim Tarmann Dan Obert

 Lucas McPherson Kenny Hartman

The Board meeting was called to order by President, Randy DeSutter at 2:00pm.

SECRETARYS REPORT

Matt Rush presented the minutes of the January Executive Committee meeting.

 **It was moved by Matt Rush and seconded by Marty Marr**

**THAT the minutes of the January 15, 2021 meeting of the Executive Committee of the Illinois Corn Growers Association be approved and placed on file.**

 **The motion carried.**

Matt Rush presented the minutes of the January full board meeting.

 **It was moved by Matt Rush and seconded by Terry Smith**

**THAT the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Corn Growers Association be approved and placed on file.**

 **The motion carried.**

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Sarah Hastings reported that the committee met and completed a review of expenses and vouchers.

TREASURERS REPORT

Sarah Hastings reviewed the financial statements ending January 31, 2021.

 **It was moved by Dave Rylander and seconded by Joe Murphy**

 **THAT the treasurer’s report be placed on file.**

 **The motion carried.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Rod Weinzierl gave an update on legislative efforts in Springfield. The Illinois Soybeans Association would like to include B20 in HB 229 and SB 2394.

 **It was moved by Don Guinnip and seconded by Mike Shane**

**THAT we support Illinois Soybean Association’s efforts to include B20 in HB 229 and SB 2394.**

 **The motion carried.**

Rod reviewed the agenda of the upcoming joint executive committee meeting with the Illinois Soybean Association.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Randy DeSutter reported for the committee.

***Corn Congress Meeting Review***

The committee commented on how well-organized Corn Congress went this year. Our delegates were able to have meaningful conversations throughout the meeting that helped facilitate discussion on the delegate floor.

Rod Weinzierl gave an update on the status of the impact of the new resolution around RON95.

***Congressional Visit Overview***

Rod Weinzierl gave an overview of the virtual congressional visit schedule. We will go over the full schedule in more detail during the full board briefing tomorrow morning.

***Farm Bill Task Force Update***

If directors are interested in being on the Farm Bill Task Force, submit your name to President, Randy DeSutter. There will likely be several board members and ex-officio members on the task force. It’s likely that we will do several listening sessions throughout the state.

***2022 ICGA 50th Anniversary***

So far, Bill Leigh has volunteered to participate on the committee to plan this event. The committee discussed adding ten years to the IL Corn history book.

***CFAR Appointment***

Sue Adams has served as a representative on the Council for Food and Ag Research (CFAR) for several years. This is an annual appointment.

 **It was recommended by the committee**

**THAT we appoint Sue Adams to the Council for Food and Ag Research in 2021.**

***FY21 Audit Engagement***

ICGA received an engagement letter from Striegel Knobloch & Company, LLC to perform the FY21 audit.

 **It was moved by the committee**

**THAT we commit $8,775 to engage with Striegel Knobloch & Company, LLC to perform our FY21 audit.**

 **The motion carried.**

Rod Weinzierl gave an overview of the agenda for the IL Corn/IL Soybean Executive meeting later this week.

 **It was moved by Randy DeSutter and seconded by Joe Murphy**

**THAT we approve the Executive Committee Report with a total budget impact of $8,775.**

 **The motion carried.**

EXPORTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dave Rylander reported for the committee.

*Goal 1: Begin construction on one new lock on the Upper Mississippi by 2019.*

Rod Weinzierl gave an update to the group about the Waterways Council infrastructure bill. He let the group know earmarks are on their way back. Both chambers of Congress need to work out the rules for earmarks. He discussed the logistics behind why lock starts are so challenging and the status of Lock 25. Rod also touched upon the status of the Lower Mississippi dredging project.

Rod then talked about electric vehicle charging stations and the intricacies of the utility companies and creating demand.

*Goal 2: Work to increase net exports of corn and corn co-products 6 percent by 2019.*

Collin Watters touched upon the Market Access Program (MAP), the Foreign Market Development (FMD) and the different export program decisions that will be discussed in the upcoming Farm Bill. There hasn’t been an update in MAP and FMD funding. There is an upcoming informational meeting this Tuesday about these programs.

*Goal 3: Increase the amount of Illinois corn fed to livestock domestically and increase the amount of meat exported internationally by 5% by 2019.*

Dan Obert updated the group on the status of the Illinois Livestock Development Group’s farmer brand awareness campaign based in downstate Illinois. Marty Marr provided the voiceover and we used footage already shot for Illinois Farm Families. Metrics will be reported once the campaign is finished.

Matt Rush asked about following up about taking an economic mission trip to visit Texas Cattle Producers and Collin will follow up. Matt also asked about the possibility of a tug-boat tour around St. Louis.

*Goal 4: Increase global consumer acceptance of science-based farming practices by 2020.*

Collin Watters touched upon the status of Mexico issuing a decree on phasing out the use of glyphosate by 2024 and the vague language it contained about GMO’s and imports.

Collin presented an informational chart around non-tariff trade barriers facing U.S. Grains and Grain Products and other exports charts touching upon international trade laws.

Megan Dwyer touched upon the endangered species county maps are updated and corn can no longer count as a down-wind buffer. She also mentioned the anhydrous ammonia certification is live now and requires anyone moving ammonia to get it.

*Goal 5: Baseline and quantify improvements in sustainability specifically addressing nutrient loss, carbon footprint, soil preservation, and water use efficiency to remain competitive in domestic and international markets.*

Megan gave an update on the water testing program where we send out water testing strips to ICGA members to voluntarily test their water for nitrates and anonymously report it. It’s used as an educational tool.

Megan also touched upon the First Time Cover Crop Program which is partnered with Growmark’s, CoverTec, and is offered to growers in Ogle, Lee and Whiteside County. The program is $600 for members and $675 for non-members which includes an ICGA membership.

The Fall Covers and Spring Savings program throughout the state had all the acres accounted for and it they went quickly. They receive a $5 discount on cover crops with certain requirements needed to be met.

 **It was moved by Dave Rylander and seconded by Sarah Hastings**

**THAT we place the report of the Exports Committee on file.**

 **The motion carried.**

INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Terry Smith reported for the committee.

Collin Watters presented an update on the strategic planning process and facilitated a discussion on updating committee goals.

*Goal 1: Increase corn used in ethanol production in Illinois from 600 million bushels to 750 million bushels by 2020.*

Dave Loos updated the committee on current RBOB, ethanol, and D6 RIN prices.

USEPA has not yet announced RVO numbers for 2021. These were due to be released in November, 2020. USEPA has proposed an extension for the compliance deadline for 2019.

Dave presented a proposal to start a legislative campaign that will compare electric vehicles with vehicles with combustible engines using higher blends of ethanol. Steffan Mueller is also working on tracking the greenhouse gas reductions of 98RON fuel with a 30% blend of ethanol, demonstrating an almost equal reduction in aromatics compared to an electric vehicle and we would like to share this data more widely throughout this campaign.

**It was moved by the committee**

**THAT ICGA commit up to $150,000 in educational, informational, and promotional efforts to ensure a level playing field for corn ethanol in any climate or transportation policy, regulations and legislation. (Goal 1B4)**

 **The motion carried.**

Dave touched on the indirect land use change issues stemming from wind and solar systems replacing farm ground.

Dave gave the committee an update on low carbon fuel standards around the nation.

*Goal 2: Increase the percentage of ethanol in the Illinois fuel supply from 10 percent (450 million gallons) to 15 percent (675 million gallons) by the end of 2020.*

SB1407 was reintroduced in Springfield.

Jacqueline Muhammad gave a review of recent legislation in Springfield including HB3241, SB2562, and SB2428. HB3241 requires every filling station selling more than 850,000 gallons per year to offer E15. SB2562 would allow equipment used to store and dispense E10 to dispense E15 at service stations. SB2428 establishes a 10% sales tax incentive for E15 beginning July 1, 2021 and a 20% incentive for E20.

Dave gave a brief update on the USDA HBIP program.

Dave reviewed a campaign in Washington, DC that will focus on the upcoming SAFE rule this summer. This rule will reset the CAFE and GHG emissions standards. We will have the chance to fix the R-factor, eliminate the CO2 penalty, and establish rules to help level the playing field between electric and traditional vehicles.

**It was moved by the committee**

**THAT ICGA commit up to $150,000 to support work on establishing a high octane low carbon fuel standard while eliminating regulatory barriers to higher blends of ethanol. (Goal 2C)**

 **The motion carried.**

*Goal 3: Establish multiple corn biorefineries in Illinois by 2020.*

Dave gave an update on the Illinois Biotech Initiative. SB1693, introduced by Senator Scott Bennett would maintain the existing biotech research centers in Illinois, establish job training programs around this new biotech initiative, establish a public/private partnership to promote the research, development, and commercialization in biotech in Illinois, and create incentives for developing companies to build plants and commercialize in Illinois. Paul Bertyls and Nathan Danielson continue to work on this project on our behalf.

*Goal 5: Grow and support the use of corn and corn co-products by the livestock industry in Illinois.*

Marty Marr gave an update on the Illinois Livestock Development Group.

 **It was moved by Terry Smith and seconded by Sarah Hastings**

**THAT the report of the Industrial Committee be approved with a total budget impact of $300,000.**

 **The motion carried.**

GRASSROOTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Garrett Hawkins reported for the committee.

*Goal 2: Increase the knowledge and involvement of 500 ICGA members.*

The PAC committee met in February and approved officers and financials for 2021. There were no major changes in receipts or disbursements from last year.

Ashley Deal gave an overview of 2020 fundraisers, the drawdown event, and the raffle. We raised a total of $60,382 for the state and federal PACs, a $4,000 increase over 2019. We’re considering sticking with one virtual drawdown in 2021 as opposed to the two separate events.

We are planning to have the Congressional Staff Tour in the Peoria Area the second week of August this year.

*Goal 3: Increase ICGA’s state organization representation from membership by 2% per year.*

Current ICGA membership is at 3,822 members. An influx of renewals comes in in March and April due to past membership drives.

*Goal 4: Reduce the use of nitrogen and phosphorous by 5 percent per bushel by 2019 using 2005 as a baseline.*

Randy DeSutter is the current president of the Council for Best Management Practices. CBMP is considering shutting down. Money is not an issue but the council is struggling with figuring out a strategic direction.

Travis Deppe gave an update on the Precision Conservation Management program. Illinois Soybeans just pledged $500,000 per year for five years to expand the footprint of PCM. Pepsi also wants to expand into Nebraska. There is a new project potentially developing in Ohio. This expansion will require additional staff. We currently have four field staff in Illinois and one in Kentucky. Travis Deppe is interviewing and hiring additional PCM field staff around the state. Each field staff can support approximately 100 farmers.

We reduced nitrates by 615,000 pounds, phosphorus by 90,000 pounds, and achieved a 127,000 ton reduction in sediment by PCM farmers in 2020 alone. We require major conservation adoption in a short amount of time to meet our 2025 interim goal set by the EPA. ICMB is working to assemble a small team to look closer at this.

Don Guinnip reported on a recent NRCS meeting. The group is experiencing a high rate of turnover right now. Don Guinnip is now the Treasurer.

We have not received traction or adoption from all counties in Illinois in the STAR program.

IL Corn staff is preparing to mail water testing strips to all members by end of March for the 2nd year in the row. Participants who log their results into our form will get to donate $5 to their local FFA chapter.

*Goal 5: Improve the loss ratio of crop insurance for corn farmers in Illinois to at least a loss ratio of .8.*

The first-time cover cropping program is coming back in the lower rock river watershed. We are partnering with Growmark to work in Ogle, Whiteside, and Lee counties to fly on oat/radish mix on 40 acres per participant. The cost is $600 for members and $675 for non-members.

Randy DeSutter will name Farm Bill Task Force appointments after the June board meeting. We expect the group to focus on Title 1 , crop insurance title, conservation title, and may focus on the export title more than in past.

 **It was moved by Garrett Hawkins and seconded by Terry Smith**

**THAT the report of the Grassroots Committee be placed on file.**

 **The motion carried.**

 **It was moved by Terry Smith and seconded by Marty Marr**

**THAT we commit to remit 20% of the $11,125.94 check to DCLRS that was intercepted, reproduced, and cashed fraudulently.**

 **It was moved by Matt Rush and seconded by Mark Bunselmeyer**

**THAT we amend the motion on the floor to “THAT we commit to remit 50% of the $11,125.94 check to DCLRS that was intercepted, reproduced, and cashed fraudulently.”**

Bill Leigh abstained from the vote.

 **The motion carried.**

The committee voted on the amended motion, “**THAT we commit to remit 50% of the $11,125.94 check to DCLRS that was intercepted, reproduced, and cashed fraudulently.”**

Bill Leigh abstained from the vote.

 **The motion carried.**

 **It was moved by Matt Rush and seconded by Marty Marr**

 **THAT the meeting be adjourned.**

 **The motion carried.**

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 Randy DeSutter, President