

Minutes of the AIS Board of Directors Videoconference, Wednesday, May 27, 2020
With corrections from June 24, 2020 AIS mtg

Present:

Jody Nolin (6) - president, Affiliations Liaison
Andi Rivarola (15) - 1st VP, Convention Liaison (temporary), Public Relations Social Media,
Public Relations 2020 Convention, Strategic Planning
Bonnie Jean Nichols (17) – 2nd 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
Tom Gormley (5) – Membership

Claire Schneider (15) – Director, Recording Secretary
Doug Chyz (4) - Director, RVP 4
Gerry Snyder (15) – Director, Awards
Howie Dash (23) – Director, RVP Counselor
Janis Shackelford (15) – Director, Policy
John Ludi (13) – Director, Publication Sales Director
Lorene Crone (7) – Director, Asst. Electronic Services
Neil Houghton (2) - Director, Image Coordinator, Iris Program Resources Digital
Phyllis Wilburn (14) – Director, Section & Cooperating Society Liaison
Susan Driver (7) – Director, Calendars
Wayne Messer (21) - Director, Exhibition Show Reports, News & Notes, RVP 21

Scarlett Ayers (23) – AIS Convention 2021 co-chair
Mike Reed (17) – asst RVP 17
Kathryn E Mohr (2) - RVP 2
Elladan McLeester (8) – RVP 8
Jean Richter (14) – RVP 14
Eva Barry (23) – RVP 23
Mary Ann Campbell (18)
Happy Carver (17)

The meeting was called to order on Zoom at 5:02 PM PDT.
A quorum was present.

Parliamentarian will be Gary White for this meeting.

1. Approve the minutes from the previous meeting – Claire Schneider

Motion 1: to accept the minutes of the April 22, 2020, teleconference, as amended.

Motion by Bonnie Nichols and seconded by Gerry Snyder. Passed unanimously.

2. Nominating Committee Report – Wayne Messer

Wayne's electronic report contained several suggestions. (1) that a job description of AIS director be published to promote the recruitment of nominees for director. (2) that the name of the Nominating Committee chair be included in the list of committee chairs on the website and in the Bulletin. Wayne will follow through with these suggestions.

The nominees for director are Scarlett Ayres (23), Randall Bowen (5), Happy Carver (17), Cheryl Deaton (15), Susan Driver (7), Susan Grigg (4), Anita Moran (4), Riley Probst (14) and Mike Reed (17). There were no further nominations. And Wayne did not receive any nominations from his publicity campaign in News & Notes.

The executive session will be June 3rd at 5 PM where the voting members will select four of these nominees to become director candidates. Michelle Snyder will send out the bios of the nominees and a ballot this weekend.

The new Nominating Committee will consist of: Randall Bowen (RVP 5), Elladan McLeester (RVP 8), Riley Probst (section representative), with Janis Shackelford (15) and Susan Driver (7) representing the AIS Board. Wayne Messer volunteered to serve as an advisor. By June 15th, the name of the chair of the new Nominating Committee needs to be sent to Michelle Snyder.

3. AIS Centennial Celebration, a new Facebook group – Neil Houghton

Neil and Andi Rivarola set up the group and have inducted over 250 participants. The site welcomes photos of 2020 blooms only. A suggestion was to connect this time capsule to the AIS website. Permission to participate in this Facebook group has been granted to gardeners, hybridizers and iris enthusiasts. Video tours of member gardens have been posted as well as lots and lots of photos. This is a private room available for Facebook members who have received access permission from Neil or Andi.

Last week, Svetlana visited the garden at Presby and found only one iris in bloom. Because the bloom season is very late this year, the convention would have been a tour of buds, not of blooms. Sadly, the international judges would have had nothing to judge. Maybe not so sad after all.

4. COVID-19 contingencies – Howie Dash

Howie, being a co-chair of the 2021 AIS Convention in Las Cruces, has produced a video to promote the event. If it turns out the 2021 Convention is cancelled, one option would be to push all future conventions up one year. For example, Las Cruces in 2022, Dallas in 2023, etc. A

better option would be to put on a convention that follows the guidelines of social distancing. Howie had several suggestions. Limit the size of the convention to 150 people. Arrange a round-robin format to visit the six gardens with six buses each with only 25 people. Each attendee would receive a box lunch. Masks and hand sanitizer would be included in each welcome swag-bag. The hotel would set up tables for the banquet with acceptable social distancing. Because they would like our business, the hotel has been happy to work with Howie in the effort to foil with the COVID virus.

Discussion: It might create a backlash if attendance to the convention is limited to 150 people. Is there a way to allow more than 150 attendees? If there is a limit to the number of attendees, a method for attending remotely the AIS Spring Board meeting would need to be provided. Other methods of attendance should be investigated because not everyone has had success with Zoom. It's great to have these contingency plans, but when will we know if we need them? The gardens of future conventions have a schedule for planting guest irises and need to know if their convention is on as scheduled or postponed. If the conventions are pushed ahead one year, we would be looking at three-year clumps of irises.

5. Photo Contest – Anita Moran (absent)

The rules and application for the photo contest have been posted and will be in the next Bulletin.

6. Spring Reports – Michelle Snyder

Michelle has received most of the reports, but there have been a few laggards. At this May 27th meeting, the spring reports listed for discussion are from these committees and chairs: Audit, Finance, Foundation, Insurance, Membership, Storefront and Treasurer. There were no questions.

Comments regarding the membership report: it is a disappointment that the advertising campaign has not produced substantial increase in membership. However, an email from *Fine Gardening* reported that ten of their readers have checked the box marked "AIS" asking for more information. So maybe, the advertising campaign has had an effect. A suggestion was made to continue the advertising campaign beyond the original three-month deal. However, before allocating more money to promote AIS membership, perhaps we should study the demographics of their readers and even investigate other venues for our advertising campaign.

Other discussion: John Jones has packages of graphics that could be used in an advertising campaign. Tom Gormley reported that the trend in new AIS memberships has been for e-memberships. Of the 278 who are e-members only, approximately 20 are from overseas. The online library is massive, a wonderful resource. Perhaps a password should be added for access to the protect items in the library. And with that password, make a slight increase to the price of e-membership.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Update of offices, positions, committees and chairs – Michelle Snyder

It is important that a current and complete list of committees and their chairs be published in the Bulletin and posted on the AIS website and in the Wiki. This is especially important for those ad hoc committees that have become permanent. The Audit and Finance Committees should be listed with all the other committees in the back of the Bulletin. News & Notes should be listed under Publicity and Marketing. Social Media should be listed separately, as its own independent committee. Included with each entry will be the name of the chair or manager and their contact information.

Discussion: There is an overlap of tasks and duties of the AIS committees. Not that anyone wants to form another committee, but someone or committee should look at the organization and distribution of tasks and duties of all the AIS committees. For example, public relations tasks are being handled by several committees. A flow chart would go a long way towards reducing the duplication of tasks and efforts. Any volunteers?

8. The Anniversary Medals – John Ludi

The Anniversary Medals are in John's hot hands. They are beautiful and are available for clubs or anyone to order. Information about pricing and available quantities will be in the next Bulletin and News & Notes. There are special sets of medals available, too.

9. Release of the R&I publication – John Jones

The 2019 R&I will be released for publication in the next couple of days. John has a new system which is working well as evidenced by the completion of the R&I two months earlier than last year. There are 1116 new registrations from 17 countries, 589 of which are from the USA. Sixty-five percent were tall bearded, 23% were other bearded iris and 11% were beardless, species hybrids and species. There were 582 introductions.

10. Renewal of license for File-Maker Pro – John Jones

The File-Maker Pro package is for five users. The current users are John, Joanne, Neil Houghton (Image Coordinator) and Tom Gormley (membership secretary). One more player is encouraged to apply with John for the fifth license to help with the registration of new irises. Last year the license cost \$525.

Motion 2: to approve the purchase of a renewal of the license for File-Maker Pro for five users. Motion by Gerry Snyder and seconded by Howie Dash. Motion carried.

11. Hard Drive for backing up the registration process – John Jones

Because his hard drive for local backup has failed, John needs a new one with at least three terabytes. The hard drive must be compatible with John's current operating system.

Motion 3: to allocate up to \$400 for the purchase of a hard drive for the registrar. Motion by Neil Houghton and seconded by Gerry Snyder. Motion carried.

12. Error messages from the host – John Jones

“Out of memory” has generated some error messages. There have been attempts to hack into the AIS website and after John contacted the website contractors about security, suddenly the error messages and attempts to hack have disappeared. If anyone has had issues, they should contact Bryce Williamson or John. Janis Shackelford reported that she has seen 404 error messages when working in the Wiki. Bob Pries should be contacted to deal with that.

13. Planning for next year regarding the ballot, shows and conventions, judges training, etc. Judges training could be delivered by PowerPoint and testing conducted in a Zoom meeting. Jody Nolin recommended that 30 minutes be set aside at the June meeting to discuss how regions and affiliate clubs can and should handle these issues next year or after the COVID emergency has subsided.

14. Webinars – Andi Rivarola

Andi has attended several webinars and suggests that AIS get on board with hosting webinars. A webinar by Jill Bonino, Region 15, will air in July. Webinars could be scheduled for judges training (JT). Zoom has a platform for webinars that works well, using a split screen (one for the speaker and one for the PowerPoint.) After a presentation, attendees could send chat-questions to the speaker. Volunteers for webinar presentations: Bonnie Nichols (judges training), John Jones (how to register an iris and a JT on awards & ballots), Jody Nolin (JT on species), and Gerry Snyder (how to vote the AIS Ballot online). Andi is suggesting that several webinars be scheduled to help relieve the disappointment of cancelled conventions and shows as well as providing judges training. Recorded interviews might be interesting for webinars, many of which should be in the Iris Encyclopedia. Let’s keep everyone informed and excited about irises and AIS through the use of webinars.

15. Announcements

The next teleconference will be June 24th.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Schneider