

## Minutes of the board meeting, Alabama Section of AWRA May 20, 2008

Prepared by: Ashley McVicar

The meeting was held at Walter Bryan Jones Hall at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL. Attending were Marlon Cook, Milt Ward, George Marodis, Sabra Sutton, Brian Atkins and Ashley McVicar.

### Minutes from last meeting

The minutes from the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were handed out and reviewed. They were approved as they were.

### Financial Report

Sabra handed out the Financial Report for the Reporting period 8/1/2007 through 4/30/2008. She mentioned that the total AWRA conference cost last year was \$6136 but this figure does not include all of the student housing reimbursement. Sabra agreed to put together a budget that would include all anticipated expenses thru the end of the year to see what we need to bring in as well as to identify some areas that may need to be cut.

Marlon agreed to get with John Morris on the status of the sponsorship for this year's conference. Marlon suggested we may need to make this more of a group effort in soliciting sponsorship. There was also discussion about not capping the giving amount at \$500 in case some sponsors may want to contribute more. Marlon will get a list of the current sponsors so that we can look into seeing if there are others that we would contact for sponsorship.

Marlon also agreed to call Dennis about several issues, one being to re-verify AWRA's agreement with AUEI as to the proceeds that we should get from the conference. It appears the proceeds have been decreasing with increasing attendance. Another issue Marlon will discuss with Dennis is the possibility of putting students up in the Perdido rather than in condo's.

One other suggestion that was made to possibly cut cost would be to look at having a breakfast business meeting rather than the Thursday night meeting. This may become something we need to investigate once we have a better idea of our budget for the rest of the year and anticipated cost.

Sabra confirmed that she got the signature authority transferred to her at the bank after the last business meeting.

### Symposium Planning

Milt suggested having Robert Twilley as the keynote speaker for the symposium this fall with the theme still being Wetlands and Bottomwood Hardwood Restoration. Milt passed out Mr. Twilley's faculty biography from LSU. The members agreed that he would be a good choice for

the keynote. It was also decided that we would wave any symposium speakers fee to the symposium as well as pay for their travel expenditure if they were only attending the symposium and not the conference.

Additional potential speakers that Milt will contact are:

John Shill – ALDOT

Mike Moxley or Cindy House-Pearson – COE

Eve Brantley – Auburn

Julia Cherry – UA faculty

It was discussed that the Symposium would be September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1pm – 5pm with 10 minutes up front and 30 – 45 minutes per speaker.

### Seafood Festival

Marlon will get with John

### Business Meeting Social and Conference Issues

Possibility of looking into a breakfast meeting rather than a Thursday evening meeting was discussed.

Discussion about the potential merger of this conference with the Mississippi conference brought up several issues that our group would have. One of AWRA's biggest concerns is that MS would not be able to provide any revenue from conference proceeds to AWRA. Since this is our only revenue source other than sponsorship, AWRA cannot support the idea. Another issue is that it would open up the contract at the Perdido and increase conference expenses. Also it brings into question how the AWRA symposium would work into a larger program such as possibly into a session rather than a stand alone symposium. Also it would be unclear as to what presence we would have when the meeting would be held in MS. There is also a difference in the time of year that the MS meeting and the AL meeting take place.

The consensus from the Board was that a merger of the two conferences did not look a proposal we would be in support of. Milt suggested there might be some steps we could suggest that would be short of a merger of the two groups such as a session devoted to MS issues at our conference, a panel discussion, etc. The Board may write a letter to Dennis stating our position.

### Other Section Issues

We will need to discuss potential nominees to the Board at our June meeting.

The next meeting date is set for June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 10:00 at the Alabama Power Building in Birmingham. Ashley will setup a conference room and call in number.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.