

MINUTES OF THE LOUISIANA SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

APRIL 17, 2020, ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA

Meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by State Chair Kamran Abdollahi.

Present were: Buck Vandersteen, Fred Hagaman, Bill Wieger, Eugene Austin, Holly Morgan, Niels de Hoop, George Tiley, Ashley Long, Yadong Qi, Buddy Stalnaker. All via phone conference.

Minutes from the last meeting were read and approved.

Chair Comments-Kamran Abdollahi:

COVID-19 updates and projections. Impacts in academia include switching to virtual online classes. Some are struggling with having material to accommodate the students. It has become evident that there is a need to better develop technology for “distance communication”. There needs to be a plan and development of ways to stay engaged in dealing with the response to COVID-19.

Impacts to Forestry include a great consideration on safety and protecting individuals. There will be increased challenges for graduating and prospective employees and employers. The pulp and paper industry seems to be doing well coping with COVID-19, however construction is “non-essential” so there is a slowdown in building products. Business relationships are impacted without face-to-face meetings and convention; changing the way business is done through a more distance engagements.

Treasurer’s Report– Buck Vandersteen:

The Louisiana Society started the year 2019 with \$25,553.36, receiving \$16,607.38, and had \$30,140.48, in disbursements throughout the year. YTD revenue is \$12,326.60 and expenses total \$2,298.02. The Louisiana Teacher’s Tour has been canceled, funding will be rolled over to next year.

The Southwest Chapter has \$4,264.60, in an account which will be liquidated and sent to LASAF Treasury these funds will be put into a CD for Forest Awareness. The SW Chapter has been inactive for a few years.

Tri-State Meeting-

The rescheduled date for the meeting will be Wednesday Sept. 23 – Friday Sept. 25. The content and program is much the same as originally planned. A few of the speakers will not be able to make it but most were able to accommodate the changes. Registration will continue and those that already registered will be carried over to the new time. Sponsors are still in place and have not requested any refunds.

Chapter Chair Reports

Pineywoods: Recent meetings included information on the use of UAVs in forestry and updates from the LDAF Office of Forestry. Hopefully there will be a meeting in May.

Southern University: The School had a site visit from the SAF Accreditation Program on the Urban Forestry B.S. Degree Program. Due to COVID-19 impacts it is unsure how internships will be conducted most likely having negative results. Work continues on recruitment as normal.

Dr. Qi will be the Graduate Program Leader and Dr. Abdollahi will be the Undergraduate Program Leader at SU.

LSU: Conclaves for both Forestry and Wildlife have been canceled with no plans to reschedule this year. The students have been participating in online and field based classes, however, it has been difficult and not as inclusive as traditionally. Field-based experience has been hard hit and the instructors are working on how better to interact with the students with the current restraints.

SAF Board-TX, LA, MS Dist- Buddy Stalnaker

The first Board meeting was canceled and will be a conference call in May. The sale of the old HQ building has been finalized. Currently SAF is in a good financial situation but there remains a slow decline in membership. Only 20% of professional foresters in the US are members. Mr. Stalnaker is serving on the Finance Committee.

Old Business-

SAF National Young Professional Committee- Ashley Long

Recent recommendations and requirements were reviewed for a non-voting Board Member to sit on the National Board as a Young Professional. There is a question as to why it is a non-voting position.

WebSite- Efforts continue in updating and redesign of the LASAF website. Currently put on hold due to COVID-19 shutdown.

New Business-

None

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.