

2023 CPSS Board Meeting – Quarter 3

Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Virtual Meeting

Attendance taken by Zoe Brindley

- Present: Colby Moorberg, Michelle Busch, Laurel Mueller, Aaron DeJoia, Virginia Brown, James Hartsig
- Staff: Dawn Gibas, Zoe Brindley
- Absent: Jamie Patton, Chris D'Auito

Meeting called to order by Colby Moorberg at 12:08 PM Central time.

Welcome and introductions made.

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes from 6/20/23

2024 budget review

- 2 budgets:
 - CPSS
 - The CPSS 2022 budget fell short of the projected budget primarily due to a drop in renewals. The 2023 budget had decreased the projections on renewals and the 2024 budget is projecting the renewals to be about the same as 2022.
 - Decreasing renewals need to be addressed in both retaining certified soil scientists and in encouraging people to become certified. We will be spending time discussing marketing and recruiting as part of our upcoming meetings and instituting a marketing plan. Both budgets include an increase in marketing expenditures to support this.
 - Motion to approve by Aaron DeJoia; Motion seconded by Laurel Mueller; motion unanimously passed.
 - CSSE
 - Fundamental exam fee increase from \$260 to \$265 including proctoring fees.
 - Professional exam fee increase from \$260 to \$265 including proctoring fees.
 - There are no current study guides available from our program, we could look at editing the old ones. There is also a plan to update the now dated Soils Fundamentals Course to an online course following the same structure as Foundations in Applied Agronomy.
 - Motion to approve by Laurel Mueller; motion seconded by Michelle Busch; motion unanimously passed.
 - Both cost centers are projecting a small net income (<\$5,000 each) for 2024.

Continuous vs. Window testing

- A general review of continuous testing over the past 2 years shows that there hasn't been any significant increase in testing, although soils is using the freedom to test at any time more than the CCA program appears to. In an effort to provide structure and deadlines for testing to all examinees, the program will be going back to window testing, with testing offered in four windows instead of two.
- Discussion on window testing and providing the same windows for all exams (soils and agronomy):
 - 4 times a year: November 2023, January/Feb 2024, March/April 2024, July/August 2024. See attached schedule.
 - An option of section testing would be instituted in the March/April testing window for the Fundamentals Exam only.

- The six areas of the Fundamentals Exam would be split into the following three testing sections: 1. Soil Chemistry and Soil Fertility, 2. Soil Physics and Soil Genesis/Classification/Morphology, 3. Soil Biology and Soils and Land Use Planning.
- Motion to adopt window testing as proposed by Dawn made by Aaron DeJoia; motion seconded by Laurel Mueller; motion unanimously passed.

Policy and Procedures document

- Review of current policy language that requires renewal of certification with reapplication and retaking the Fundamentals Exam if lapsed for over 12 months.
 - Laurel proposed to change to three years; Colby suggests two years.
 - Motion to approve the change from 12 months to 36 months by Laurel Mueller; seconded by Michelle Busch; motion unanimously passed.
- Review of the discounted fees policy for graduating students.
 - Aaron proposed waiving the fee for these students; Laurel suggested changing verbiage to currently enrolled students or students with proof of enrollment.
 - Michelle asked if no fee would reduce commitment to finish the process of submitting an application and taking the exam?
 - Colby proposed this verbiage: Students can qualify to have their application fee waved if they can provide proof of current enrollment at a college of university.
 - Will be further discussed and voted on in the Q4 meeting of the Board.

Review of Applications-Point of Information

- Reviewing Schedule
 - See attached schedule.
- Reviewer Worksheet
 - See attached form.

Strategic Planning Report Dawn Gibas, Aaron DeJoia, James Hartsig

- Strategic Planning for ASA, CSSA, SSSA and the ACSESS Boards took place in late July. The CPSS Executive Committee of the Board was invited to attend to ensure that certification was included in the discussions. Aaron DeJoia and James Hartsig represented the CPSS Board.
- Discussion at the Strategic Planning meeting amongst certified individuals included brainstorming how to get more people involved with certification and also educate them on the career paths/jobs available for soil scientists. One idea was being more involved and present at Collegiate Level Soil Judging Contests. This plan is still being worked on but below are several points to focus on:
 - CPSS Board members possibly attending regional soil contests; having CPSS reps present to students and advisors.
 - Sponsor a HBCU student or Native American tribal member or a team to be able to attend/compete in the national event (next year Iowa).
 - James and Aaron proposed they could gain sponsorships from corporate donations to support this initiative.
 - Depending on location, sponsoring a team would cost around \$5,000.
 - Could also sponsor a dinner at the national event.
 - Aaron, James, and Dawn will continue to pursue this idea and report back at the Q4 meeting.
 - Need information to use in talking with potential donors.
 - Colby has a list of institutions that have soils programs.
 - Zoe put together a calendar of soil judging events.

Items for Discussion

- Outreach and Marketing
 - Ongoing discussion with a consultant; will be discussed further as the overall marketing plan is constructed.
- TSP MOU with NRCS
 - Currently in progress; using the Fundamentals Performance Objectives as a reference to matching NRCS TSP coursework.
- Elections– Vice Chair
 - Need Vice Chair from the current CPSS Board members. This vote will take place at the Q4 meeting. If interested, please let Dawn and/or Colby know.
- CSSE/CPSS review of program
 - Proposed in person meeting beginning of December with CPSS/CSSE members.
 - Dawn is checking on options.
- State Certification Boards (FL, OH, PA)
 - FL and OH are struggling to get board members and maintaining members.
 - Need more communication between the national board and the state boards.
- TN licensing issues
 - TN uses our Fundamentals Exam for licensing. A group in TN is petitioning the state of TN to replace our exam with something that they would write. Soils Licensing is also up for sunseting again next year. This is an issue to watch.

Next board meeting to be scheduled in early December. Zoe will send potential dates and times.

Motion to adjourn by Laurel Mueller; James Hartsig seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:26 PM Central time.