



**Illinois
Native
Plant
Society**

Illinois Native Plant Society

P.O. Box 60694, Chicago, IL 60660

**Minutes
Governing Board Retreat, Zoom
March 30, 2024**

Call to Order:

Board Members Present: Emily Dangremond, John Taft, Susanne Masi, Lailah Reich, Joseph Armstrong, Becky Croteau, Chris Benda, Daniel Pohl, Nick Seaton, Paul Marcum, Floyd Catchpole, Kelsay Shaw, Karen Larson, Kate Ahrens, Trish Quintenz.

Guests present: Nico D'Alessandro

Quorum present, yes/no? Yes.

Time	Agenda item	Lead
9:15	In-person attendees arrive, get settled Lailah* set up computer and Zoom	All
9:30	Welcome and opening remarks Emily completed introductions and reviewed the INPS mission statement. Lailah and Emily discussed granting others access to files in Google Drive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelsay and others on executive board need access to Google Drive. • Bios for website need to be sent to Kate. • Floyd circulated information to the board for the retreat as well, items prepared over the past year by past president Janine Catchpole. • Insurance is through the Hartford and is on auto-pay. 	Emily Dangremond
9:40	Goals and vision: Discussion of each officer's goals for their position this year. Emily led discussion and asked all present members to contribute. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily: Establish code of conduct and mechanisms for dealing with instances where code is not followed. • Lailah: SOP for how to deal with donations. • Daniel: Continue to support and grow Big Botany Year in 2024. Grow interest in org in N. Illinois. • Becky: Goal is to understand role to make as efficient as possible. • Floyd: Nonprofit letter for solicitation of donations, specifically large donations. Tax forms. At this time, we don't specifically know of large donors, but if we set this up, hopefully large donations will be received. • Trish: How to handle large donations, and what to do with large donations? INPS Shared Calendar would be helpful at a state level to help communicate between Chapters. 	All—roundtable discussion

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paul: More coordination between Chapters would be great. Kelsay chimed in that social media director would be important. Facebook is partially active. We don't have a full-time content generator which would be meaningful. We should be funneling publications through our website and social media. We shouldn't rely on Chapters to maintain social media presence. Part time person for social media coordination. Look into costs of hiring someone for this. Need to improve way we connect with our members. ● Kelsay, need to think about how to interact with members. Email vs. social media. Appealing to younger generation. ● Floyd said we should look to other similar organizations for ideas on social media. ● Karen: Goal is to learn more about organization, unify our voice, and attract new members. ● Kate would like to get INPS off of Word Press and update the process to make Chapters responsible for their own website updates. She needs more lead time; 30 days would be ideal. Need to update how we handle website, software's, functionality, etc. Do we need a professional web designer who knows Word Press? Or do we totally switch and update? It would be great to use a different program, that is simpler, so local Chapters can update on their own. Can we find a correspondence secretary and a second webmaster. Reach out to members who would like to volunteer. ● Joe Armstrong would like to coordinate for assistance with the Grand Prairie Chapter, need to update membership list, posts, etc. Needs help. ● Paul noted that the Membership list needs to be updated more readily, why can't this be automated. New members need an incentive to try to find volunteers. Open positions could be listed, and new members could fill out what they might be interested in volunteering for. We need to be more specific for what elements we are seeking help/volunteers for. Membership list should be available for all Chapter presidents. Link should be available for everyone. Formatting should be updated for sorting. ● Susanne asked how we attract new members? Thinks we needs a session at some point to discuss goals related to mission statement and also noted the 50th anniversary of INPS is coming up. Follow up with the members who have mentioned they want to help and volunteer, should be a better system to track. Reiteration of making new member form be more specific about asking new members how they would like to contribute, role, and level of effort etc. It needs to be more targeted, more specific, and there needs to be a follow up. Kelsay discussed how the forms can be updated, but the responsibility should be on the Chapter president and also the webmaster. ● Nico - Need to identify specific areas where we need help. May need a professional webmaster. Create a way to setup a webpage that is user friendly for everyone and have a hierarchy for webpages too. Add presentations, resources, etc. on website and social media sites. Just 	

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	<p>need to add content. Make sure to keep calendar and website up to date. Floyd deleted the Kankakee Chapter calendar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily suggested making a list of what we need for the website. Need to develop for paying someone to update. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What are our larger goals for the organization? · How can we better engage our members? · Where can we improve and/or become more efficient? 	
10:45	Break	
11:00	<p><i>Erigenia</i></p> <p>Notes from John Taft: Five contributions since last issue came out. Two have been accepted. Others are undergoing revisions. Flow of input is really low. He would like a few more articles to publish next issue. Tried solicitations twice but no results.</p> <p>Other ways of increasing submission rates discussion. Expand scope. Most of the contributions are from our grants program. Better job at promoting, social media, etc (Kate said send emails out every semester to academics to remind them of <i>Erigenia</i>). Kelsay said we could have people publish secondarily? Floyd said <i>Erigenia</i> is in bylaws, so would need to update if we change, and possibility of increasing dollar amount of survey grant and requirement to publish in <i>Erigenia</i>. Need better information on who reads this publication.</p> <p>John asked if bylaws stipulate how frequently we need to publish? Even if we solicited twice, may not be enough. Needs to be sent out every semester. We should try way more times.</p> <p>Floyd said there's no search engine for <i>Erigenia</i> online, we need to post them differently and a searchable literature citation.</p> <p>Susanne mentioned we may want to consider extensive book reviews or article reviews for the publication, if possible?</p> <p>John mentioned an indexing service they were previously paying for, but its name escapes the board now. There was a discussion about considering getting more intensive article reviews and inviting people to do substantial research. They also discussed the idea of having new book reviews, which could be popular and draw attention.</p> <p>Paul Gulezian's fourth edition of the Field Guide to the Biodiversity of the Chicago region, could be a good candidate for a review. It was asked if anyone would be interested in reviewing this book, with Emily offering to coordinate if needed. There was also a discussion about the possibility of having someone from the Chicago region review the book due to its specific focus on the region.</p> <p>Bylaws do not state how often <i>Erigenia</i> should be published.</p>	John Taft (Zoom)

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	<p>Emily said there may be a possibility of publishing research conducted by undergraduate students or retired academics. There would be a mentoring aspect to this. John works with authors to coach them and there are simple guidelines as well.</p> <p>Emily and Paul talked about the need for formatting and writing articles to submit to a peer-reviewed publication. They consider adding this to their membership checklist and possibly creating a YouTube video on how to write an article.</p> <p>Emily mentioned her Guide to Scientific Writing, which could be linked from the INPS website, and she could donate a portion of sales to INPS.</p> <p>Daniel asked if we can ask authors to make publications for Harbinger into articles for Erigenia? *We brought this up with Chris Benda, and asked him to flag any Harbinger articles/authors that might be able to do this.</p>	
11:30	<p>By-laws updates:</p> <p>Notes: Floyd discussed updates on the INPS bylaws. The participants reviewed the minutes of the Bylaws Committee from August 17, 2023, and discussed various proposed changes to the bylaws.</p> <p>There would not be a Chapter bylaw, its more of a guidance document. The proposed changes included removing a sentence that suggested the treasurer and other signatories might be required by the government, and preventing chapters from having their own bylaws. The rationale behind these proposed changes was to maintain the incorporation of the state of Illinois and to avoid potential conflicts between chapter and society bylaws.</p> <p>Floyd motions to change the bylaws. A proposed chapter must agree to follow the bylaws of the INPS. Chapters may create Standing Rules of Order for operating purposes as long as rules do not conflict with bylaws of the INPS.</p> <p>Becky seconded. All voted yes, Lailah abstained.</p> <p>It was noted that we need to send out a ballot to our members or vote on at a membership meeting.</p> <p>Item 3. See Floyd’s handout for exact language. Template for annual chapter reports to simplify the process for chapters and stop making quarterly reports. The reminder for the chapter report would go out at the same time as the reminder for the annual report to the Secretary of State. Amend report due date.</p> <p>Sounds like we may table Item #3. Regarding the bylaws, INPS suggested changes to Article 7, which would prevent chapters from having their own bylaws. This change was approved by the board members in the meeting.</p>	Floyd Catchpole

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	<p>Another proposed change was to move the deadline for annual chapter reports from August 30 to December 30. However, this change was not approved.</p> <p>Item 4. Dues Discussion. See Floyd's Handout for specific language.</p> <p>Clarifying this process balances the power between the members and chapters of INPS with the Governing Board. By adding a term for the dues and disbursement rate chapters can better plan their budgets. Currently there are no provisions to halt change in disbursement rate at any time by the Governing Board. There was a recent change to the bylaws (in 2023) voted upon at the annual membership meeting. We need to look at the exact language for this. Do we not have current bylaws online?</p> <p>Table Item 5. Discussion as well, come back to this at April meeting.</p> <p>Trish read the vote on September of 2023 annual meeting. They also discussed the process for changing the disbursement rate, which currently requires a two-thirds vote at the annual meeting. They are considering amending the bylaws to specify that changes to the disbursement rate can be made at any annual meeting. They also discussed the need to review the current bylaws to ensure they align with these proposed changes. We need to revisit this vote at previous annual meeting.</p> <p>*Update with information emailed after the retreat (by-laws online are current)</p>	
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	<p><i>The Harbinger</i></p> <p>Chris is getting help with editing and layout from Katie Kucera and Brian Charles. All back issues are on the INPS website; but it would be nice to add the Table of Contents for users to view before downloading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -could the newsletter be displayed as a webpage on our site? -separate out each individual article? (would allow for a shareable link to each article) -Chris is always looking for content: we need to ask our members to contribute! <p>Chris is thinking of a special issue on private nature preserves</p>	Chris Benda (Zoom)
1:15	<p>Grants: 2024 Research Grants and Survey Grant updates</p> <p>-Susanne's grant report submitted in advance, linked here: (https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1ZR-A4lOfSafnBm7Z-rPmopP9GJRzjbQD)</p> <p>Susanne led the discussion and referred to the report she submitted prior to the retreat (see link above). Four Research Grants (of 5 applications) were awarded with a final budget of \$ 10,080 (slightly below the approved budget of \$12,000). These funds will be distributed over two years. We would like more applications and plan to advertise more broadly. Brian Charles has offered to help with publicity for the next cycle. We will consider a slightly later application deadline than Jan. 31. There were no Survey Grant applications</p>	Susanne Masi

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	<p>and the question is whether to continue this grant since other groups (POC, INHS, etc.) have somewhat filled the gap for surveying listed species, which our grant was created to fill (see submitted report for this history.) Discussion followed with suggestions for revision, the consensus being to give the Survey Grant another try: allow for board members to apply who are not involved in the grant process (Floyd will check with an attorney about the conflict of interest question); delay the application date; allow for institutional indirect costs (this was actually incorporated in the 2024 guidelines, with up to \$450 allowed for indirect costs); use more targeted publicity; consider using the funds for survey contracts instead of grants; consider taking a regional approach for surveys. The Grant Committee will review all suggestions and prepare recommendations to the Board.</p>	
1:45	<p>Budget -Added mileage reimbursement for retreat for board members attending in person (\$1500) -voted to approve budget (Becky motioned, Trish seconded)</p>	Becky (with help if needed)
2:00	<p>Annual Gathering: July 12-14 hosted by NE Chapter at Benedictine University in Lisle (will there be Sunday field trips? Unknown. Need to check with organizers) -We need to let members know what's going on (note: Emily included in president's message in latest issue of the Harbinger) -Looking ahead to the INPS 40th birthday in 2026, Daniel suggested "looking back, telling our story, and looking ahead" would be a theme we could embrace</p>	Emily
2:15	Break	
2:30	Code of Conduct: Emily mentioned that there have been several instances involving inappropriate or undesirable behavior at INPS events or between	Emily

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	members, and that we need a Code of Conduct that governs people's behavior, and a way to address violations of the Code of Conduct. Desire for chapters to handle issues at the chapter board level.	
2:4 5-3 :15	<p>Small group work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Membership/website: Paul, Kelsay, Kate, Karen, Becky · Code of Conduct: Emily, Floyd, Trish, Daniel, Susanne 	All—small groups
3:1 5-3 :45	<p>Small groups report back to larger group</p> <p>-Code of conduct: We want an overall policy statement that includes non-discrimination, zero tolerance, and guidelines. The NE chapter already has one that is posted on the INPS website. We need to figure out consequences, and also have a waiver for field trips and events. Emily agreed to draft a code of conduct as a first step, and get it to the group by April 10 (the consequences part is the next step) and then to the larger board for the April 15 meeting.</p> <p>-Membership/website</p> <p>-get all the chapters able to use the website to its fullest potential—not all chapter presidents have access, currently—make more user-friendly for adding events to calendars (have one master calendar?)</p> <p>-social media and website feed into each other</p> <p>-Use of resources from our existing website; membership portal for members to access resources that are not public-facing</p> <p>-partnerships with existing websites, such as embedding illinois wildflowers</p> <p>If we promote native plant sales, then we should ask the sales to promote us back. Discussion about expert speakers, creating videos or using the videos that already exist to create a resource list</p>	All
3:4 5-4 :00	To be filled as needed	