ICEC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

15 April 2025
4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom

Attending:			
Louis Beck		*Ex Officio:*	
Kyla Burns	X	Gus Elliott	X
Ellen Carman	X	Chris Like	X
Heather Gamm		Jerry Neppel	X
Melissa Haugo	X	Carlee Sabus	
Jared McGovern, Vice-Chair	X		
Tiffany Morgan, Chair	X		
Ted Neal	X	*Contractor:* Linette Bernard	X
Jim Pifer	X		
Kean Roberts	X	*Guests:*	
Peg Steffen	X		
Samuel Taylor	X		

Quorum was confirmed then Tiffany Morgan called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Sam Taylor made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Jared McGovern. Motion passed.

Melissa Haugo made the motion to approve the meeting minutes for 7 February 2025. Ted Neal seconded. Motion passed.

Reports

1. Review Treasurer's Report – Sam Taylor present the FY25 ICEC budget status to the board and shared that there is currently $54, 214, $29,314 of which are restricted funds for WILD Resources, Big Trees, Scholarship, MEEC profit, and PEEPs. Tiffany Morgan provided background information about PEEPs, explaining that it is a group including Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and Wyoming that works to build capacity for the member states. The consortium can apply for grants as a group. Taylor shared that ICEC is operating at about $8,800 per year, meaning that if no additional income is generated, ICEC has four more years of funding. What ICEC is currently bringing in in donations, memberships, etc. does not cover our current costs. For this reason, the Financial Committee will be activated. The board suggested some idea for increasing engagement and revenue. These ideas will be discussed by the Financial Committee.

Action Items

1. No action items.

Discussion Items

1. ExCom voting, write-in candidates - Linette Bernard shared that ICEC has historically had an 'other' option on the ExCom voting ballot, which has never been used until this past year. One person was written in, but they were not a member, a requirement to be on the board. Bernard requested guidance on whether the form should be changed. The board agreed that an explanation including clarification that any write-in candidate must be a member and encouragement to notify the person being written in be added to the voting form.
2. Website updates – Tiffany Morgan shared that the new website is live, and Linette Bernard shared that some changes include combining pages to eliminate extra clicking by users and reducing the number of sub-menus. All board members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with new website and provide feedback.
3. ICEC Committees call for members - Tiffany Morgan shared that we will be activating the Financial and Communications Committee. The Financial Committee will be led by Jared McGovern and Sam Taylor and will look at fundraising, revenue generation, connecting with NAAEE and other orgs to build financial capacity. The Communications Committee will be led by Tiffany Morgan and Ellen Carman. This committee will create a plan for member messaging and outreach. All board members are encouraged to join a committee or ask to discuss starting a different ad hoc committee. Committees will collaborate to find a time to meet virtually. Mellssa Haugo and Gus Elliott volunteered to join the Communications Committee. Kean Roberts and Jim Pifer volunteered to join the Financial Committee. Sam Taylor motioned to start an Ad Hoc Committee for Winter Workshop 2026. Ted Neal seconded the motion. Motion passed. No board members volunteered to join or be the chair of the Winter Workshop 2026 Committee.

4. Winter Workshop 2025 debrief - Linette Bernard shared the Winter Workshop Attendance and Budget Balance over time document. Winter Workshop 2025 essentially broke even. 56 people attended at various pay rates which is similar to previous years. Bernard also shared background about Winter Workshop. Tiffany Morgan shared that the 2025 ICEC Winter Workshop Feedback (Responses) Summary. Overall, participants thought it was an inspiring day and loved the keynote speaker and thought it was great to go through activities with musical connections and have an opportunity to network with others. An area for improvement includes working to build more partnerships.
5. Updates from Leadership Team - Tiffany Morgan shared that the ExCom officers met to assess finances, revisit the strategic plan, and begin creating an action plan for organizational change. Committee involvement will be critical for implementing the board's feedback and advancing the strategic plan (which remains unchanged). Tiffany Morgan shared that changes are needed in ICEC's relationship with the Iowa DNR regarding Project WILD. Gus Elliott explained that ICEC has served as the fiscal agent for the WILD guide sales and training transactions since 2015. Funds from these sales are restricted and reflected in ICEC's balance sheet. The DNR now plans to shift all WILD-related transactions to the Iowa Hunter Education Association for greater efficiency. This transition was agreed upon by DNR leadership, including Megan Wisecup. The current MOU with DNR runs through March 2026, providing a year to phase out ICEC's financial role in Project WILD. DNR will maintain its organizational commitment to ICEC, and Elliott will remain an Ex-Officio member.

Updates

1. 2026 Winter Workshop date and location - Winter Workshop will be at Kirkwood Community College on February 21.
2. IPBS Blitz update – Tiffany Morgan noted that the grant work has ended. Five IPBS blitzes are scheduled for 2025. For specifics or to host a IPBS blitz in your area, reach out to Tiffany Morgan.
3. Environmental Game Jam – Peg Steffen shared that this year's Game Jam engaged students in six topics with participation from nine teachers/schools. Fifty-four student teams created four-minute videos judged by ICEC, DNR, and SWCD representatives. Winners were recognized through virtual awards assemblies. Steffen noted Game Jam was funded by the Holthus Grant. There is currently no outside funding secured for next year's Game Jam. Peg Steffen shared that she is willing to hand off the project, citing it requires relatively little work. Concerns were raised about loss of institutional knowledge once Peg leaves the board. Jared McGovern suggested a broader ICEC board discussion on the topic including possibly initiating a sunset period or finding another organization to take over Game Jam. Peg Steffen will prepare a Game Jam report and send a teacher evaluation survey to gather feedback.

Gus Elliott left meeting at 5:31 pm.

Informational

1. Iowa Envirothon State Contest is Monday, 28 April 2025 at Jester Park Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center – if interested and able to volunteer, please contact Linette Bernard or Carlee Sabus. Board members are encouraged to volunteer or attend the event. Linette Bernard plans to take videos of the event to use for promotional materials.
2. Updates from Chris Like – The State Board of Education will review the new Science standards document on Thursday, April 17. The standards will likely be adopted on April 18. The new standards will be discussed at a Science Leadership Summit on May 29 at the Iowa Science Center. Fall Science teacher professional development is being planned for the fall and will take place at the University of Dubuque (Oct. 9), Adventureland (Date TBD), and the Omaha Zoom (Date TBD).
3. Jerry Neppel shared that the Iowa Chapter of Soil and Water Conservation is offering two scholarships that are open to college students and folks working in the field. Reach out to Jerry for more information.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.