**Minutes of the IOIA AGM (Annual General Meeting)**

**Thursday, March 3, 2022**

**3pm – 6pm PST**

**Held remotely via Zoom**

**Board Members Present:**

* Rachel Myers (Outgoing Chair)
* Janine Gibson, Vice Chair
* Heather Donald, (Outgoing Secretary)
* Allan Benjamin, Treasurer
* Charles Mitchell, Director
* Terrance Layhew, Director
* Beth Dominick, Director

**Welcome & Call to Order by Rachel Myers at 3:00pm**

**3:05 pm - Meet the Board Candidates**

Candidates gave short introductions:

* Brian Baker, Oregon USA
* Janine Gibson, Manitoba Canada
* Darren Maum, New York USA
* Kate Newkirk, Maine USA
* Leonard Pollara, Michigan USA - not present until later in meeting
* Tom Page, California USA - not present

Voting remained open until 4pm.

**3:10 pm - Keynote Presentation**

Bernward Geier spoke on his vision of a 100% organic world, which will require interim goals, including a pesticide free world and gradually increasing the market for organic products. He spoke about the goals some countries have set to reduce pesticides and increase organic production, as well as countries that have already achieved high percentages of organic production.

“It isn’t a choice; it is a need. The bad news for inspectors is that once the world is 100% organic, there won’t be a need for organic inspectors.”

[www.one-world-award.com](http://www.one-world-award.com)

**3:45 pm - Business Meeting**

**1.   Quorum Established**

* 35 Inspector Members in attendance - more than 15% of voting members
* Guests
  + 1 Supporting member
  + 3 Staff (Diane Cooner, Sacha Draine, Teri Lindberg)
  + Bernward Geier, keynote speaker

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**2. Introduction of Ballot Committee**

Diane Cooner - Chair

Al Johnson

Brian Magaro

Acknowledgement of Eric Feutz of the Nominations Committee for his work in preparing the slate.

**3. Approve the 2022 AGM Agenda**

Two updates:

1. Latin American Committee won’t be presenting – item removed from Agenda.
2. Terrance Layhew facilitating the Mind Map for Ellie Hudson.

Motion:  Leonard Pollara

No dissents.

Motion to accept agenda passed unanimously.

**3.** **Secretary’s Report (Heather Donald)**

* Highlights from the 2021 AGM Minutes were read by Heather.

**Motion to accept the Minutes as written**:  Janine Gibson

No dissents.

Motion passed unanimously as presented.

**4. Annual Report Overview from the Chair and Committee Reports - Summary:**

* Annual Report – Rachel Myers, Chair

IOIA continued to represent the Inspectors voice, submitting strong, comprehensive comments to the NOSB’s proposal on Human Capital, and was awarded $250,000 towards building an apprenticeship program as part of the NOP’s RFA on Human Capital and partnering in an additional 4 projects. The Board continued to meet regularly with the NOP and with Certifiers, and IOIA hosted 7 Town Hall Meetings with members over the year and introduced a new podcast. Membership held strong at 322 members across 16 countries. The new website and a modernized membership and training information management system were debuted. Global activities continued with support of the Asia Pacific Committee’s training work, developed new training resources in Spanish language, and is seeking funding with AOI (the Alliance for Organic Integrity) to develop e-learning. IOIA trained more people in 2021 than 2020 with 890 participants in 3 languages and 52 events, and collaborated with 10 cosponsors.

A moment of respect was given for members who passed away in 2021 – George Danner, Ib Hagsten, Stan Hildebrand, and Jack Reams.

IOIA’s Strategic Plan was developed by the Board in November of 2021 and consists of 3 Objectives: #1 Design training that evolves with the sector, expands capacity and grows skills; #2 Advocate for Inspectors while engaging stakeholders to increase member benefits and grow the community; #3 Implement operations protocol for continuous improvement within the organization and to advance IOIA’s mission. The Strategic Plan is available on the IOIA website in the About section.

Big thanks given to all of the IOIA staff.

Many thanks and appreciation given to Heather Donald and Rachel Myers for their service on the Board.

Committees:

* **Asia Pacific Committee** – Maheswar Ghimire (Nepal), stepping in for Mutsumi Sakuyoshi, Committee Chair.

Members: Mutsumi Sakuyoshi (Japan), Isidor Yu (Korea), Maheswar Ghimire (Nepal), Vitoon Panyakul (Thailand), Sandeep Bhargava (India), Kathe Purvis (Australia), Jim Pierce (Fuji).

A year of volunteer work has gone into the Committee’s first Grower Group Training set to take place in March with a full roster of attendees. This follows a successful January workshop with over 200 registrants. A second training is in development for Western Hemisphere / European time zones.

* **Canadian Committee** – Janine Gibson, Canada (BOD Liaison)

Members: Bill Barkley (Chair), Kelly Monaghan, Garry Lean, Kim Snarr. All Canadian inspector members are considered members of the Canadian Committee. Kelley Monaghan continues to represent IOIA on the Canadian General Standards Board Organic Technical Committee. Scheduled an Advanced Inspector Training for November 2022 that had been canceled a number of times due to the pandemic. Two online Basic Crops courses and a self-directed Canadian Standards 100 Level in Crops were offered with enthusiastic feedback. IOIA had a significant voice in the discussion regarding the USCOEA equivalence.

* **Policy Committee** – Rachel Myers, USA (BOD Liaison)

Members: Leonard Pollara, Garth Kahl, Kate Newkirk, Margaret Weigelt, Allan Benjamin, Terrance Layhew, Pam Sullivan, Luis Brenes

Prepared 2 rounds of comments to the NOSB on the Human Capital Discussion Document. Put out a survey to membership to collect input and better represent members in public comment. The survey was part of what led to the Inspector Retention Working Group with IOIA and ACA.

* **Mentorship Committee** – Janine Gibson, Canada

Members: Amanda Birk, Angela Wartes-Kahl, Pam Sullivan, Janine Gibson, Terrence Layhew, Trish Dougherty, Lois Christie.

The Committee was successful in meeting their purpose and determined to dissolve in October of 2021. Their achievements include the initiation of a Pilot Apprenticeship Program, procured grants and industry funding, implemented Program marketing, as well as recommending to the IOIA Board to hire a Director of Operations and the creation of a Training Advisory Committee which have been included in IOIA’s Strategic Plan.

* **Scholarship Committee** – Arthur Bassett, Mexico (Co-Chair)

Members: JJ Mack (Co-Chair), Brian Baker, Beth Dominick, Margaret Weigelt, John Caputo, Margarito Cal, Gabi Soto.

Tibby Plasse (Idaho, USA) was awarded the Andrew Rutherford Scholarship and there were unfortunately no applicants for the OCIS Scholarship. IOIA has a new scholarship for 2022 – the Reynaldo de la Rosa Memorial Scholarship Fund to go towards training inspectors living and working in Mexico and which has already raised over $15,000. The Committee will meet again in March to fine tune objectives and parameters and the application process. Arthur invites anyone who has ideas about trainings that can be held in Mexico to reach out to him. Thanks were given to all committee members and staff coordinator Diane Cooner.

**5. Treasurer’s Report (Allan Benjamin)**

2021 Balance Sheet, Revenue & Expense Statements:

Balance Sheet:

* Remains strong through the 2nd year of the pandemic and IOIA has not needed to dip into Cash Reserves.
* From 2020 to 2021, Current Assets have only decreased by about 3%.

Bottom Line:

* Planned negative bottom line was primarily for the completion of the new Information Management System.
* IOIA invested in an in-person Board Strategic Planning Retreat which was a non-budgeted expense.
* Government PPP funds that IOIA was awarded were not budgeted for and helped to offset some of these expenses.
* Actual bottom line was $30,000 better than projected.

Budget vs. Actual – IOIA has been involved in 7 different special projects (i.e., Grants and RFA Projects) which will be reflected in both the income and expenses. Most of the funds will be received in 2022 which is reflected in the 2022 budget. The 2022 budget also includes the addition of a new staff member and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

**Janine Gibson** – Wanted to comment how wonderful it is they were able to cut the $60,000 deficit in half. Worth noting and well done!

Budget was brought up on screen. No questions or comments from the attendees.

No motion required.

**Motion to Accept the 2021 Financial Reports:**Leonard Pollara, Brain Magaro Seconds.

No dissents

Financial Reports are unanimously approved.

**10 Minute Break - with video clips from NOFA documentary with Al Johnson and NOFA-VT Keynote address by Jim Riddle.** A 30-year anniversary slide show was included in the agenda, but there was not time, so it was promised to be made available on IOIA website at a later date during the year.

**6. IOIA’s Human Capital Apprenticeship Project for NOP RFA (Margaret Scoles)**

The largest projects IOIA has previously received are no more than half the size of this project.

The goal of the RFA is to improve the oversight capacity of the organic industry by supporting and expanding the pool of qualified inspectors and reviewers. The initiative will support projects across the human capital pipeline from recruitment to training to maintaining existing professionals. IOIA is the lead on this project and the only one of the 9 projects to be funded. We are also involved in 3 of the other funded projects.

The project is titled “Building a Sustainable and Inclusive Apprenticeship Program for Organic Inspectors and Other Organic Professionals”. IOIA is partnering with the University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, Kentucky Department of Ag, Organic Association of Kentucky, the Organic Integrity Cooperative Guild, Elmwood Stock Farm (Mac Stone) and Green Door Workshop (Ellie Hudson). The purpose is to develop curriculum, toolkits and marketing materials for a replicable model for recruiting and training organic professionals, as well as developing mentor and apprentice competencies. Diversity, equity and inclusion was an important focus of the project also. Several trainings will be delivered in 2022 as part of developing the model. This will include a 100-Level Crop Standards webinar, a Basic Crop Training, an Organic Transition Trainer Workshop, and Organic Inspector Apprenticeship Courses with intensives in Crops and Livestock.

**7. 2023 AGM – New Orleans**

We don’t have a date yet, but it will likely be at the end of January, in conjunction with the NOP/ACA Training.

**8. The Path to Success – New Business, Member Discussion**

The attendees participated in a brainstorming activity using Miro – an interactive sticky note platform where everyone invited can add notes, move them around and add connecting lines between notes.

**Door Prizes –** Noel Zimmer (cap) and Janine Gibson (Terrance’s book), and Kate Newkirk (Korean wine)

**9. Announce New Board & Acknowledge Outgoing BOD Members**

* **Brian Baker and Kate Newkirk** were introduced as the new BOD members and **Janine Gibson** was welcomed back for another term.
* Vote Counts for the BOD: 103 voted of 188 eligible voters.
* Rachel and Heather were thanked, as well as all current and past board members for their dedicated work for IOIA.

**Meeting was Adjourned at 5:50pm**

Submitted **By Heather Donald, Secretary**