

**2023 CPSS Board Meeting – Quarter 4**  
**MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, December 13, 2023**  
**Virtual Teams Meeting**

**Attendance taken by Zoe Brindley**

- Present: Aaron, Colby, James, Jamie, Chris, Michelle, Laurel, Virginia
- Staff: Dawn Gibas, Zoe Brindley
- Absent: None

**Meeting called to order by Colby Moorberg at 2:02 PM Central time.**

**Welcome and introductions made.**

**Consent Agenda**

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes from 8/15/2023

**Recap of Annual Meeting in St. Louis**

- At the SSSA Board meeting in St. Louis the Board further discussed CPSS and its inclusion in the strategic plan. They edited their strategic objective on Workforce Development to specifically refer to CPSS in the Desired Outcomes. This is the language with the addition underlined: New tools created to promote soil science and certification to prospective audiences.
- The Consulting Soil Scientists meeting in St. Louis was a great networking session for students and soil scientists to connect. This meeting was used to increase awareness about soil science careers and opportunities. Nominations for the 2024 election cycle also took place at this time.
- What are ways to involve certified professionals in next annual meeting in San Antonio? What can we do to draw these individuals to the meeting?
  - Practicing Soil Scientists group have organized field tour in places local to the meeting in the past. These were available to CPSSs and were at the beginning or the end of the annual meeting.
  - Laurel commented that non-research/non-academic soil scientists need to focus on the next generation of soil scientists by sharing their experiences in a session at the meeting. Specifically, sharing ideas on how to connect to middle school and high schoolers to get them interested in soil science. Laurel is willing to look into a co-sponsorship to fund travel plans for soil scientists to attend.
  - Colby mentioned this next meeting is in a licensing state, so the Soils Certifying Board (SCB) could team up with the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and see if they would like to lead a local workshop. The SCB could also reach out to the wetland soils division and other soils-related divisions to gauge interest in sponsoring. Also, the SCB could engage with a field tour already happening to get some people to interested in certification.
  - Chris recommended that any sessions the SCB hosts needs to offer CEUs.

## **Policy and Procedures Document**

- Discounted application fees for students
  - A discount of this sort affects the budget and could be detrimental.
  - If exam numbers continue dropping and discounted fees are implemented, the combination would especially affect the budget and being able to break even.
  - Exam sessions can still be offered for groups of students to take the Fundamentals of Soil Science Exam and would be proctored by the university, so this would save the students a proctoring fee.
  - Laurel asked if there are prep classes available to help people study for the exams.
    - Dawn stated the board would need time, staff, and funding to put together an updated prep class like the ones offered previously.
- CCA Amnesty Task Force
  - The CCA Task Force is exploring options for recertification without having long-time professionals having to re-test recertified without having them take the exam(s). Many do not get recertified because they do not want to take the exam(s) again.
  - Dawn will report back when the task force finishes up in March.

## **CSSE/CPSS Review of Certification Program**

- The Soil Science Exam Program is 30 years old. Education requirements need to be updated.
  - Where do/can we get the knowledge base to update these items?
    - Canadian Soil Science Society (CSSS) has been looking in to creating licensure or a credential for their soil scientists. A committee of the SCB, CSSS, and the Council of Soil Science Examiners would be beneficial to work together to update these items since both countries are seeing the same changes in university departments.
  - Chris suggested producing a guideline for universities to base curriculum off of.
    - Colby mentioned proposing recommended curriculum is difficult, but we could recommend courses or course titles.
  - Colby brought up the idea of offering micro-credentials.
  - Jamie mentioned the WI NRCS would most likely be willing to engage in these soils courses conversations.
  - Colby is leading an effort this spring with Ag Idea/Great Plains Idea to help students enroll and take classes through other institutions in order to obtain certificates or whatever else the students need those courses for.
- Course List
  - Colby created draft list of course titles for our soil science core requirements based off of the NRCS course list and the OPM 0470 list.
    - See attachment.
    - Initial thoughts with the use of this list (needs further discussion):
      - Soil problems/research/topics/project would need to be added to the policy manual requiring catalog description or syllabus and max of 4 credits if this course list is implemented.

- Old course list was getting too specific. This list contains headings/subjects rather than specific course names.
- This course list could be used internally when reviewing applications while the requirements are updated. Once finalized, it will be available to the public.

### **Review of Applications**

- Reviewers need to be reviewing applications in a timely manner and need to inform Zoe if they will be out for extended periods.

### **Strategic Planning Follow Up**

- ASA/CSSA/SSSA boards accepted their 2024 Strategic Plans and are now operationalizing those plans for 2024
  - Dawn will update the board if a change affects the certification program.
- May have Aaron and James as representatives for the National Soil Judging Contest.

### **State Certification Board Meeting**

- Ohio is reworking their MOU. Updates will be provided.
- FL and PA are waiting for the SCB's decision on giving amnesty for people to get recertified before making any changes to their programs.

### **Elections**

- Colby has been reaching out for a vice chair.
- Virginia nominates James for vice chair.
  - Colby will check with him for interest and suggested to vote over email

### **Proposed dates to get the 2024 quarterly meetings on the calendar:**

- Tuesday, March 12 at 3 pm Eastern Time
- Tuesday, June 4 at 3 pm Eastern Time
- Tuesday, September 10 at 3 pm Eastern Time
- Tuesday, December 10 at 3 pm Eastern Time

**Meeting adjourned at 3:28 PM Central time.**