



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date & time of meeting: December 7, 2023, at Noon Central Time at ISA Offices in Atlanta, GA

Attending: Chair: Beau Brodbeck, Chair Elect: Patrick Franklin, Vice Chair: Rachel Barker, Trustees: Lori Brockelbank, Jeff Edgar, Steve Geist, David Gorden, Dan Herms, Sharon Jean-Philippe, Pete Smith, Sam VanMaanen, Kathy Wolf
President/CEO: Paul Putman, and staff guests Jonathan Cain and Heath Hupke (minutes).

Via Zoom: Treasurer: Jacques Brunswick

Absent: Gordon Mann

Chair Brodbeck began meeting at 12:05pm Eastern Time.

Minutes Approval

- Trustee Geist made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Vice Chair Barker. Unanimously approved

Chair Summaries for Committees

- All chairpersons were asked to make verbal year-end summaries to augment their written reports during the meeting.
- Exec and Governance Committee (Beau) – He began by acknowledging that 2023 has been a year of transition for TREE Fund, and that he believes it has been a good year overall. Time has been spent recruiting new board members, and that work will be ongoing. He reminded the board of its decision in December to split up the Development and Communications Committee into two, separate committees, as it had been in the past.
- Audit and Finance Committee (Jacques)- Their meetings have seen great participation by its members.
- Research and Education Committee (Dan)- Heath was a great help in putting together the details for the committee to review. Dan was recently elected to the ISA Research Committee, which was seen as a positive since it can possibly help spread the word about TREE Fund's grants and scholarships. Looking at ways to promote the grants that are available.
- Development and Communications Committee (Jeff)- The committee put together a list of websites for nurseries and growers to help future growth of TREE Fund contacts and potential donors. A bicycle group list was also created to help with promotions of the Tour des Trees to local cycling groups. Kathy mentioned that an outreach messaging campaign initiative has been started for foresters from the University of Virginia.
- Liaison Committee (Lori)- A new Southern Chapter liaison has just been elected. She is looking forward to an updated online shared folder that liaisons can use to share ideas.

TREE Fund President Report (Paul Putman)

- TREE Fund President/ CEO Paul Putman gave his report on highlights from his first 5+ months. He began by thanking Jonathan and Heath for their good work and extra efforts during 2023.



- Paul talked about some fiscal management projects he has worked on. TREE Fund is currently in good financial standing and close to the budget goal. Went over details about TREE Fund's accounts in the Chicago Community Trust and the new CDs at Wintrust. There was some discussion and clarification to help all board members understand the accounts.
- With no current Operations and Governance Coordinator, Paul has had to do some extra work as far as management and administrative tasks, including governance support, credit card details, cyber security, PTO details, scholarship applications, contracting, and laws.
- Personnel Management. A search for a new Operations and Governance Manager started in November. Paul also talked about future evaluations for staff and a self-assessment of his first six months.
- Community Relations. Staff recently reviewed a calendar of travel and outreach for Paul and staff. Staff has been exploring different partners and publications to help spread the word about TREE Fund and its projects.

2023 Budget (Jacques Brunswick, with in-person assistance from Paul Putman)

- Paul and Jacques reviewed the expenses and balance for 2023 and its relation to 2024's budget.
- A balanced budget for 2024 was proposed.
- 2024 budget was voted on. Motion for vote was made by Trustee Jean-Philippe; seconded by Trustee VanMaanen. Unanimously approved.

Research Grant Reviews (Dan Herms)

- Dan presented a review of grant recommendations for the fall cycle. All recommendations were unanimous as far as approvals from the individual review committees).
- A motion was made to accept the grant recommendations, as written, by Trustee Gorden; seconded by Vice Chair Barker. Unanimously approved.

Election of Trustees

- Beau recognized Jeff, Steve, Sharon, Kathy, and Gordon for their time serving on the board and thanked them for their service. They were each presented with "thank you" plaques.
- Board voted on a two-year term renewal for Trustee Gorden. Motion made by Vice Chair Barker; seconded by Chair Elect Franklin. Unanimously approved.
- Board voted on a one-year Trustee Term Extension for Chair Brodbeck. Motion made by Chair Elect Franklin; seconded by Trustee Herms. Unanimously approved.
- A vote on officers for 2024 was held with the recommendations being Chair Elect Franklin moving to Chair, Vice Chair Barker moving to Chair Elect, Trustee Gorden filling the role of Vice Chair, and Treasurer Brunswick filling the role of Treasurer. Chair Brodbeck made a motion to vote on these positions, seconded by Trustee Jean-Philippe. Unanimously approved.
- A vote was made on committee chair appointments. Treasurer Brunswick to serve as chair of the Audit and Finance Committee, Trustee Herms to serve as chair of Research and Education Committee, Trustee VanMaanen to serve as chair of the Development Committee. A chair of the Communications committee will be



appointed later and a chair for the Liaison Committee will be elected at tomorrow's meeting. A motion to elect these individuals as stated was made by Trustee Edgar, seconded by Trustee Geist. Unanimously approved.

- Details and background information were given regarding three board candidates, Dr. Asia Dowtin, Jon Hicks, and Dr. De'Etra Young. Vice Chair Barker made a motion to approve all candidates to the board, seconded by Trustee Smith. Unanimously approved. After these approvals, the board now stands at 11 members, which is the required minimum.

Tour des Trees

- Jonathan Cain gave a recap of the 2023 Tour des Trees in the Lake Tahoe area. 77 riders with 22 first-time riders. Details of partner engagement and activities given. \$364,000+ raised at this year's event. Fundraising included funds raised by virtual event- TdT 350/350 Challenge- which had 23 people complete the challenge. Some discussion on the future of the virtual event. Details given on proposed route for 2024 in New England.
- Board was asked to vote on proposed dates for the 2024 ride. Pros and cons were given for options of July 28 to August 3 and September 22 to 28 with Paul Wood's route planning committee leaning toward a recommendation of September 22 to 28. Chair Brodbeck made a motion to approve dates of September 22 to 28, seconded by Vice Chair Barker. Unanimously approved.
- Board was asked to vote on a revision to a previously approved proposal regarding the locations of future Tour des Trees rides. In September, the board approved recommendations to host the ride in Canada in 2025 and western Michigan in 2026. Following a conversation with the Tour Director, Paul Wood, TREE Fund staff asked to vote on a reversal of those locations to give more time to work out some planning details with the Canadian TREE Fund before the event. Vice Chair Barker made a motion to switch the locations, Trustee Geist seconded. Unanimously approved.

Annual Appeal

- Heath Hupke gave an overview of the current annual appeal. Heath asked board members to volunteer to contact any friends or acquaintances on the annual appeal list to help thank or solicit possible donations. It was recommended that the list also be sent out via email. David asked a question about separating donors that give to Tour des Trees riders and regular donors to not potentially take away from any fundraising asks done by riders.
- Heath also reviewed the TREE Fund Webinars for the year, with the most recent one being on Giving Tuesday and part of the annual appeal campaign. Over 5,000 attendees viewed the webinars this year.

2024 TREE Fund Goals (Paul Putman)

- Paul gave an overview of his vision for 2024 and what he and staff plans on working on for the year. His president's report provides detail, but a brief overview included:
 - Hire a new staff member (Operations and Governance Manager)
 - Work with Audit and Finance Committee on endowment reporting/ tracking.
 - Begin to learn new database and fundraising software.



- Continue outreach to ISA chapters and TREE Fund partners.
- Revisit operating plan vs. business plan model.
- Develop fundraising plan and calendar for 2024.
- Get new Communications and Development Committees up and running.
- Revisit insurance details.
- Work on a reboot of the TREE Fund's planned giving program, the Heritage Oaks Society.
- Begin "competitor" analysis. Work with liaisons and others regarding any further partnership opportunities.
- Develop communications calendar.
- Administrative items: Unload old office equipment, shredding, employee reviews, Teams folder for board members, review policies and procedures.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- TREE Fund and ISA's 100-year anniversary. The board discussed possible avenues to help ISA celebrate its centennial. In-the-works is a centennial-themed kickoff event for the Tour des Trees at the Bartlett Arboretum in Connecticut where ISA was founded. Other ideas included creation of a video, Tour des Trees promotion, and possible conference dinner or After-Hours event. Rachel mentioned that Arbormetrics might be able to help with putting a video together.
- 2024 Meeting Details. Bartlett Labs selected for meeting on May 16/17. Zoom meeting on September 5. December Board and Trustee Meeting will be held on December 10/11 with location to be determined.
- A formal board resolution was read and a motion was made to nominate Steve Geist to be a Trustee Emeritus to the TREE Fund board. Chair Brodbeck motioned to vote, seconded by Trustee Jean-Philippe. Unanimously approved.
- Treasurer Jacques Brunswick was presented with the Ken Ottman Volunteer of the Year Award for all his efforts and help with TREE Fund finances for 2023. It was noted that he served as de facto CFO for the first half of the year and has spent significant time training Paul as he gets started.

A motion to go to Executive Session was made at 4:15pm by Trustee Jean-Philippe, seconded by Vice Chair Barker. Unanimously approved.

Prepared by JC