



CIFA Members Meeting

Online via Webex

April 6, 2021 • 2:00 – 4:00 pm (ET)

Minutes

I. Call to Order

Kim Colson, CIFA President, called the April 2021 virtual meeting of members to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed all members in attendance, provided introductory remarks, and thanked everyone for attending. He also announced that he would be retiring from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, and he appreciated his time spent in the past at CIFA events.

Since this was a virtual meeting and members who were in attendance were visible, introductions were not done. Mr. Colson then turned things over to Deirdre Finn, Executive Director, to explain how members could participate and vote during the meeting. There will be one opportunity to vote during the meeting, members were encouraged to participate. Mr. Colson then introduced Ms. Knecht and asked for the Secretary's report.

II. Secretary's Report

Secretary, Angela Knecht, presented the draft minutes from the November 6, 2020, meeting of members that was held virtually and were provided to all members via email. No changes were requested, and the minutes were unanimously approved upon a members' poll. Ms. Knecht and Jim McGoff expressed their appreciation for Kim's leadership and collaboration over the years and wished him well.

III. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Jeff Walker, discussed the highlights from the full report that covered the preliminary year-end report for 2020 and projections for 2021. Based on preliminary reports, and despite challenges, CIFA ended the year with a gain of \$14,710. Although the 2021 Summit that was scheduled in Washington D.C. was cancelled, it is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the overall budget. The Fall workshop is expected to generate a net gain, even though attendance is expected to be lower than past workshops, since the food and beverage requirement, and room minimums have been reduced.

IV. Executive Director's Report

CIFA Executive Director, Deirdre Finn, provided an update on advocacy, professional development, and communications. Ms. Finn discussed the three plans from the Biden-Harris administration. The American Rescue Plan provides \$350 billion in funding to state, local and tribal governments to address impacts from the coronavirus pandemic. These funds will be administered by the U.S. Treasury and guidance is coming soon. The American Jobs Plan includes \$110 billion for water infrastructure and the American Family Plan has been proposed, but it is not likely that funding for infrastructure projects will be in that proposal.

Reauthorization bill for both the DWSRF and CWSRF have been proposed. The Senate bill reauthorizes each SRF incrementally over the next five years, also provides funding for SWIFIA, and allows states to use 2% of the capitalization grant for technical assistance for the CWSRF provided by nonprofits. The House introduced legislation to reauthorize the CWSRF at \$8 billion annually for the next five years. For the DWSRF, the House introduced two bills, they both reauthorize the DWSRF over the next ten years, both require American Iron and Steel as a permanent provision.

EPA administrator Michael Regan was sworn in on March 11th. He was previously the Secretary of North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality.

Ms. Finn and her team have been working on the fall workshop and intends to offer a blended online and onsite learning experience. The workshop will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 2-7. The following year is being planned for St. Louis, Missouri, November 5-10. The spring summit that was scheduled in Washington D.C., was cancelled, but the same venue has been secured for April 19-20, 2022, and April 12-13, 2023.

V. Member Feedback and Discussion

Discussion regarding when the Treasury would release guidance on the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Several states provided their intended use of the funds, Pennsylvania was looking at broadband, and a separate SRF for broadband; Iowa was looking at water and sewer and intended to use on existing loans or projects on their Intended Use Plan; North Carolina was concerned about the 2024 deadline to draw funds; Oregon was interested in the ARP definition of sewer; Wisconsin inquired about needing a public health emergency – there is no requirement for that.

Next topic was EPA and What's Happening – New administration, Radhika Fox, appointed to EPA's Office of Water. Discussions on collaboration between states and EPA and having representation for each region is desired. The EPA committee will convene before and after each EPA State Work Group meeting. Cash management continues to be a priority for EPA, to be sure funds are flowing, each SRF has different governance. Criteria for disadvantaged communities and affordability will continue to be a priority, President Biden's Justice40 initiative of 40% of federal funds going to disadvantaged communities and how states develop criteria will be of

interest to EPA. Some other issues brought up include programmatic reviews, green project reserve, the many small grants/new programs coming our way.

The final topic was communication, Deirdre thanked those who updated their SRF profiles. A discussion about prepayments was had, and a request for those with language in loan agreements was made to be stored on the members only page on the website. The fall workshop and incorporating some online presentations into a blended program leading up to the in-person workshop was discussed and received favorable input. The idea of mini members meetings was mentioned to carve out and quickly discuss topics, one of those could be on prepayments and early payoffs.

Deirdre made two announcements before we closed for the afternoon. Lori Beary who is on the legislative committee and was a past president of CIFA will be retiring from Iowa on April 15th. Also, Jay Manning from Rhode Island will be retiring in September. She thanked them for their years of service and all their work to support CIFA.

VI. Adjourn

Kim Colson adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m.