

Kentucky Section AIPG Business Meeting

Thursday, July 24, 2025

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams Web Application

Attendees: **Bill Brab**, **Tim Crumbie**, **Ben Currens**, Donnie Lumm, **Richard Smath**,

Welcome and Call to Order

President Ben Currens called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

President's Report

Ben indicated that he thought the awards banquet went extremely well and that he will defer other comments until later in the meeting.

President Elect's Report

No report.

Vice President's Report

No report.

Secretary's Report

Tim Crumbie reported that he emailed the draft minutes from the last meeting to the Executive Committee on July 21st, 2025, and the minutes were approved on July 23rd, 2025. Tim indicated that he will email the final version of the minutes to Richard Smath to post on the website after the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Bill Brab shared the Treasurer's Report for the period ending June 30, 2025. A summary is provided below:

Total Operating Funds as of May 31, 2025	\$27,464.30
Checking Account Balance as of June 30, 2025	\$27,537.83
Total Operating Funds as of June 30, 2025	\$27,537.83
Net Change from previous report	\$73.53

Ben made a motion to approve the June 30, 2025 Treasurer's report and Tim C. seconded. The motion carried.

Donnie Lumm asked Bill about updating the plaque for Lifetime Achievement Award winners that is on display at the KGS. Bill said he is aware of it and is making plans to get it updated.

Communications Coordinator's Report

Richard Smath indicated that he has nothing to report.

Past President's Report

No report.

NEW OR ONGOING BUSINESS

Annual Awards

Bill mentioned that he thought the awards banquet went well and the weather was good. He said the expenses were under control and there was a good turn-out. He added that having a venue that is free to use was certainly helpful in keeping the costs down. There was a short discussion about possibly moving the banquet around the state from time to time so others could attend.

Mock Interviews

Tim C. reported the Mock Interviews which were held at the KGS on July 9, 2025, went very well and that the candidates this time were particularly impressive. Bill asked if the format was the same as it was the prior year and Tim responded that it was. The only difference was that one of the interviewers could not attend but was able to participate remotely.

KGS Annual Meeting

Ben reported that the meeting went well and mentioned the question that Tim asked Sarah Gaddis on behalf of Bill, about why the state is having so much trouble retaining geologists. Ben added that the pay schedule for the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet (EEC) has not been updated and no one even knows how to revise it. This issue has been brought up to the Office of the Commissioner by several people, including informal internal panels, to provide evidence regarding why the pay schedule needs to be updated, but nothing has come of it. Ben added that at one point the state was the largest employer of geologists in Kentucky but that is no longer the case, particularly for licensed geologists. He said that there is no need for state employed geologists to become licensed because state employees are excluded from the licensing requirement. He suggested that input would be needed from a source outside of EEC to be able to make any progress. Sarah Gaddis is no longer the Director of the Division of Water, and no replacement has been named yet. As such, there is currently no point of contact to speak with about the situation. Bill indicated that he would still like to speak with her about the conditions at the state, including the pay for state geologists. Bill said that several years ago a waiver of licensure was granted to state government because of employee retention, and he wondered if the current conditions stem from that. Bill asked if geologists are considered less valuable or important than other licensed professionals like engineers who are required to have continuing education. He reported that he has an agenda to make continued education a requirement before he leaves his position on the Board of Registration because he feels that this would increase the perceived 'value' of geologists. He asked if part of the reason for not being able to obtain and retain geologists could be due to the fact that professional licensing and continuing education are not required for state employees, which may cause others to not value geologists as much as they do those professions that require licensing and continuing education. Ben said he does not think that continuing education is the reason even though he agrees that it should be pursued as a requirement. He added that the pay is functionally substandard and that there is apparently some confusion about the roles of geologists at the state. Seemingly, there is a consensus that an environmental scientist or an engineer can sign off on a report so why do they need a geologist? Because of this mindset, there appears to be no concern with making the geologist positions more attractive to potential candidates. Tim stated that it seems contradictory that the state seems to recognize the importance of having a licensed geologist sign off on

reports from consultants but they don't require it themselves. Bill said that one of his frustrations when he was a consultant was the fact that PGs were required to sign off on reports and make recommendations, but the state often had entry level geologists reviewing and questioning those recommendations. Ben said he will reach out to Sarah and Rob Blair and a couple of others to see if they would be willing to discuss the issue to see what options are available. Tim reminded them that AIPG National (had) pay data from across the country which could potentially be used to show the pay discrepancies. Tim suggested that Ben reach out to Wesley Turner who may recall the previous effort to address this topic. It was mentioned that the efforts should be approached with discretion, being cautious not to inadvertently cause the perceived value of geologists to be diminished.

Campus Visits

Bill reminded everyone that we are going to re-start the campus visits once the school year starts. He said we already have a good contact at ECU and any campus visits there should be easy to schedule. Ben said he sees value in combining these campus visits with speakers to gain interest and boost participation. He said he already has Wesley Turner set up as one speaker.

Membership Survey

Ben reported that he and Daniel Draper have discussed creating a survey to see what the membership would like for AIPG to be doing. The surveys could also be distributed to students during campus visits to gain insight into the topics that interest them the most. Ben added that doing this could also help KY AIPG focus on specific aspects of the AIPG mission statement. Tim mentioned that the surveys have been done before but there was some dissatisfaction because the majority of the recommendations related to environmental geology because that was the hot topic at the time. The KY-AIPG has since adjusted the talks/short courses to include more fundamental topics like core logging, which is applicable to a wider range of geologists. Donnie Lumm added that he and John Popp taught a course in 2019 on coal and sandstone and Frank Etensohn presented a course on black shales in 2020. Both courses were highly successful. Discussion continued about topics for future courses and how they could be used to attract numbers and help with professional development.

Bill retrieved a copy of a survey that KY-AIPG had sent out in the past that listed about 16 potential topics for future workshops and suggested that it be used as a template to build upon. Bill added that he still has the results from surveys that were sent out over many years. This baseline data could be built upon and compared to information from the new surveys to assess how trends and interests have changed over the years. Technology has obviously changed since this was first done, and some of the newer technologies like LiDAR, drone use and artificial intelligence (AI) could be added to the offerings. Bill is going to compile this information for presentation during the next meeting.

Open Floor

Ben reported that the new website is essentially completed and he thinks it could be published relatively soon. He said there is more information that needs to be added and that he is going to try to figure out how have a working model to share. He's also run into a snag about how to make the 'contact us' link work. He also indicated that it would also be good to figure out what information to share about section officers. Information like field trips, seminars, short courses and workshops can be included on the website.

Bill referenced an email that Daniel Draper sent earlier today, that mentioned several topics including short course topics, presentations, technical sessions, general talks from professionals in the field about what geologists do, the request for a CPG Application Review Chairman, state geologist retention, professional licensure and continuing education. He wanted to make sure that we kept this information in queue to be discussed in the future. Tim suggested considering making the Application Review Chairman part of the responsibilities of the President Elect or the Past President, that way, instead of having to search for a new chairman each year, the requirement will be 'baked in' to the officer's duties. The suggestion seemed to be well received.

Donnie volunteered that he has 400 copies of a 2013 handout titled *A Consumer Guide to Geological Services in Kentucky* that had been authored by the KY Board of Registration for Professional Geologists, that he can provide to anyone who is interested. Bill asked Donnie to send it to him so he can digitize it.

Other Discussion Topics

Board of Registration Update

Bill reported that Kevin Cary was sworn into the vacant position and that as an ECU graduate, he has worked at several consulting firms. They did not have a quorum for the June 9, 2025 meeting so none was held. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday August 11th, 2025. The legislation about the fee structure and updates to the application form was filed with the LRC in May. Bill reported that he went to Frankfort on July 23, 2025 and attended a public hearing for comments on the proposed regulation changes and none were offered.

Bill's reported that his term on the Board expired on June 30, 2025 but he volunteered to continue in his position. Rick Bowersox's term will expire next year and he does not currently have plans to continue, so Bill indicated that members should start considering potential nominees. He added that the National ASBOG meeting is in the late October/early November timeframe.

Ben reported that registration is open for the 2026 National AIPG Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. He indicated it would be good if someone would like to attend the meeting and present the required section paperwork. He is not sure if he will be able to attend. Ben added that Charlie Mason had asked about the status of the Potter Scholarship fund and was concerned that it might run out of money. He asked if KY AIPG could help turn that scholarship into a Trust. Bill said that he also heard Charlie mention it and added that the topic could be broached during an in-person KY AIPG meeting. Either Ben or Bill will reach out to him and request that he provide a written summary of his proposal to possibly present to Dr. McGlue.

Donnie reported that the GSK will host a field trip to Muldraugh Hill on Saturday, November 8th, 2025. Daniel Phelps will lead the trip.

A short discussion was held about the venue for the next meeting and it was decided that the August meeting would be virtual, but we should plan an in-person meeting in September. Room availability will need to be verified prior to scheduling.

Next Meeting

The next KY-AIPG meeting will be held virtually on August 21st, 2025 at 4:00 pm. Ben made a motion and Bill seconded. The motion passed. Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ben seconded. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:19 pm