

# Kentucky Section AIPG Business Meeting

## Thursday, December 4, 2025

Hybrid In Person and Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams Web Application

Attendees: **Tim Blackburn, Bill Brab, Ben Currens, Austin Dilla, Daniel Draper, Donnie Lumm, Shishir Sarker, Richard Smath.**

### Welcome and Call to Order

President Ben Currens called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

### President's Report

Ben indicated that he wants to discuss the 2026 Darwin Lecture as it is rapidly approaching. He held further comments until later in the meeting.

### President Elect's Report

Daniel Draper reported that he has prepared and mailed a letter to the potential speaker that Dan Phelps had recommended but does not have anything new to report about the status. He said he would like to give it a little more time before following up. He also has the name of another speaker that was recommended by Charlie Mason in case the first option doesn't work out.

Daniel added that he attended the GSK field trip and said there were a lot of people in attendance. He also mentioned the importance of the 2026 KY AIPG officer elections to which Ben responded that he had not seen the email requesting nominations and said he would reach out to Richard Smath.

### Vice President's Report

No report.

### Secretary's Report

No report.

### Treasurer's Report

Bill Brab shared the Treasurer's Report for the period ending November 30, 2025 with the Executive Committee prior to the meeting as he would not be able to attend. A summary is provided below:

Total Operating Funds as October 31, 2025	\$25,522.63
Checking Account Balance as of November 30, 2025	\$25,432.25
<b>Total Operating Funds as of November 30, 2025</b>	<b>\$25,432.25</b>
Net Change from previous report	- \$90.38

Ben made a motion to approve the report and Tim Blackburn seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### Communications Coordinator's Report

No report.

### Past President's Report

No report.

## **NEW OR ONGOING BUSINESS**

### Darwin Lecture

Ben indicated that he is not surprised that a response has not yet been received from the first choice speaker because it's a busy time at colleges and universities. He asked Daniel if he had reached out to the speaker that Charlie Mason suggested. Daniel said that he has not and thinks the alternate speaker lives in Seattle. Daniel said he would come up with another option for a speaker. There was a short discussion about whether it would be better to have the event in person, virtually or a combination of the two. Ben floated the idea about hosting the event in person, with the speaker being remote. Daniel said he preferred to hold the event in-person. Bill wondered how many people would attend if the speaker was not physically present. While he acknowledged that hosting the event virtually is an option, he proposed to use it as a last resort. He said he has attended conferences where that has been done and it is generally not appreciated by those who took the time to be there in person. Daniel said he has another person in mind, a university professor, who is a great public speaker. Ben said that he doesn't have a lot of contacts but is willing to help if needed. Ben and Bill agreed it would be appropriate to wait a few more days as Daniel had suggested earlier in the meeting, before looking for an alternative. Bill suggested that if no response has been received from the initial contact by next Wednesday, then we look to other options. Donnie Lumm recommended finding someone who is recognized regionally and who would draw a good crowd. He said he will come up with a recommendation over the weekend and pass the information to Daniel. Ben suggested that Daniel reach out to the first choice by phone if a number is available. It may prevent an unfortunate double-booking situation.

### Officer Elections

Ben indicated that it is his understanding that an email would be sent to the membership, requesting nominations for the 2026 KY AIPG Executive Committee. Once the nominations are received, the ballot posted online using Google forms where members can vote. He and Bill said that they have not yet seen the email request for nominations. Bill suggested that someone follow up with Richard Smath to make sure the request for nomination goes out to the membership (with a set deadline), and that the ballot announcement be sent out as soon as possible. Daniel wanted to make sure that people know that the President Elect position is a three-year commitment. Ben said he will reach out the Richard tonight or tomorrow morning, to remind him about sending the nomination request in case it got lost in the shuffle. He also wants to set the deadline for nominations for December 14, 2025, and that voting begin that day. Bill said it would not take much time to prepare the ballot.

### Speaker Survey/Pool

Ben reported that he has gone through the member survey and said that he thinks that Jim Howard's survey on topics for short courses was excellent, and he added that he does not feel that KY AIPG is in the same "position" as it was fourteen years ago. He said he thinks that conducting another survey of this type would be a good path forward but feels it should be postponed until next fall. He also thinks it would be a good

idea to have the Geologist of the Year serve as a speaker and added that students could be included in the speaker pool if they have a project that they have worked on and would like to share.

#### Fundamentals of Geology (FG) Course Revamp

Ben indicated that there still seems to be a lot of interest in continuing the course. Bill said the notice for the course typically goes out around the deadline to register for the exam, which is at the end of January. He said they have an outline and the curriculum for the course but they need people to teach the modules. Bill can no longer do it because he is on the PG Board and Drew Andrews is no longer available.

#### Campus Visits

Ben reported that he and Bill visited the Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) Geology Club on October 27, 2025 and he thought it went well and said that the seven students attended were reasonably engaged. Bill reported that he participated on a panel meeting at the University of Kentucky (UK) on October 23, 2025. Ben said that he and Bill spoke (separately) during an undergraduate seminar course at UK. Bill met with them on October 9, 2025 and Ben's meeting was on October 30, 2025. Ben did not feel the attendees were very engaged during his visit but said that EKU expressed interest in having AIPG return in the spring.

#### KY AIPG Annual Report/2025 Conference Attendance

Donnie Lumm submitted the annual report to the National Executive Committee but he doesn't have it with him so he deferred to Daniel, who also attended. Daniel reported that he attended the AIPG National Meeting in Chesterfield, Missouri in October of 2025. He said that on Saturday he listened to the reports from all of the sections and reported that some appear to be thriving while others are not. He said there seems to be low energy in participation and that AIPG National wants to write a report about the erosion of the geosciences (low enrollment, programs closing, field camps being eliminated). Daniel made several contacts while he was there and volunteered that KY AIPG is willing to help with anything on the national level. He also toured a lead mine which he enjoyed. Donnie reported that the Tennessee and Virginia/West Virginia AIPG sections are inactive, Ohio is about on the same level as KY AIPG but is doing a little better financially because of annual golf scrambles and an annual workshop. The Indiana/Illinois section is hit and miss because they have fund raising events. The KY AIPG has always been lacking in this area. He added that most of AIPG members in Kentucky are concentrated in the middle part of the state. There were a total of three people from Kentucky at the national meeting including him and Daniel. He feels that National AIPG is losing steam, partially due to the attrition of older members. He feels that the KY AIPG is in the top 6-10 sections in the country. To summarize, he thinks KY-AIPG is doing ok, but not great. Ben said developing the speaker list would help in establishing more short courses that could help our financial situation. He also suggested partnering with the Geological Society of Kentucky (GSK) and other organizations to try to develop some aggregate short courses by combining resources.

#### Next Meeting

Daniel recommended having the next meeting on Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 6:00 pm. Ben made a motion and Tim B. seconded. Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ben seconded. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.