



It is hard to believe that another year is almost over — or will be over by the time you are reading this letter. It has been a year of change and excitement. Highs and lows. Endings and new beginnings. As I prepare to step into the role of International President of IRWA, first and foremost, I want to thank each and every one of you who have supported and inspired me throughout my journey. I would not be here, at the brink of this awesome adventure, without the many wonderful friends I have made through this great Association and friends I hope to meet — you are the future great leaders of IRWA. I see you, even if you may not yet see yourself!

As an Association, we didn't just weather the pandemic, we came out stronger and more focused than ever. Over the past few years, we have reflected on who we are and how we can best serve our members. We have developed plans that will move us forward not just this year, but for years to come. We have been working on ways to increase individual member benefits and leadership engagement. We worked toward increasing recognition for the SR/WA, the premier designation for anyone working in the right of way industry. IPEC has put out a prodigious amount of work. We are on schedule for the update to the "Principles of Right of Way" textbook, and we are working on two new specialty professional certification pathways — the Right of Way Project Management Certification Program and the Right of Way Surveying & Engineering Certification Program. Our International Industry Committees have been partnering with Regions to provide seminars and symposiums on timely, relevant topics as they continue to make people's lives better through infrastructure development. Our Region leaders have been working on not just the governance of the Association, but also providing insight and direction to the Strategic Plan as we continue to implement initiatives brought forward by membership and creating ways to assist our Chapter education chairs.

It has been so exciting to see the ways our committee, Region and Chapter leaders are thinking of new and innovative ways to engage our members! There are still bumps in the road. As we have held conversations around member engagement, increased member benefits and leadership and professional development, we have found a lot of gaps, but thankfully, we have an amazing group of passionate, dedicated leaders who have rolled up their sleeves and put on their thinking caps to work on solutions!

As leaders, our job is to inspire others to follow and eventually take our place. We want to build in our own redundancy. That may sound counterintuitive, inspiring people to replace us, but really, that is the secret sauce! We must inspire our future leaders to see the possibility of who they can be as a leader. For many, being in Chapter leadership is the first and possibly only leadership they have ever been involved in. It is an awesome responsibility to support and help guide individuals to grow personally and professionally. But also, it is so rewarding to see the changes in their lives that are a direct result of choosing to become part of IRWA and taking up the challenge of becoming a leader! I read this not long ago, the attribution for the quote is a little uncertain but regardless of the source, it resonated with me. *"Tell me, and I forget. Teach me, and I remember. Involve me, and I learn."*

I am more humbled now as I am about to become International President than I was when I stepped into my first IRWA leadership role at my home Chapter. That is because the more involved I have been, the more truly dedicated and smart individuals I have met who have constantly challenged and inspired me. Thank you so much for your support! And the best is yet to come!

**DENISE L. SKINNER, SR/WA**  
Incoming International President 2024-2025



2024-2025



## KOBY GODWIN, SR/WA

### Candidate for IRWA International President-Elect

Koby has been a member of IRWA's Edmonton Chapter 62, Region 10, since 2007.

#### Education

- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Urban & Regional Planning Technology

#### Certification/Designations

- Alberta Infrastructure, Realty Services, Acquisition, Sales and Development — Property Agent, 2015-Present
- Alberta Infrastructure, Realty Services, Land Planning Technologist 2008-2015
- Scheffer Andrew Ltd. Planning Technologist, 1999-2008
- Cochrane Engineering Ltd. CADD Technologist, 1997-1999

#### IRWA Activities

- International Vice President, 2023-Present
- International Treasurer, 2022-2023
- International Finance Committee Chair, 2022-2023
- International Secretary, 2022
- Region 10 Chair, 2020-2022
- International Finance Committee Member, 2021-2022
- Region 10 Vice Chair, 2018-2020
- Region 10 Secretary/Treasurer, 2016-2018
- International Transportation Committee Region 10 Representative, 2012-2019
- Edmonton 2018 International Education Conference Co-Chair, 2012-2018
- Chapter 62 Course Coordinator, 2017-2021
- Chapter 62 President, 2013-2015
- Chapter 62 Treasurer, 2010-2012
- Chapter 62 Secretary, 2009-2010

#### Other

- Various Government of Alberta groups including the Contaminated Sites Committee, SharePoint and Nintex team lead, Flood Recovery Program for the High River Flood of 2013
- Board member, South Edmonton Football Parents Association, 2018-2021
- Masque Event Coordinator, Canadian Liver Foundation, 2008-2011
- Graphic Design Work — Italian Monument, Dante Alghier Library
- Guest Lecturer, NAIT for Urban & Regional Planning Technology Business Class

Last June, I was lucky enough to be voted into the position of International Vice President, and I have dedicated myself to serving the Association and ensuring the faith the members put in me was well deserved. It's been a year filled with early morning meetings, after dinner phone calls and long (and sometimes intense) discussions. But from those discussions have come what I believe we elect our leaders for... action. I'm pleased to have been involved in supporting the advances in our education, from course updates to updated pathways, and planning outreach to new and local organizations to bring into IRWA. As a result, we have seen great and continued progress as we also move toward strengthening our online courses and webinars.

As International Vice President, one of my focuses has been working with the Region vice chairs, and one of the early highlights of the year was a meeting with some of our educational leaders. It was a full day of discussion packed with new and innovative ideas that have already started to be incorporated into future education sessions and have seeded other projects going forward.

I have also been fortunate to work closely with the International Professional Education Committee and the International Relations Committee, helping and supporting the Association's education goals and continuing to build relationships with our international partners.

I look forward to challenging myself with the opportunity of serving as International President-Elect. I would be honored to continue the work of other great IEC members who have held this role and work with our current leadership to ensure a smooth transition and continuance of programs and initiatives while also continuing to push for the regular updating and upgrading of our excellent education offerings.

For all of those who have provided advice, support and assistance throughout the last year, I thank you all once again. I always find it amazing how much support and help members (and staff) of IRWA are willing to offer. I think it's the biggest reason why we are such a unique organization and why I have always said we are one large family. As always, a huge thank you to my family for their time and support as I know I wouldn't be in this position without it, and it means the world to me.

If you have any questions for me regarding my candidacy, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your time and attention as I, once again, am humbly asking for your support and vote, this time for the position of International President-Elect.



## DANIEL K. BUCAN, SR/WA

Candidate for IRWA International Vice President

Dan has been a member of IRWA since 1999. He's a member of Chapter 13, Region 5.

### Education

- MBA, Robert Morris University, 2001
- Bachelor of Science, Management & Finance Majors with minor in Economics, Robert Morris University, 1989

### Certification/Designations

- SR/WA, International Right of Way Association, 2009
- Real Estate Salesperson, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2010
- Private Pilot Certificate, Federal Aviation Administration
- PA Notary, Public
- AAPL Member
- Member, ASCE Transportation

### IRWA Activities

- International Treasurer, 2023-Present
- International Secretary, 2022-2023
- International Education Conference Co-Chair, Cleveland, 2022
- International Governing Council, 2020-Present
- International Relations Committee Liaison, 2022-Present
- International Transportation Committee Liaison, 2022-Present
- International Electric Utility Committee Liaison, 2022-Present
- International Finance Committee Chair, 2023-present
- International Finance Committee Vice Chair, 2022-2023
- International Investment Committee, 2022-Present
- International Professional Education Committee Curriculum Liaison, 2022-Present
- Region 5 Professional of the Year, 2022
- Region 5 Chair, 2020-2022
- Vice Chair Strategic Planning Committee, 2021-2022
- Region 5 Vice Chair, 2018-2020
- Region 5 Secretary Treasurer, 2016-2018
- Chapter 13 International Director 2 Year, 2015
- Chapter 13 International Director 1 Year, 2014
- Chapter 13 President, 2013
- Chapter 13 President-Elect, 2012
- Chapter 13 Vice President, 2011
- Chapter 13 Professional of the Year, 2016
- Chapter 55 International Director, 2004
- Chapter 55 President, 2003
- Chapter 55 President-Elect, 2002

I am seeking the office of International Vice President this year and respectfully ask for your vote. I have been honored to represent you as International Secretary and Treasurer over the past two years.

This year, as your International Treasurer, I found myself continually encouraged by our members who volunteer their time and expertise representing and leading Chapters and committees to develop educational and credentialing opportunities for our members and industry professionals.

In my role, I serve as chair of the International Finance and Investment Committees, and we continue to collaborate with HQ to implement \$75,000 in expense reduction while identifying more areas for savings and assess ways to increase revenue. In addition to reviewing monthly financials with IRWA leadership, we will be completing a detailed budget that will be presented to you during Spring Forums. We look forward to your feedback as we develop this budget and welcome any comments and recommendations during this process for approval at the annual BOD Meeting.

This fiscal year, we are also developing monthly financial dashboard reports to provide tools and increase transparency for our leaders and members. Additional requests from IEC this year have focused our efforts on recommending revised fiscal policy and procedures, including expense reimbursement processing, as well as assessing competing associations to best maximize member value.

As part of our budget development process for next year, we are working with the International Committees to financially support their performance goals, including the planning of webinars, seminars and meetings.

We are developing budgets for ADA support for members and Chapters, new course RFPs, the implementation of RWIEF Scholarships and the rewrite of the "Principles of Right of Way" textbook, which are all being monitored by the International Finance Committee.

My roles on the IEC have grown my understanding of our Association and how we communicate. The teamwork skills I've gained have prepared me to perform the duties as International Vice President. I look forward to serving our members in this role while working closely with the International Professional Education Committee, Region vice chairs and Chapter education leaders to develop and deliver opportunities for our members. My detailed understanding of committee budgets and goals will provide a well-coordinated transition and ensure education excellence for our industry.

Thank you, and I look forward to being with all of you this June in California!

**CYNDI WHELPLEY, SR/WA, R/W-RAC**

Candidate for IRWA International Executive Treasurer

Cyndi has been a member of IRWA's Puget Sound Chapter 4, Region 7 since 2000.

**Education**

- B.S. Public Administration — San Diego State University
- M.A. Organizational Leadership, Chapman University
- Project Management Certificate — University of Washington

**Certification/Designations**

- SR/WA — International Right of Way Association, 2006
- R/W-RAC — International Right of Way Association, 2022

**IRWA Activities**

- Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year, 2022
- Bylaws Task Force 2022-Present
- Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Task Force, 2021-2022
- Education Conference Speaker, 2019-2022
- PEAK Certified Instructor, 2019 to present
- International Ethics Committee, 2019-2022
- International Finance Committee 2022-Present
- International Nominations & Elections Committee, 2015-2016
- International Public Agency Committee, 2019-2023
- International Relocation Assistance Committee, 2018-2023
- Region 7 Chair, 2021-2023
- Region 7 Vice Chair/Treasurer, 2019-2021
- Region 7 Secretary, 2017-2019
- Region 7 Professional of the Year, 2020
- Chapter 4 International Director #2, 2011-2012
- Chapter 4 President and International Director #1, 2010-2011
- International Electric & Utilities Committee, 2009-2014
- Chapter 4 President-Elect, 2009-2010
- Chapter 4 Vice President, 2008-2009
- Chapter 4 Program Chair, 2009-2010
- Chapter 4 Golf Committee Chair, 2005-2009
- Chapter 4 Professional of the Year, 2005

**Other**

- Rotary Club of Oak Harbor, 2017-Present
- Soroptomist International of Oak Harbor, 2017-Present
- Northwest Chapter of the Scleroderma Foundation — Board Member & Vice Chair, 2017-2021
- Oak Harbor Youth Football League — Board Member, 2010-2018

What's your "WHY"? Many times, I've been asked, *why do you choose to be an IRWA member? Why do you choose to volunteer?* We are all the same in that we each have 24 hours in a day, or 168 hours in a week. How we spend that time may provide insight on our "why" or what we value in our community, work or home. Personally, some of the things I value can be found right here in IRWA.

Over the past three decades, I've been grateful to serve on International Committees, participate on task forces and serve in various leadership positions. These opportunities connected me with subject matter gurus, phenomenal mentors and long-time friends. For me, connection is important as well as serving others and serving *with* others to meet needs. There's something amazing, almost magical, when you find people who share the same values and want to improve the world around them. The connections I've made over the last 30 years are worth more than any currency in the world.

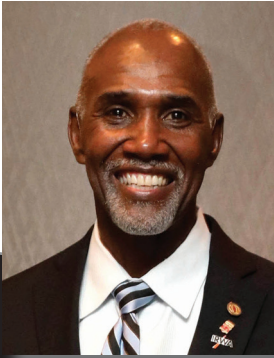
For the past two years, I've volunteered with our Chief Financial Officer, International Finance Committee and Investment Committee and look forward to continuing to work with this fine group of professionals to optimize our Association's financial resources, foster responsible stewardship and contribute to IRWA's overall success. During this time, I've gained a better understanding of the financial elements that run this amazing Association. From developing the budget, reviewing the monthly financial reports and ensuring our spending is in line with the strategic plan, I'm prepared for this next step as your International Treasurer.

This year I had the opportunity to complete the PEAK Instructor Development program. This was the most rigorous two-day IRWA class I've taken, and I can personally attest that IRWA is continuing to elevate our education program and how course material is delivered. Through our education offerings, we are growing the next generation of professionals and our future leaders. I'm grateful to be a part of that pathway.

So, what's my "WHY"? The answer is easy — I believe in our purpose, and I value professionalism, education and connecting with other right of way professionals. As your International Treasurer, I will continue to support efforts to improve our education opportunities, growing IRWA's membership and encouraging networking opportunities which elevate our profession and highlight the value we bring to infrastructure projects.

It has been a privilege to serve as your International Secretary on the International Executive Committee, and I thank you for your support this past year! As a candidate for the position of International Treasurer, I would be honored to have your continued support and your vote for the International Treasurer position.





## MATTHEW D. HARRIS, SR/WA, R/W-RAC

### Candidate for IRWA International Secretary

Matt has been a member of IRWA's Magnolia Chapter 40, Region 6, since 2006.

#### Certification/Designations

- SR/WA — International Right of Way Association, 2014
- R/W-RAC — International Right of Way Association, 2012

#### IRWA Activities

- Region 6 Chair, 2021-2023
- International Governance Task Force
- International Diversity, Equality, Inclusion Task Force
- International Chapter Dissolution Task Force
- Region 6 Vice Chair, 2019-2021
- Region 6 Secretary Treasurer, 2017-2019
- Region 6 Professional of the Year, 2014-2015
- International Marketing & Membership Committee, Membership Subcommittee Chair, 2023-present
- International Marketing & Membership Committee member
- International Relocation Committee Chair, 2 years
- International Public Agency Committee Chair, 2 years
- International Public Agency Committee Vice Chair, 2 years
- International Transportation Committee member
- International Asset Management Committee member
- Chapter 40 President/Director, 2014-2015, 2015-2016
- Chapter 40 Professional of the Year, 2014-2015
- Chapter 40 Vice President, 2013 -2014
- Chapter 40 Professional of the Year, 2012-2013
- Chapter 40 Treasurer, 2012-2013
- Chapter 40 Secretary, 2011-2012
- Chapter 40 Relocation Chair, 2008-Current
- Chapter 40 Education Chair, 2013-2016

#### Other

- NCAA baseball umpire, 2010-Current
- NFHS baseball and football official, 2000-Current

No one likes to lose, including me. When I came up short last year after running for International Secretary, I suffered from self-doubt and concern about why I was unable to get my message across to the directors. I needed to take a step back to reflect, because I knew there was a lesson for me to learn from that experience. The first lesson was that a vote for Cyndi was not a vote against me. The directors had to choose between two qualified candidates, and they felt that Cyndi was the right decision. I respect that choice.

The second lesson was that when your goal is to be of service, self-doubt is a waste of time and energy. Self-reflection, on the other hand, is a valuable tool to help a person evolve and improve. I have spent the last six months with that goal in mind. During that time, many of you have reached out to me offering advice, reassurance and support. Some specifically encouraged me to run again. The encouragement reminded me of the most significant member value that this Association provides — the PEOPLE.

Our “networking” goes far beyond the professional contacts and access to the subject matter experts from nearly every aspect of infrastructure development. Our members will mentor you, educate you, team up with you and help you find the right job. But do not forget that they will also check on you when you are ill, celebrate your small and large victories and lend an ear when you need one.

Most IRWA members are concerned with the same issues: marketing our organization, its education and credentialing; the quality and variety of our educational offerings; increasing member value; and doing it all within a reasonable expense. My work on the IGC, as Region 6 chair, as a member of Chapter 40, as a leader/member of multiple committees and task forces and as an employee of Mississippi Department of Transportation has given me several views into the varied needs within the Association and our industry. What do you believe should be the first priority? It is not an easy question, which is why collaboration, communication and transparency across all levels are so important.

I have been told that I am a good listener. I want to hear all points of view on an issue before forming an opinion toward a plan of action. We need everyone to have a voice at the table. I want to be part of an IEC and IGC that listens, learns, plans and ultimately takes action that provides solutions to YOUR priority issues.

I humbly ask for your vote for International Secretary. Thank you for your consideration.



## RAYMOND D. MEHLER, SR/WA

Candidate for IRWA International Secretary

Ray has been a member of IRWA's Los Angeles Chapter 1, Region 1, since 2005.

### Education

- Bachelor of Science in Engineering, University of Michigan, 1987
- Master of Public Administration, Syracuse University, 1993

### Certification/Designations

- SR/WA, International Right of Way Association, 2013
- R/W-RAC, International Right of Way Association, 2013
- PMP, Project Management Institute, 2014
- Real Estate Sales License, California, 2007
- Notary Public Commission, California, 2018

### IRWA Activities

- Region 1 Chair, 2022 to present
- International Governing Council, 2022 to present
- International Bylaws Task Force, 2022 to present
- International Finance Committee, 2021 to present
- Region 1 Vice Chair, 2020-2022
- Region 1 Secretary-Treasurer, 2018-2020
- International Strategic Planning Task Force, 2020-2021
- International Governance Task Force, 2018-2019
- Chapter 1 Project Management Chair, 2018 to present
- Chapter 1 International Website of the Year, 2017
- Chapter 1 Nominations and Elections Committee Chair, 2017-2019
- Chapter 1 Past President, 2018-2019
- Chapter 1 Director, 2 Year, 2017-2018
- Chapter 1 President, 2017-2018
- Chapter 1 Director, 1 Year, 2016-2017
- Chapter 1 President-Elect, 2016-2017
- Chapter 1 Treasurer, 2015-2016
- Chapter 1 Secretary, 2014-2015
- Chapter 1 Course Coordinator, 2013-2015
- Chapter 1 Fall Seminar Co-Chair, 2006

### Other

- Optimist Club, Long Beach Chapter, President, 2004-2005
- YMCA Camp Oakes Board of Managers, 2003-2005
- St. Bartholomew Young Adults President, 1991-1992, 1993-1994

*I've had two pivots in my career, and the second has made all the difference.*

Like most IRWA members, I pivoted into right of way from another industry. I was first in aerospace engineering, then switched to IT. There, I met Casey Overcamp, who recruited me into his family-owned right of way business. I learned the value of building consensus in both industries.

Listening to Casey was important because it helped me make a great move. Similarly, listening to you is important so we make great moves for IRWA!

Casey and his fellow owners believed in IRWA and encouraged their employees to pursue credentials energetically. I also noticed they treated the Association as if it was part of their family. So, I adopted IRWA as mine! This Association is more than a place to learn and develop a network, it is a forum for genuine friendships with a common dedication to serving the real estate needs of infrastructure.

For over a dozen years, I've held leadership positions at the Chapter, Regional and International levels of the Association, facilitating seminars, coordinating courses, chairing committees and serving in executive office roles from Chapter secretary through president, and Region vice chair and chair. I've had the fortune to study the workings of the Association in all facets and realized that as an IRWA leader, I am part of a continuity of leadership, learning from the talents of the officers before me and developing the promise of those who follow me.

I served on the Strategic Planning Task Force, which initiated the Association-wide strategic plan to focus IRWA on membership, education, marketing and leadership development. These efforts continue with annual refinements and initiatives in the Strategic Planning Committee and the International Marketing & Membership Committee.

My work continues and grows. I'm currently in my second year serving with the International Governing Council, my second year chairing the International Bylaws Task Force and my third year serving on the International Finance Committee. In all I do, I will continue the vision to increase membership value, keep education current, implement effective marketing, develop leadership and listen to and serve you, the member.

Like Casey who initially hired me, I find that IRWA has become my family. Even my wife, Suzette, refers to IRWA as "my other family." I ask you for your vote to continue my service to the Association as your International Secretary. And I want to hear your thoughts on what we can do for our Association. Please contact me!

My fellow family members, please vote for Ray Mehler, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, on June 26, 2024. It's your vote that makes all the difference!