

CHAPTER DELEGATES MEETING OUTCOMES
OCTOBER 14-15, 2014
THE OREAD HOTEL & GCSAA HEADQUARTERS
LAWRENCE, KS

TO: 2014 Chapter Delegates Meeting Attendees

DATE: October 29, 2014

FROM: John J. O'Keefe, CGCS

CC: GCSAA Board of Directors
J. Rhett Evans

Key Outcomes

- *The membership will vote on adding an equipment manager classification to the GCSAA Bylaws at the Annual Meeting in San Antonio.*
- *The membership dues increase will move forward as written and the membership will vote on it at the Annual Meeting in San Antonio.*
- *The GCSAA Board of Directors will continue to refine the new member standards proposal and bring it before the delegates at the 2015 Chapter Delegates Meeting.*
- *The GCSAA Board of Directors has decided to not move forward with altering the current Board Terms of Service.*

The GCSAA Board of Directors, 2015 board candidates, and 87 delegates representing 91 of GCSAA's 98 affiliated chapters, convened at The Oread Hotel and GCSAA Headquarters on October 14-15, for the 22nd annual Chapter Delegates Meeting. Thirty of the delegates were first-time attendees.

John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, GCSAA Vice President, called the Chapter Delegates Meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. on October 14. Mr. O'Keefe introduced the GCSAA Board of Directors. He welcomed everyone to Lawrence and thanked them for their time and participation at the meeting.

President's Association Briefing

Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, GCSAA Immediate Past President, delivered the President's Association Briefing for President Keith A. Ihms, CGCS whose arrival was delayed due to unexpected circumstances at his golf course. Mr. Finlen focused his presentation on GCSAA's mission, vision and organizational priorities. He emphasized that while GCSAA's Mission hasn't changed much in 90 years, the vision to be the global leader in golf course management is relatively new. The board has set organizational priorities to ensure GCSAA is able to achieve its mission and vision. Part of these priorities is to stay unified and focused – only by working together will we be able to be successful in the future.

Organizational Priorities

GCSAA is well positioned to move forward to achieve success. We are strong financially. The association has a history of providing programs and services that members can rely on and GCSAA is the voice of all superintendents within the golf industry. This strong foundation creates opportunities. Mr. Finlen reminded attendees of his message during last year's Chapter Delegates Meeting, that the GCSAA Board of Directors and staff are focused on four organizational priorities: Enhancing technology, advocacy and outreach, opportunities for growth and to continue our focus on members. The delegates heard about a few of the achievements in each priority area.

1. Enhanced Technology – GCSAA strives to investigate and implement technology that maximizes the membership experience and provides communication in convenient and easily consumable ways.
 - a. GCSAA+ mobile app was launched in 2014. Members now have the ability to update member profiles and search the directory via smart phones or tablets.
 - b. Staff completely redesigned the GIS website making it easier for users to find what they need, when they need it.

2. Advocacy and Outreach – GCSAA remains committed to being the voice of the profession to ensure members are able to continue doing their jobs with the tools and resources needed to do it.
 - a. GCSAA and allied partners recently garnered a win with EPAs announcement it would extend Nemacur use through October 2017.
 - b. GCSAA Government Relations has a more robust presence on the website housing action alerts, GR updates and webinars in one area.
 - c. GCSAA launched its new Grassroots Ambassador Program in July.

3. Opportunities for Growth
 - a. Environmental Institute for Golf
 - b. Golf Industry Show
 - c. International
 - d. Partnerships

4. Member Focus – GCSAA has not wavered from its primary mission – “to serve our members”. The GCSAA Board and staff continue to focus on:
 - a. Chapter Outreach – the field staff program is fully staffed and remains a priority
 - b. Increased educational offerings – education remains the cornerstone of GCSAA
 - c. Environmental profile – GCSAA will conduct a series of surveys on the physical features and maintenance practices of golf courses in the United States. This will be the second go-round for these important tools.
 - d. Enhanced Job Board was launched.

The key to exceeding these organizational goals is to continue GCSAA's inclusive approach in decision-making and involvement in initiatives. In 2014, GCSAA completely revamped its committee structure. Now, the opportunity for members to get involved on the national level through task groups is well underway with 19 groups composed of more than 150 engaged

members. Perhaps nowhere has this inclusive approach been more evident than in the multi-year review of Member Standards.

Member Standards

A tremendous amount of thought and discussion has been put forth since the effort to review GCSAA's current set of Class A standards started in 2011. The process engaged dozens of members from all classifications. The GCSAA Board of Directors evaluated numerous options based upon the following criteria:

- What best addresses the personal and professional growth needs of the membership.
- How can GCSAA provide more opportunity for Assistants to grow in the profession?
- How can GCSAA best serve the profession as a whole?
- The ability to reduce the confusion around CGCS, Class A and SM members.
- The sustainability of the business model and the likelihood the proposal would be supported by the membership.

After careful consideration of various models the board has made a recommendation that:

- Reduces the number of classifications.
- Maintains CGCS as the pinnacle of continuing educational attainment.
- Adds certificates as a method to acquire continuing education.
- Aligns this association with the vast majority of associations around the world in focusing education *around designations and not classifications*.
- Deviates from some components of prior conversations with work groups, but is well thought out and focused on the future of the profession as whole.

Mr. Finlen finished his presentation by assuring delegates they would hear more about the Member Standards Proposal tomorrow. He stressed to the attendees that GCSAA is seeking their input on this proposal and other topics over the course of the meeting and that delegates should engage in open discussion that will provide the association with direction for the future.

CEO Briefing

Mr. J. Rhett Evans, CEO began his association briefing by asking the delegates the following question: Why are you a member of GCSAA? He had them call out their top answers. The most commonly held reasons were:

- Education
- Advocacy
- Community
- Environmental issues backing (science and research)
- Networking opportunities

Mr. Evans noted that many of the responses embody the definition of what an association is – people coming together to organize for a joint purpose, to form a connection, a bond and form lasting relationships. As the world becomes more complex and diverse, GCSAA becomes even more important and we must strengthen that cooperative link with one another. Mr. Evans highlighted one of the reasons delegates said they joined GCSAA - Advocacy – for further reflection.

We Are Golf

Advocacy represents a series of actions taken and issues highlighted to change the “what is” into a “what should be.” Five years ago several allied golf associations, GCSAA, NGCOA, PGA and CMAA joined together in a coalition to change the public and political perception of golf into a more favorable “what should be”. This coalition is We Are Golf. Mr. Evans has served as the chairman of the board of the coalition for the past two years and helped write the federal agenda which is focused on maintaining the visibility and message of the golf industry with members of Congress, the executive branch and regulatory agencies.

The message the coalition shares is backed by facts, data and research and it is starting to resonate with those on Capitol Hill. That message highlights that golf:

- Drives the Economy – 465 million annual rounds played, \$5.6 billion spent on golf supplies and a total annual economic impact of \$68.8 billion.
- Jobs and Manufacturing – The golf industry supports 2 million jobs in the U.S that pays over \$55 billion in wages annually.
- Supports Charities – Golf is more than just a game with charitable contributions totaling more than the NFL, NHL, and MLB combined. 143,000 charitable events a year with 12 million people participating. Generating \$3.9 billion in charitable giving.
- Sustainability – Golf is not bad for the environment. Just the opposite – it’s good for the environment with over 2 million acres of green space that serve as holding areas and filtration systems for storm water runoff. These green spaces establish corridors for wildlife and create vital habitat areas. Less than 15% of US golf courses utilize municipal water supplies.
- Fitness Benefits – Golf offers fitness benefits with walking 18 holes is equal to a 5 mile walk or a 3.5 mile run. Golfers exceed their recommended 10,000 steps a day.

Perhaps the most evident reminder that the We Are Golf message is getting heard on Capitol Hill is National Golf Day. An annual event hosted by the coalition that brings representatives from all the associations to Washington D.C. for a day of exhibits, meetings and press conferences all on behalf of the golf industry. This year WAG representatives had a meeting at the White House with the special assistant to the president and chief of staff of the National Economic Council. WAG members met with EPA water officials and had 85 appointments with members of Congress.

Mr. Evans advised that these efforts are not solely focused on touting golf’s message once a year to politicians. They are working on communication plans that will combat negative press and demonstrate the positive things that are transpiring in the industry throughout the year.

GCSAA Business Update

Mr. Evans briefed the attendees on the state of GCSAA’s membership. After experiencing decreases of over 4% in both total and professional members in 2011 & 2012, GCSAA started to experience a turnaround in 2013 and 2014 shows even more promise.

Membership 2014

- 17,200 Total Members
- 12,173 Professional Members
- 4,897 Class A
- 3,605 Class SM
- 3,671 Class C (Assistants)

Financial Snapshot

GCSAA's financial position has been managed to sustainable levels in the last six years. Expenses have been managed through appropriate staffing levels, leasing space in GCSAA Headquarters, increasing operating efficiencies and prudent investing to grow reserves. Revenues have stabilized in the past three years. Membership decline has slowed, net revenue from GIS was up 45% for 2014 vs. 2011 in Orlando and EIFG grants are rising due to major gifts. Incremental increases in user fees (dues, exhibit space and conference attendance) is offsetting rising operating costs. Members should know that GCSAA is on solid financial footing due to:

- A solid financial reserve at \$6.6 million
- Expenditures that do not exceed current revenue and funding sources
- Positive cash flow and minimal risk exposures
- Total ownership of the headquarters building which is valued at \$8 million
- A supportive industry and a sterling reputation in the game and business of golf
- A high membership retention rate

How GCSAA is funded - money in

- 50% is through industry support – advertising, sponsorship, exhibit space and fees
- 26% is through member dues
- 15% is through user fees – education, conference registration, tournament fees
- 9% is through EIFG grants and lease space at headquarters

How does GCSAA put the money to work?

- Education, publications and conference and show are areas that contain the most expense, but also support most of the revenue generation for GCSAA.
- Marketing and branding initiatives aimed at promoting the profession in the marketplace.
- Program/Member Service expenses will continue to increase in the priority areas of advocacy, field staff, technology and member marketing and outreach.

Mr. Evans updated the delegates on GCSAA's Life Insurance Benefit. Being a compassionate and benevolent fraternal association is a core value for GCSAA and its members. That is why GCSAA established a Benevolence Fund and life insurance benefit to aid members and their families in times of need.

- November 2012, the insurance premiums doubled from \$100,000 to \$200,000 giving a 2:1 paid claims ratio from 2009-2012.
- In 2013, members voted in an additional \$10 increase for Class A/SM and \$5 for Class C to cover these increases in premium.

- The claims paid ratio continues to increase in 2013-2014 and another significant increase in premiums is expected.

Mr. Evans concluded his presentation by advising delegates that the association has a strong financial foundation, however it is and will continue to be challenged economically. He asked the delegates to represent their chapter's needs, the profession's best interests and address the vitality of the golf industry.

Delegate Orientation

John J. O'Keefe, CGCS led the delegates through a brief orientation of the meeting and their role over the next 12 months. He encouraged the delegates to be engaged throughout the meeting and to represent their members. Mr. O'Keefe reminded the delegates that their role does not end with this meeting. GCSAA will look to them as a liaison between the association and their chapter.

Rounds 4 Research Update

Matt Shatto, Chief Operating Officer and John O'Keefe, CGCS presented information on the Rounds 4 Research Auction. The two auctions in 2014 raised a total of \$159,873 of which chapters received \$103,024. The top four chapters participating in this year's program were:

- Carolinas GCSA \$30,933
- Metropolitan GCSA \$10,166
- Georgia GCSA \$7,469
- Heart of America GCSA \$5,214

While the auctions have been successful in giving chapters another avenue to raise money for their research initiatives, it hasn't been without challenges. The program has been running in the red the last several years. Mr. Shatto had the following to say regarding the 2015 initiative.

GCSAA is focused on making it a success by:

- Having one auction.
- Explore opportunities for partnership with multi-course owners.
- Simplify the donation process.
- Evaluate opportunities to streamline the process.
- Potential for celebrity spokesperson.

Chapters can help ensure the success and continuation of the Rounds 4 Research Program by:

- Providing feedback on ideas to increase donated rounds.
- Ideas on how to more actively engage bidders in your area.
- Provide input on what can be done to better illustrate the value of the program to non-participating chapters.
- The program must grow for it to continue after 2015.

Affiliation Agreement Extension

John O'Keefe reminded the delegates that the GCSAA Board of Directors has voted to extend the existing affiliation agreement by one year. It will now expire December 31, 2015. Mr. O'Keefe advised that an extension agreement would be mailed to all chapter presidents and executives by the end of October. The affiliation agreement was extended to provide time for an

Affiliation Agreement Task Group to meet in 2015 to recommend any changes or additions to future agreements. The extension would also give members time to consider the new Member Standards Proposal and the affect this proposal might have on the affiliation agreement.

Board Terms of Office

Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS addressed the group regarding the composition of the GCSAA Board of Directors. During the 2014 Summer Board Meeting, the board of directors discussed several areas regarding the current terms of office of the board. Specifically, they discussed:

- Broadening engagement opportunities.
- The role of the immediate past president.
- Length of service.
- Enhance cohesiveness between members, allied organizations and industry partners.

In order to reduce the length of service on the board and broaden engagement opportunities, the board proposed the following:

- Reduce the board composition by one board member, bringing the total on the board from nine to eight.
- This would be achieved through normal attrition beginning in 2016.
- Requires a Bylaws change at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

After discussion by the delegates, it was decided to not move forward with this proposal.

Equipment Manager Classification

Matt Shatto briefed the delegates on the addition of an equipment manager classification. In late 2013, the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association (IGCEMA) and GCSAA met to discuss mutual goals through a combined membership. The group evaluated the strengths of a membership union, opportunities for all members, the industry and facilities. They also discussed possible risks. Through these conversations a roadmap to a membership union developed. The IGCEMA Board approved moving forward with a union and obtaining approval from its members. GCSAA's Board of Directors reached consensus to pursue a union with IGCEMA at the 2014 Spring Board Meeting and to propose an equipment manager membership classification.

GCSAA did not reach this decision in a vacuum. The board has had numerous conversations with members throughout the country. Staff has gathered information related to existing equipment manager education events, providers and formal educators. An GCSAA Equipment Manager Task Group formed and was chaired by GCSAA Directors John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS and Mark F. Jordan, CGCS. The task group was comprised of seven equipment managers and two superintendents and they met via conference call on Oct. 10 to determine equipment manager specific education to be held at the 2015 Golf Industry Show.

GCSAA has identified the following equipment manager programs and services:

- EM specific education and training development
- Centralized resource center for equipment managers via social-learning groups, product-specific manuals, networking opportunities and a job board.
- Current array of GCSAA benefits and services.

Matt Shatto concluded his presentation by stating that there is a need to assist equipment managers in obtaining golf specific education. A facility is stronger with an engaged equipment manager. Chapters around the country have begun to focus on providing opportunities for education to this group.

Next Steps

- Delegates will discuss the new Equipment Manager classification
- Communications to GCSAA/IGCEMA members after the meeting
- GCSAA Annual Meeting – requires a two-thirds majority vote to approve the amendment to the GCSAA Bylaws creating an Equipment Manager classification
- IGCEMA special meeting and voting process – also requires two-thirds majority voting members to approve the dissolution of the association

Member Standards

President Keith A. Ihms, CGCS addressed the delegates regarding the multi-year review of Class A member standards and shared a new proposal aimed at promoting the golf course superintendent profession as a whole, while still providing individuals the education and tools they need to achieve career success.

Mr. Ihms began his presentation by reminding attendees that GCSAA currently has 13 different membership classifications. The current Class A model is comprised of a sliding scale based on superintendent experience and formal education. There is also an education point and service point requirement which needs to be achieved. It is a complicated system that has caused confusion not only with employer groups, but within the GCSAA membership.

Mr. Ihms highlighted the various task groups and committees that have reviewed member standards, PDI and classifications since 2011. In the fall of 2012, the Member Standards Advisory Group provided an executive summary of its findings at the 2012 Chapter Delegates Meeting. The MSAG recommendations were:

- Classifications should be simplified.
- Eliminate the Superintendent Member (SM) classification and replace with Class B.
- The integrity of Class A standards should be consistent at the local and national level.
- Class A standards should be enhanced.

The 2012 Chapter Delegates discussed these recommendations and agreed with most although there were concerns voiced regarding the enhanced focus on Class A and none for the designation of CGCS. In 2013, several membership committees also discussed the MSAG recommendations at a more operational level. These committees' recommendations were brought before the 2013 Delegates:

- Overall consensus to simplify member classifications.
- Majority believed standard should be enhanced.
- Overall consensus that employers must see value in Class A to actively seek these individuals in the hiring decision.

Mr. Ihms advised that only after all of this member input did the GCSAA Board of Directors begin formal discussions on the recommendations. Over the course of several meetings the board deliberated on various proposals to redefine what Class A and all the membership classifications should be moving into the future. At the 2014 Summer Board Meeting it became clear that the confusion in the marketplace over various membership classifications was taking away from GCSAA's overall marketing efforts to promote the Class A member. The board reiterated the importance of a clear, concise message to owners, operators, golfers and all stakeholders on the value of a professional golf course superintendent. GCSAA's marketing dollars would be best spent on marketing the profession and not one classification. This inclusive approach was in keeping with why GCSAA was founded. Once the marketing piece became clear, the board was able to focus on creating a new classification and Class A proposal. The board focused on:

- Addressing the personal and professional growth needs of members.
- Providing more opportunities for Assistants to grow in the profession.
- Serves the profession as a whole.
- Reduces the confusion around CGCS, Class A and SM members.
- Creates a cohesive and inclusive association.

The Proposal

Membership Classifications are simplified from thirteen to five:

- Class A Superintendent
- Class B Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Equipment Manager
- Member

Class A Eligibility

| Formal Education | Superintendent Experience |
|--|---------------------------|
| Bachelor's Degree in Turf or Plant Science | 3 years |
| Other Bachelor's Degree plus: Associate Degree in Turf/Plant Science | 3 years |
| Other Bachelor's Degree | 4 years |
| Associates Degree in Turf/Plant Science | 4 years |
| Turf Certificate/Short Course | 5 years |
| Other Associate's Degree | 6 years |
| No Degree or Recognized Certificate | 7 years |

Key Points:

- Proposal is still centered on formal education.
- Maintain CGCS as the pinnacle of continual education.
- Allows for the creation of certificate programs, which will help members to continue to market themselves and their individual achievements.
- Allows for the association to promote the value of a well-educated superintendent.
- Allows GCSAA to promote a well-educated team at a facility.

Mr. Ihms ended his presentation with the following thoughts regarding member standards, classifications and the process the board undertook to create the new proposal. The board looked at this complex issue through a variety of lenses. Including:

- Promotion of the profession.
- Impact on membership.
- Impact on chapters.
- Impact on the golf facility.
- Impact on GCSAA.

Delegate Discussion

The delegates were then placed in small working groups to discuss the creation of the equipment manager classification, reduction in the GCSAA Board terms of service and the new Class A and member classifications proposal. The groups then reported back to the entire assembly on their discussions. The majority of the groups reached the following conclusions:

- To not reduce the size of the GCSAA Board of Directors. The role of the past-president and engagement of directors should be handled internally as a matter of policy and to not alter the bylaws.
- Supportive of the creation of an Equipment Manager classification. The delegates were clear that GCSAA should aim to break-even with its efforts in this area.
- Supportive of the simplification of membership classifications.
- Supportive of streamlining the Class A eligibility requirements.
- Requested additional thought on requiring a pesticide license or some sort of IPM Exam to obtain Class A status.
- Requested additional thought on the education requirements.
- Expressed concerns in how no longer requiring education points or service points could impact chapter attendance.

Mr. Ihms advised that GCSAA would use the next year to solicit additional input on the Class A proposal and simplified membership classifications from the membership. The 2015 Chapter Delegates Meeting will be utilized to provide feedback on these conversations and to give chapters an additional opportunity to provide comments. The membership will vote on the new pathway at the 2016 annual meeting.

Mr. Ihms and the board reached consensus based on the feedback provided by the delegates to move forward with the equipment manager classification bylaws amendment at the 2015 Annual Meeting in San Antonio.

Member Dues Increase Discussion

Peter J. Grass, CGCS, GCSAA Secretary/Treasurer and Cameron Oury, Chief Financial Officer advised the delegates that a dues increase would be on the ballot at the 2015 Annual Meeting in San Antonio. It is part of the GCSAA Board of Directors Self-Governance Policy to review membership dues for Class A, SM and C members a minimum of every two years. Factors the board considers in the review process are other non-dues revenue sources, the association's financial position and other general economic projections. The member dues are tied to the

Consumer Price Index (CPI) in a process that was developed and approved by members back in 2006.

The current proposal:

- CPI increase of 3.3% since 2013
- Translates to a \$10 increase for Class A/SM and \$5 increase for Class C
- New dues rate would be Class A/SM \$375; Class C \$190

Delegate Discussion

The delegate discussion centered on concerns that lower budget facilities might not be able to afford dues. A delegate asked what programs or services would be cut if the dues increase did not move forward. Mr. Grass advised that no programs have currently been earmarked to be cut, however the funding member programs receives would be effected. It would mean less money to go around. Several delegates voiced their support of the increase.

Town Hall Session

The GCSAA Board of Directors established the practice of conducting “town hall” meetings to further enhance the communication and information sharing between GCSAA’s elected leaders and affiliated chapters and members. The town hall format is an open forum where chapter delegates have the opportunity to have a dialogue with the GCSAA Board of Directors who will answer questions and share information on items of interest and importance to chapters and members.

The delegates discussed numerous issues with the board of directors including:

- Rounds 4 Research items including restrictions on bids, how to increase the number of rounds donated and the percentage that is returned to the EIFG. Delegates were encouraged to share these ideas at their chapters.
- Discussions surrounding the name of the association and if it fits with what the profession is in today’s world. Delegates decided the name of the association still fits.
- Discussions surrounding GCSAA’s commercials. Specifically, the content of the commercial and why the commercials aren’t seen on the major networks. The board shared that GCSAA’s leverages its advertising money the best it can. The major networks would eat the entire budget with one commercial.

GCSAA Programs and Services

GCSAA Chief Business Development Officer, J.D. Dockstader and GCSAA Chief Operating Officer, Matt Shatto updated the delegates on initiatives and programs in 2014.

Golf Industry Show

J.D. Dockstader shared that GCSAA is excited to be in San Antonio for the 2015 Golf Industry Show. It’s been many years since we’ve been there and he’s been hearing positive things from members and industry in anticipation of the event which will take place February 21-26, 2015.

Some highlights include the following:

- 385 Hours of Education
- 30 Hours of free Education
- A fun Opening Night Celebration at the Tower of the Americas

- Over 500 Exhibitors
- 21 Hours of Education on the Trade Show floor
- Plenty of networking opportunities
- Bigger and Better Closing Celebration!

The GCSAA Golf Championship will be held at five prominent golf courses in the San Antonio area and will be Saturday, Feb. 21-Monday, Feb. 23. The golf courses are:

- TPC San Antonio, Oaks Course
- TPC San Antonio, Canyon Course
- Cordillera Ranch
- LaCantera, Palmer Course
- The Quarry

Mr. Dockstader shared that the schedule for the Golf Industry Show will mirror last year with education Monday and Tuesday, Trade Show open on Wednesday and Thursday with other events sprinkled throughout the week. Once again there will be no events scheduled on Friday, Feb. 27.

Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG)

Mr. Dockstader gave a brief update on the EIFG, GCSAA's tax-exempt charitable organization. When a member or industry partner donates to the EIFG where does the money go? Right back to the programs and services dedicated to GCSAA's members. Programs centered on research, education and advocacy. The EIFG supports:

- 8 new research projects
- 25 free live webcasts
- 300 scholarships and grants
- 75 environmentally based education programs

New programs such as:

- Rounds 4 Research
- Melrose Leadership Academy
- Healthy Turf, Healthy Tomorrow
- BMP Grants
- Grassroots Advocacy Campaign
- The second phase of the Golf Course Environmental Profile

Professional Development

Matt Shatto gave a brief update on GCSAA's professional development department and what the program has achieved in 2014 and what members can expect going forward. The department has:

- Provided 14 live webcasts so far in 2014.
- Provided education in Vietnam and the Philippines.
- Assisted 223 members in attaining or renewing their CGCS status.
- Assisted 378 members in attaining or renewing their Class A status.
- Deployed an enhanced Job Board

- The next Compensation and Benefits Survey will launch in December.

Environmental Programs and Research

Mr. Shatto advised that the Environmental Programs area is happy to report it was able to offer BMP grants in the amount of \$20,000 to five chapters this year. It is also launching the second phase of the Golf Course Environmental Profile. The first survey, Water Use and Conservation, launched in October and will close on November 17. The other surveys are as follows:

- Nutrient Use and Management Practices – Spring 2015
- Pest Management Practices – Fall 2015
- Energy Use and Environmental Stewardship Practices – Spring 2016
- Property Profile – Fall 2016

Mr. Shatto reminded the delegates that the annual call for research proposals ended on Oct. 1. The committee is now reviewing proposals and will make announcements later this year.

Field Staff

The mission of the Field Staff Program is to support affiliated chapters and allied groups through outreach by providing direct services to our members. The program is now fully staffed in all nine regions and it is focused on a variety of programs and initiatives, including:

- Rounds 4 Research
- Strategic Planning Sessions with chapters
- Advocacy efforts
- Helping chapters establish BMPs

Technology

As was covered in the President's Message, technology remains one of GCSAA's organizational priorities. 2014 brought the launch of the GCSAA+ App and the new GIS website. In 2015, gcsaa.org will get an update and additional Apps specific to the profession will be launched.

Advocacy

Chava McKeel, Associate Director of Government Relations, briefed the delegates on the advances her area has seen in 2014. Ms. McKeel advised the delegates that GCSAA's, and the superintendents' message needs to be heard at the local, state and federal levels. For much of 2014, her team has been concentrating on making sure our message is heard on numerous issues including:

- Namacur – GCSAA helped to secure an extension from the EPA through Oct. 6, 2017 for members to use up their existing stock.
- Waters of the US (WOTUS) – much time and effort by GCSAA and our allied partners is being focused on getting the EPA to change their proposed rule which would greatly hamper our member's ability to do their jobs.
- Launching of the GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador Program – this is a local, grassroots initiative that is seeking to match a GCSAA member with a member of Congress. Recruitment is ongoing and chapter delegates are encouraged to contact the GR staff to assist in identifying possible ambassadors.

Candidate Presentations

Chapter delegates had an opportunity to listen to presentations from candidates running for elected office. After the presentations, delegates participated in the “Meet the Candidates” session where they asked questions of the delegates in breakout groups. The 2015 GCSAA Board candidates are:

- Office of President – John J. O’Keefe, CGCS
- Office of Vice President – Peter J. Grass, CGCS
- Office of Secretary/Treasurer – Rafael Barajas, CGCS and Bill H. Maynard, CGCS
- Director (electing 3) – Kevin P. Breen, CGCS; Darren J. Davis, CGCS; John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS; Mark F. Jordan, CGCS; Jeffrey F. Millies, CGCS; Rory Van Poucke; and John Walker.