

**BSA Board Meeting MINUTES
November 17, 2023, via Zoom
10:00am-1:00pm Central**

Who attended:

BSA Staff: Heather Cacanindin, Amy McPherson, Johanne Stogran, Tricia Jackson

Board Members: Brenda Molano-Flores, Vivian Negron-Ortiz, Rachel Jabaily, Eli, Karolina Heyduk, Emily Sessa, Josh Felton, Jenny Xiang, Allison Miller, Jenny Cruse-Sanders

1. Minutes approval – Norm

The minutes for the following meetings were discussed and approved:

July 22, 2023; July 27, 2023; August 28, 2023; October 17, 2023; November 10, 2023
(Executive committee).

Motion: Vivian; Second: Jenny. No objections.

2. BSA Business Office Report – Heather

Some highlights from the past year were presented and discussed, with a focus on the impact of reduced publications revenue and gains from investments, giving, and dues. A sponsorship from Longwood Gardens and a potential collaboration with the US Forest Service were also mentioned; some of the details of these partnerships were discussed. Details about closing out the fiscal year were also discussed. Finally, the (1) new ad-hoc committee on membership, (2) the new BSA Bluesky account, (3) the search for a new EIC for AJB, (4) the ad hoc committee on AI, and (5) the Planting Science and Root and Shoot RCN grants were also briefly discussed, including new opportunities for bystander training. The lack of funding for the ombuds person at Botany2024 and potential avenues to keep this service was mentioned, as was an expansion of existing mentoring programs.

A brief summary of the resolution of the Botany & Beyond grant issues, including the continuation of the PLANTS program, was presented. Finally, the attrition of teachers from the professional learning workshops was discussed.

3. Botany 2023 Wrap up, Letter to Partners, and Botany 2024 Update – Melanie and Johanne

The losses from Botany2023 and the preparations for Botany2024 were discussed. The need for a field trip coordinator for Botany2024 was emphasized. The board also discussed improvements that could be made to tracking meeting finances, with a goal of making better informed spending decisions. Potential joint meetings with both the Mexican and Canadian Botanical societies were discussed.

4. FY2023 Financial Report – Allison and Heather

The need for the BSA to adjust to a new financial landscape was emphasized, both from the impacts of inflation and the new publication agreement with Wiley. An increase in giving and the ability for the BSA to provide services to other societies was mentioned as a positive. Challenges in bringing in more income were also discussed; are expenses are increasing while income is largely flat. Losses from meeting were mentioned as a significant concern, but moving away from the large expenses associated with hybrid meetings should help. Due to commitments, 2026 would be the first opportunity to have an all-virtual conference. Overall, there is a sense that BSA is in a relatively strong position considering the challenging financial landscape.

While the 2024 budget was approved by the board and members at Botany2023, it has been necessary to make some changes since there (for example, adding in the loss from Botany2023). One important change would be to eliminate the \$4,000 fee paid to AIBS for access to their public policy center. Since this is not widely used, it was proposed to discontinue this service with the possibility of re-joining later. It was noted that balancing the 2024 budget requires a \$250,000 draw from the BSA investment account.

Motion to approve the 2024 budget: Allison; Second: Emily. No objections.

5. Collaboration with Federal Agencies / Sponsorships and Funding – Brenda

Two collaborations have been proposed so far (Longwood Gardens and the US Forest Service). An initial meeting with the BLM was also held in summer 2023. The objectives for these collaborations and partnerships are to diversify the source of members beyond academia and to provide students and other early-career members exposure to opportunities beyond the academic sphere. Because agencies such as BLM and the Forest Service are looking to hire, they are interested in having a presence in BSA has the potential to be mutually beneficial. Agreements with agencies would likely be for 3-5 years but renewed each year.

Break

6. Editor in Chief Search – Emily and Amy

The current EIC of AJB will complete her tenth year in 2024. Both the EIC of AJB and PSB will be stepping down in 2024; committees for both positions will be assembled, with initial meetings in January 2024. A Google nomination form will be established, as was done for the APPS EIC position. A projected timeline for the process was discussed. Compensation for these positions should be around \$5,000 for PSB and \$18,000-\$20,000 for AJB. While there are no minimum requirements for the position, but it was discussed that successful candidates should have a philosophy in line with the society in terms of diversity in authorship and editorial boards, as well as with respect to the changing publication landscape.

7. Change of Physiological Section Name – Heather

A change in the name of the Physiological section of BSA have requested that the name be changed to the Physiological and Ecophysiological Section, to better reflect the change in membership.

Motion to approve the name change: Jenny ; Second: Rachel. No objections.

8. Botany and Beyond Grant Update – Heather

An update of the resolution for the Botany and Beyond grant was provided earlier in the meeting. The process by which the resolution was determined was discussed.

9. Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change Update – Vivian

The membership of the ad hoc committee was presented to the board. A brief summary of the three initial meetings was also presented. Plans are developing for a virtual symposium for fall 2024, to coincide with an AJB virtual collection based on past publications. Potential options for funding the virtual symposium were discussed. The board also discussed the possibility of looking for sponsorships for the virtual symposium.

10. Election Reform Update – Brenda and Heather

As part of a capstone project from the Root and Shoot grant, a proposal is being prepared to reform BSA elections. While the proposal is not yet complete, a few details were discussed by the board, including: (1) including refreshed job descriptions for all elected positions and (2) implementing a two-step nomination process that includes both the nomination and an assessment of interest of the nominees. Additional ways in which election reform relates to the strategic goals of BSA were discussed as well.

11. AISES and Indigenous Voices Action Planning – Heather

The progress on the grant with AISES and other societies was discussed, with an emphasis on acting on recent survey results. The details of the action plan will be developed later in the fall at a meeting that will include around 10 BSA members.

12. Other Business

The board was reminded that this is a great time to purchase gift memberships for students.