

**November 23, 2020 (1-3pm Eastern)**  
**ZOOM MEETING MINUTES**

*In attendance:* Cindi Jones, Linda Watson, Heather Cacanindin, Michael Donoghue, Melanie Link-Perez, Imeña Valdes, Shelly Gaynor, Chelsea Specht, Chris Martine, Jennifer Cruse-Sanders, Chris Martine, Lucinda McDade, Emily Sessa, Rachel Spicer.

Gaurav Moghe and Stacey Smith joined at 2pm re: Phytochemical section proposal

*Meeting called to order at 1:04pm Eastern*

1. Minutes Approval

- **MOTION to approve minutes from July 24, Aug 10, Aug 20, Sept 21 and Nov 16 -> PASSED**

2. Reports and Updates

Business Office Report:

- Have staff done the DEI training? Yes, one in October. It went "OK"
  - How much flexibility is there in our contract? We are mostly paying for each module or activity as we go
- Presidential executive order prevents us from making unconscious bias training mandatory, so we are waiting until February for this
- Question about relationship with American Fern Society:
  - They use our system for membership
  - Rob has been tracking his hours for a small amount of work and we will bill AFS for his time

Publications Update:

- Thinking about how we tweet (and encourage retweeting) about new issues or special editions

Wiley Update:

- Subscription income is down
- When will we expect things to level out and stabilize?
- The uptick that we saw after partnering with Wiley was in a sense artificial, due to overlapping (duplicate) subscriptions in different categories
- Suggestion that we limit free content because it leads to dropping subscriptions
- Despite our concerns, there is relief on the side of our publications team that we have the partnership with Wiley to navigate the complex landscape that publishing has become

Membership Update:

- Increase in students but a decrease in professional memberships; but still increase overall
- Amelia is thinking about a retroactive survey about why folks are not renewing
- 2017 was an IBC year and we had a very small meeting in Fort Worth, which explains the drop in membership that year

Education Update: Across the board recognition of the amazing work of Catrina and her team with the work they have done and the new grant received from NSF

### 3. BOTANY 2020 Financial update

- 25k profit made overall
- 50% stays in conference bank account; \$12.4k is available to share
- BSA's profit share is about \$7.5k
- Question re: \$10k in bank fees; suggested that this is fairly typical (credit card fees, etc.)

### 4. FY2020 Financial Wrap-up

- Income from dues is up
- Grant income is down, but grant expenses are also down
- Accounting expenses are down because we are not having an audit
- Hiring social media liaisons for the first time
- Question about "Participant support costs" (5090): Mostly the education grants, in which activity is way down due to the pandemic.
- We have moved portfolio to ESG investments (environ, social, governance)
  - Morgan Stanley: Realized gain on "sold securities" is due to the switch to ESG
  - Will we be able to track how this switch affects returns? Yes, roughly

### 5. Botany 2021 Plans and Potential Postponement

- Boise is still having meetings but they have very strict room capacity limits
- In the contract, we'll have no penalties if we have to pivot to virtual *if we postpone to a future year*
  - Question about what the deadline is for that decision – not yet clear
  - We need to get the no-penalty in writing; currently just over the phone
- We have a 2024 opening; Hybrid might be possible and Idaho conference center could possibly handle it for us
- House Bill 500: Anti-transgender law in Idaho; currently there is an injunction against it
  - CA prohibits the use of state funds for travel to 12 states with policies viewed as discriminatory, includes Idaho. Number of states in this category is increasing. If the laws are put in place after we have established the location we are technically OK, but something to be aware of.

### 6. Sectional Funding Requests

We received three requests; need to discuss them specifically but also need to discuss some policy standardization issues:

- Economic Botany Section requests \$1000
- Genetics Section \$3750
- Pteridological Section \$5000

Different sections are asking for different amounts per student to support student travel. What is a reasonable travel award?

- The max that sections normally give is \$500/student but it is often \$200-300, and it changes from year to year as well

- Can we waive student's registration for students who receive travel awards? Prefer not to do this: There's some admin costs here such that it is not worth it
- Suggestion that it realistically costs about \$1k to attend a meeting, so suggested that \$500 be a standard award.
  - If we go with \$500 then we need to figure out how many we can do.
  - Sections can come back to us if they want to divide it up differently.
  - Or do we phrase it as "strongly recommend" amount \$500 but that we'll consider alternatives in certain circumstances.

Main idea: when the money comes from BSA central, then it needs to be the same, and the sections need to distribute at that same (BSA central) level with few exceptions

What about giving different amounts for awards for best talk, best poster, etc.? Most agree that it should be a standard amount, so what is a reasonable amount?

- \$250 is suggested for best paper, poster as a recommended minimum
- The prestige and recognition are more important for these awards
- Finding the judges is a limiting factor for awards
- Lucinda and Heather will look into what we can afford here

Should sections be able to ask for money to support int'l travel awards?

- Consensus is that we keep these awards at the level of the BSA and not provide these funds to sections.

Lucinda and Heather will come back with a final recommendation via email for the Board to review.

#### 7. Phytochemical Section Reinvigoration (Stacey Smith & Gaurav Moghe joined)

- Document circulated for proposal to reinvigorate this section
- Did a survey and there is interest; someone mentioned fungal chemistry; there was also a suggestion that it get renamed the Biochemistry Section to be more inclusive (general support for this)
- What is the cost to BSA for this: just administrative oversight, so not great
- They just need officers and to review the bylaws

**MOTION to reinstate Phytochemistry Section -> PASSED**

#### 8. Committee on Committees and appointment process update

We proposed a change (expansion & new process) to the Committee on Committees:

- 9 members; Pres-elect is Chair, now includes At-Large DEI Director
- Board approved a ByLaws change and the next step is that this go to the membership (after Thanksgiving)
- Right now we have 8 names on that committee so we'd need to add one
- Creating an application process (sample web-based application was shared) will help this work not all fall to the Chair
- Question about students being on the committee? Student reps actually thought that this was not appropriate.

Web site and application sample feedback:

- Suggestion to have ONE application form with a selection menu for the different committees

- Committee members do not need to be updated in two places – they are linked – so having the list of members appear in two places is OK.
- Positive feedback on website – just having this information visible and clear will be a huge improvement
- Suggestion that whether sections handle awards themselves or not will be helped with this process too.

#### 9. Strategic Planning Update

- So far we've only had three applicants; will send out a reminder
- Dates have been set for the end of January (29<sup>th</sup> + 30<sup>th</sup>)
- Question about application as a GoogleForm and it notifying you about your photo and name associated with the account; will look into whether that's an option and if so, if it can be removed. Either way, respondents do not need to have a Gmail account to apply.

#### 10. DEI Committee and Executive Order Update

- Currently in the strategic plan planning DEI is a separate pillar; so how do we ensure that it is well-integrated into all areas?
- Who is trained in this professionally for DEI and strategic planning?

#### *R. Spicer left at 3pm, before meeting adjourned*

- Chelsea suggests we bring in a DEI consultant to work with the strategic planning committee. Important to have the entire strategic planning committee in a space of awareness.

#### *L. McDade left at 3:05pm*

- Potential consultant in Bathabile Mthombeni from Come Abide Here LLC, also check with our strategic planning consultant to see if she has recommendations
- Discussion of DEI and consensus that not everyone has the same goals for what we should be doing so some training could be important going into the process

*Meeting adjourns at 3:20pm.*