

BSA Board Meeting MINUTES

August 1, 2019

JW Marriott StarPass Report, Tucson AZ

Call to Order – 8:10am

In attendance (alphabetical): Heather Cacanindin, Ned Friedman, Shelley Gaynor, Cindi Jones, Amy Litt, Chris Martine, Lucinda McDade, Rachel Meyer, Ann Sakai, Emily Sessa, Rachel Spicer, Linda Watson, Andi Wolfe, Min Ya

1. Nagoya Protocol Update and Proposal - Rachel Meyer

- Report summary: Need entry level material available for community that's understandable and functional. Created LEARNNAGOYA.COM – it's up but still under construction
- Asking for a one-time investment of \$1-3k, which is what she's been asking other societies for as well. Am Soc Mammologists, SPNHC, Phyco Soc have signed on.
- 3-page-proposal has been sent out
- NSF is interested in funding a supplement to support a law student to work on the language and resources contingent on a sustainability plan. Annual maintenance cost is almost nothing.
- USANPAG: USA Nagoya Protocol Action Group
- Wants to establish task force with BSA for developing site content (e.g., use cases)
- There is a debate going on out there about this protocol and there are big philosophical issues involved. It was suggested that we include reference to this on the website (e.g., recent Science article).

MOTION & VOTE that we provide \$2500 to support this initiative -> PASSES

2. Conference Program Successes & Challenges - Amy Litt

Childcare

- Do we want to move forward even if we lose money? We're talking several thousand dollars
- This year the parents paid \$5/hour and we subsidized it, and it was only during the day
- General reports are that it was great
- General consensus is that we want to continue offering this service
- One suggestion that it be free; another suggestion that we add a \$5 fee to registration
 - Significant opposition to increasing registration
- Discussion about requesting participating societies to contribute; then we can consider it a meeting expense

Code of Conduct Committee

- This year members of the committee were not known
- Situation at Diversity Luncheon was potential breach of the Code but no one knows who the questioner/attendee was
- What Evolution does to support the Code of Conduct: Sherry Marts did onsite training and they had designated "EvoAllies" everywhere that were very visible, and they made a big effort to publicize the Code of Conduct
- Could we place the information about the process and Sherry's contact information on the back of the name badge? General positive response to this idea.

- Discussion about feasibility of onsite training for session chairs, vs webinar, etc. Training would focus on how to respond in the moment and practice these difficult moments.
 - Suggested that we make webinars available to everyone
- Sherry is \$275/hr as issues arise
- Diversity Committee representation (on the Code of Conduct Committee) & especially meeting attendance by members (of the Code of Conduct Committee) needs to be revisited
- BSA Rep to Code of Conduct Committee needs a mechanism for selection
 - Past-President is suggested; noted that anonymity quickly lost and that there could be repercussions
 - Ask for volunteers and select among them?
 - Make it part of the appointments that the President-Elect makes, as is done with other committees? (General agreement on this selection method, at least for now)

Cancelled talks

- People do not take it seriously and the numbers are high. A lot of work goes in to rescheduling to fill gaps and adjust program if possible. Then there are actual no-shows.
- The planning committee unanimously supports requiring a “registration deposit” of some sort.
 - Note that Abstract submission web interface is distinct from Registration interface
 - Why not pay full registration at time of abstract submission?
 - X-CD is being evaluated at this meeting and might help resolve some logistics
 - Argument against a partial “fee” upfront with Abstracts, prior to registration, because it complicates students getting reimbursed
 - Also argument against registration being due at time of abstract submission
 - General support for idea but need to discuss possible mechanisms further

Alaska as venue

- Governor of Alaska cutting university and collections funding; people are upset but there is no way that we can change venues at this late of a date.
- We are discussing communications that we can produce to express our opinion and opposition.
- We signed the contract 1.5 years ago for Alaska and the penalty is significant.

3. Science Communication – Linda Watson

- We all agree that this should be a priority but need to talk more about what our goals are
- Bruce Kirchoff would like to run a workshop on this and proposed competition for best 3-min talk; he approached a lot of Board members at the meeting; he was told to talk to the Teaching Section
 - Generally not much support on Board for this competition or workshop
- Lightning talks were well attended and there was no need for any competition
- PLANTS students are interested in more “soft skills” professional development workshops
- CV reviewing workshop was well-received and should probably become a standard offering
- We need to keep professional development and scientific outreach to be distinct. The Teaching Section is already doing a ton of outreach and may be open to renaming.

4. Code of Ethics / Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEM - Heather

- BSA Code of Ethics is distinct from BOTANY meeting Code of Conduct (i.e., they are different documents with different but related objectives)

- Last Board meeting we agreed to join a consortium on this
- Our Code of Ethics was written in 1997
- Heather, Emily and Andi agreed to review existing text and offer edits to share with Board

5. Investment Committee - ESG Investing

- Want investment policy with ethical principles: ESG = Environmental, Social and Governance
- Bryan and MorganStanley will model this out and present options
- There was general support at the Council meeting to consider this
- Pro bono Maya suggests that there may be no financial opportunity lost at all making this move
- Suggesting that we pay for Maya to come to the meeting (we covered her hotel at this meeting)
- Board voted for a 70/30 split but we have not moved toward that yet, and now we have new shifts being discussed, so:

MOTION & VOTE that we remove that (70/30) recommendation during this transition period with a newly populated Investment Committee and move toward ESG investments

6. Accounting Consolidation & Section funding

- Generally well received by Sections
- How do we handle Sections' travel awards distinct from BSA's travel awards? Do we want to do this at multiple levels? Some think they should be responsible for their own travel awards. And what about social events (food and drink)? Section will want to request money for colloquia.
- Suggestion that travel awards be offered at the BSA level (i.e., they can raise supplemental funds via dues if they want to offer their own travel awards)
- Suggestion that we establish minimum dues for sections and recommend that sections consider raising their dues if they are low or they want to fund more activities
- **MOTION & VOTE to discontinue MidContinent and Phytochemical Sections -> PASSES**

7. Strategic Planning Discussion - Linda / Heather Cacanindin

- Previous strategic plan viewed more as a tactical/priority list and will be shared
- Do *not* tack that session on to the end of the BOTANY meeting (done before; bad idea; people are exhausted)
- Costs about 25k to do it well with a strategic planning committee and outside hire. Could we do it before (as in prior to, not immediately before) the next meeting?
 - Think about different sections of plan before fall meeting
 - Agreed that we need a cross-section of the membership

8. AIBS Request for Increased Funding - Heather Cacanindin

- We are a member organization and support them at a high(ish) level
- They have a new model and will be requesting more funding for more services offered
- Muriel Poston, Judy Skog, and Pam Soltis have been on their Board

9. PLANTS program continuation - Ann Sakai

- Diversity and Inclusion Initiative funded by NSF supported additional PLANTS students and faculty (community and tribal colleges); teamed up with Teaching Section for contributed papers; symposium with four speakers; everything extremely well attended; diversity luncheon wasn't technically part of this initiative.
- Diversity Committee meeting highlights:

- We want to go beyond undergrad level (grad and beyond)
- Need to change Bylaws re: PLANTS oversight given that it may be internally funded, but when it is externally funded it should be overseen by the grant PI (Note from Secretary: It is actually language in Part 9 of the BSA Policies [online] that states that the PLANTS program is under the purview of this committee)
- Relationship between Diversity Committee Chair and At-Large Director of Human Diversity (Note from Secretary: Director at Large of Human Development is technically the name) needs to be clarified
- Requests suggestions for future themes and topics and speakers
- Idea of “Broadening Participation” Session, but this overlaps with the Teaching Section
- Everyone wants to move the committee meeting time to during the meeting instead of before the meeting starts, but it is obviously hard to find a time
- Wednesday PLANTS debriefing lunch ideas:
 - Facilitate bringing together prospective grad students with PIs looking for grad students
 - Desire for career pathways discussion; discussion about whether this is overlapping with the student-organized career luncheon, but students want a more personal narrative about their pathways
- PLANTS future support/funding
 - We are in YEAR 4 of a 5-year award (only about \$20k/year); sequence was UMAB -> 5 yrs PLANTS -> 5 yrs PLANTS 2.0
 - There are some potential PIs in mind.
 - It could be internally funded by BSA
 - General agreement that we should apply for external funding
 - It could be major Development initiative too
- Chelsea Specht (ASPT) is very interested in supporting PLANTS and wants to contribute to our program.
 - She is interested in some kind of collecting trip (could be one of the field trips; PLANTS students already take one field trip). She suggested that they could contribute significant funding.
 - General agreement that PLANTS-targeted funding with topical (e.g., systematics) focus or requirement is not appropriate. Societies organize field trips all the time and anyone can sign up for them (not just for members)
 - Question about ASPT and Systematics Section being tightly linked (like Pteridological Section and AFS, etc.).
 - SACNAS is important – maybe ASPT can fund members to go to SACNAS meeting?
 - We could also ask ASPT to fund additional PLANTS students (students average \$1-2k per meeting)?
 - Linda will talk to Pam Soltis, current ASPT president and Ann Sakai can participate in providing information on the PLANTS program

10. New business

- Is it possible to lower the meeting registration cost (and/or venue cost)?
 - We used to meet at universities and not convention centers. Some idea that universities are not much cheaper, however.
 - Certain cities are much more affordable, but then attendance drops.

- We have ten professional member travel grants (10 of those at \$500 each are offered; one strategy could be to increase those numbers). Developing nations travel awards are \$1000 each.
- General agreement that shaving off snacks and coffee is a bad idea and will not save much money
- 44% registered attendees are students, so they are coming (i.e., cost is not prohibiting their attendance)
- Ann noted many people asking if they could watch some talks remotely (real time or recorded later)
 - Technology is expensive
 - Could we have a digital registration for specific symposia? We record 50-70 talks and post those and use some for marketing. Anecdotal evidence from other societies is all over the map (not worth it; reduced attendance; increased attendance).
 - Bandwidth is still a serious problem

MOTION & VOTE to adjourn -> PASSES (Meeting adjourned at 1:26pm)