

## BSA Board Meeting MINUTES

February 28-29, 2020

BSA Business Office, 4475 Castleman Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110

*In attendance:* Cindi Jones, Amy McPherson, Gillian Greenough, Catrina Adams, Ann Sakai, Chris Martine, Min Ya, Johanne Strogan, Heather Cacanindin, Emily Sessa, Rob Brandt, Andi Wolfe, Shelley Gaynor, Lucinda McDade, Jodi Creasap-Gee, Amy Litt, Rachel Spicer, Linda Watson, Beth Parada, Amelia Neely, Rich Hund, Wanda Lovan. (Ned Friedman, Theresa McCulley, Pam Diggle joined late; times indicated below)

### **Friday, February 28**

*Meeting called to order at 5:05pm*

#### 1. Welcome and Intros

#### 2. Business Office Report

- Financially we are healthy and ended 2019 in the black
- Endowment giving is up by about 20%, and that's distinct from the generous Kaplan gift to support graduate student research
- We are on track for FY2020
- Be aware of:
  - BOTANY 2020: already risky but especially with the coronavirus
  - Both NSF grants are ending soon
  - Pubs income – we have a guaranteed income but royalty is 50% less this year than last
- Strategic planning is in the works
- New awards platform is taking off and being used extensively
- New partnerships (e.g., U.S. Botanic Garden) are promising

#### 3. Member Survey Results

- 14% is a great participation rate; important to poll regular membership to get their take on things
- Satisfaction rate is very high and improved since last survey
- Connecting, networking and conference are the top three reasons for membership
- Desire to keep cost of meeting down; travel assistance; outreach to general public; accessibility and relevance to non-academic community were all noted
- Discussion re: comments about some of the governance positions or sections being closed or insider-based selections
  - Concerns expressed re: it being difficult to get a foot in the door; lack of transparency in budgeting
  - How do we encourage more nominations? How do we move away from the committee selecting the nominees who end up on the ballot?
  - Students don't know how to get involved, and that there is a student rep on all or nearly all committees

- Question about whether executive board members need to have experience with BSA governance and history
- Suggestion that it be an agenda item (improved election transparency and recruiting)

#### 4. Membership and Communications Report

- Surpassed 3000 members for the first time in many years
- Second round of 3-year membership
- Student membership always has a big number of new members; Professional members are the opposite
- Question: How far back do we go reaching out to folks who have not renewed? Several years.
- Desire to offer 3-year post-doc membership; we are having a dip in post-doc membership and this might help address this
- Should we require membership in order to view the job board? General lack of Board support for this idea because similar services are free and people would be upset
- Suggestion that we look at the tiered fees and make sure that they make sense (e.g., is the post-doc rate too expensive?). Should we offer a named post-doc travel award? Let's announce this at the Legacy Society reception. Development has requested "needs" to fund raise for.
- Excellent open rate on e-communications
- Student Social Media Liaisons are amazing and seeing an increase in followers
  - Morphology Monday needs content
  - They are requesting that they get help (\$\$) to attend the conference and serve in this capacity, help student reps, etc. They are requesting \$1k each for assistance

**MOTION** to approve \$1000 per liaison in assistance ->

**MOTION to AMEND** to approve \$1000 per liaison PLUS waived conference registration (~\$250) ->

**VOTE TO AMEND MOTION PASSED -> AMENDED MOTION PASSED**

#### 5. Business Office (Finance and Administration) report

- SSE and SEB: time spent supporting other societies
- No risk of high level audit triggered in 2017 (>\$750k federal funding); US Botanic Garden is a cooperative agreement and it may not count toward this.
- Standard audit cost (not counting staff time) is about \$20k and should occur every few years

*Ned Friedman joined meeting at 3pm*

#### 6. Conference update

- Requesting \$3k for student field trips (ASPT does the same thing)

**MOTION to fund student members to attend field trips at \$3k -> PASSED**

- Science Knows No Borders: For attendees who are unable to attend for a documented reason (medical; travel ban; VISA denied) and we charge them a one-day membership and someone gives their presentation; They must apply through Johanne, who provides the letter of invitation
- Coronavirus (tabled until later...)

- Childcare (tabled until later...)

*Theresa McCulley and Pamela Diggle joined remotely at 3:05 PM*

## 7. Wiley Publisher's Report

- Page 13: Downloads increased significantly; China & Brazil big downloading countries
- Number of authors choosing OA: Tree of Life Special Issue (2018) had a lot of grant funding for OA, and this likely explains high OA numbers that year.
  - OA = \$750 for members, \$1500 for non-members
  - Member survey: OA is important to them, but many do not have the funds (\$500 suggested as max willingness)
  - If we had 50% OA access, we'd likely have to adjust the subscription price down
  - "Read and Publish" deals are becoming more prevalent: Many institutions are now allocating funds for publishing
  - We need to publish more OA articles from OA-friendly countries; Discussion about ethics of "targeting" these countries
  - See last slide: we need to get the cost per article down
- Licenses summary: "All journals" went up; "Other licenses" went down by a larger number
- Suggests subscription revenue for 2019 is more realistic moving forward

## 8. Publications Report

- New Director at Large Emily Sessa
- Need higher Impact Factors in order to drive submissions up
  - Reviews is one way to do this
  - Dropped Primer Notes from APPS for this reason
  - Publishing lots of special issues
- Social Media profile is very important and leads to downloads and name recognition; people read papers of authors they follow on Twitter (etc.); also important to see that a journal promotes its authors and publications.
- Idea of adding citations to Wikipedia entries (further suggestion that we monitor the results)
- Let's start with editing our Wikipedia entry for AJB to be more current (!!! 2012)
- APPS: Wants to be the go-to place for methods papers
  - We are feeling the hit of loss of primer notes income (many submissions came from nonmembers)
  - Wants more special issues and reviews
- PSB: Working on new content for grad student interest (career interest; interviewing senior scientists, etc.)
  - Student reps always contribute articles
  - How is it distributed? Accessed? Can we get it in searchable form? Almost all of it is already in a digital database; Each PSB issue is the separable issue, but NOT the individual article
  - We need a half-day strategy session for PSB; a few articles are peer-reviewed.
- AJB:
  - Expanding editorial board to be more international

- Submissions have been going down slowly
- PlanS – polarizing
- Comment from membership survey about the ease with which you can put articles online and why it costs money to publish research.
- Suggestion that we educate our community to understand the role of costs and income (what it is used for) in scientific publishing; add this to the agenda for Strategy Day
- Suggestion floated that we have a discussion or workshop at BOTANY 2020 on the publication process, and then follow it up with a PBS article; Make it a webinar for broader access and participation?
- Comment that the medical and cell/molecular biol world journal subscriptions are exorbitantly expensive. It is not as simple as explaining how much tasks costs. Authors should submit to journals that espouse their values.
- Is there a ballpark percentage of OA articles that we want to be publishing? Should we have a target range of OA for next year based on some analysis? And how do we control where we are? Is this something to consider for fundraising (e.g., Legacy Society). BSA has the money to support this.
- Data sharing mandates and expectations differ across sub disciplines
- Request for guidance for Wiley on OA max/threshold
- “Voice of the Customer”: What do authors think about the submission, review and publication processes? Wiley collects these data.

*Pam Diggle and Theresa left meeting at 4:15pm*

#### 9. Conference update, continued from #6

- Childcare: requesting \$3k to cover BSA’s share for the same services as last years
  - Should parents contribute toward the cost? Should it be pro-rated based on membership category?
  - We’re thinking about it for next year because it is already set for this year and agreed to by partner societies (people using the service pay \$5/hour). The full cost is \$12k for 12 kids
  - MOTION (not really moved, but informal agreement that we should do this)
- Coronavirus: hoping that the worst of this will be over by July. Cancelling the meeting would presumably be a far bigger loss than having a very small meeting with lots of cancellations.
- Environmental sustainability initiatives: What can we do?
  - If folks bring their own mugs, you spend more on coffee
  - Proposal that we go “beef-free” due to the impact of raising beef
  - Impossible Burger sponsorship?
- Code of Conduct
  - Can we put the contact info on the back of the name badge (2 cards printed on same size; user can tear at perforation and put behind name badge.)
  - QR code to scan?

#### 10. Education and Outreach Report

- Good place to head into strategic planning

- People really know what Planting Science is now (15 years!); Cool list of team names in report
  - Large-scale study is in press
  - We're in the no-cost extension year ending Sept 30 (Digging Deeper)
- Study on teacher-scientist professional development either in person or online (NSF, \$4.6M proposal being reviewed)
- BSA Mentoring: consider models that are based more on networks of many pipeline layers than 1:1
- Collaboration with U.S. Botanic Garden on showcasing diverse careers in the botanical sciences
  - Student reps try to balance representation on panel at BOTANY meetings
  - Goal of developing new Botany.org resources and profiles
  - What is the PSRN doing in this area?

#### 11. IT Report

- New awards module is working very well
- Botany.org web redesign: prioritize over Botany conference site (see below); generally agreed that this needs a update
  - General agreement that this needs work and should be a priority for spending
  - Do we contract this out?
  - General consensus that we solicit bids for this work and find sites that we really like as examples
- Pending .org sale to a for-profit company
- Botany conference is very old (abstract submission and registration, not the mobile app; Mobile AL was the first conference it was used at) needs to either be rewritten or replaced
  - Rob estimates that it would take him 6 months full time to develop this in house from the ground up and this is not time that we can afford
  - Needs to be made compatible with our version of PHP
  - International characters pre-dates UNICODE (!)
  - Evolution is using a new system that they like (some complain about the mobile app and like ours more) and we are considering their system. Rob did a partial demo with them. We got a quote from them but it was 1.5 years ago.

*Meeting adjourned at 6:08pm*

## Saturday February 29

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

*Meeting called to order at 8:15 am*

### 1. MOTION to APPROVE MINUTES -> PASSED

- Board Call 11/6/2019
- Exec Vote 1/14/2020

### 2. Financial Update

- Investment Statement 2019: portfolio had a great year, but also started off at a low point
- FY2019 Financial Statements
- FY2019 Profit and Loss:
  - Dominated by Kaplan gift; we are approaching a \$2M/year budget
  - 5615: Highwire printing
  - 5510: Audit
  - 5100: Latin American Botanical Congress; Pan American for BOTANY; also staff travel
- FY2019 Budget to Actual
- FY2020 Profit and Loss: late Wiley payment ended up in this FY

### 3. Sectional Funding Issues and Policy Approval

- Proposed sectional funding policy:
  - Guidelines rather than strict rules
  - Discussion about best paper/poster awards: doesn't need to have a monetary gift and Sections can raise dues for this
  - Board agreed to change the language for these three requests (presentation awards, travel awards, social events) to be "in exceptional cases" to avoid annually recurring expenses
  - Requested that we add a statement that colloquia are also *not* funded by the Board
  - Funds do not roll over

### **MOTION to approve amended policy statement -> PASSED**

- Issue that was not agreed on previously: SE section wants to, and has been, use funds (their dues) to attend Assoc of Southeastern Biologist meeting – essentially it is their section meeting because it is easier for them to all get there. They have a breakfast meeting (sectional) and give two student awards at this meeting.
  - Discussion about whether we should allow BSA general funds be used for this, rather than just their dues
  - Viewed as an outreach opportunity
  - Not reaching obvious consensus
  - Suggested that we require the following:

- They acknowledge BSA and give student membership as part of the award
  - Report student names so that they can be reported at the BOTANY meeting
  - They must alert the membership of the SE section that the dues money was/is being used for this.
- Board policy on virtual partitions
  - Mycology section: their remaining funds will be spent out in Boise, when we meet with the Mycological Society
  - Historical section: reasonable number of members
  - Named awards stay a separate line
  - Suggestion that we shift to Board policy statements on our commitments to various uses of annual operating budget, rather than virtual partitions
    - PLANTS
    - Emerging Leader Award
    - AIBS public policy training for two grad students
    - Graduate Student Research Awards

**MOTION to adopt policy statements (and line items on budget) supporting the top four bullets above and to discontinue the use of the virtual partitions [Planting Science is tabled until discussion later] -> PASSED**

#### 4. Fundraising

- \$350k Kaplan gift now has a signed gift agreement; there's a new Kaplan Award committee
- \$30k (up 20%) going to endowment
- We're not using our investment money
- Important to not hand money to sections; let's stimulate them to develop funds to do things
- Point that we DO want to build the endowment to secure the future of the BSA in an uncertain climate
  - The way you raise money is to tell people what the money will do
  - Meetings and the journals are what we want to secure money to support
- Discussion about disappointing returns, knowledge base and advocacy from Wiley: until we know more about what is needed to secure the future of our publications, it is difficult to know what standing size of investment funds are needed.
  - We have a guaranteed payment that is distinct from royalties
  - Can we develop a list of specific questions for Gillian?
    - Target percentage of OA
    - What would it look like financially if AJB went OA?
    - Cost per article reduction strategy?
- Can we add a little description to the list of funds/initiatives that members can donate to at membership renewal?

#### 5. Strategic Planning Committee Selection Discussion

- August or September targets for meeting(s) and we need to populate a representative committee
- Last strategic plan (loosely defined) was 2014; last real one was 2008

- Color-coded list of prospective members; share a Google sheet for names
- Recommended ballpark number of members: 15
- Questions on survey serve as a starting point; Board and others can add to a list of big picture issues; consultant does overview and then breaks full group into smaller groups, and then reconvenes
  - Do we have specific groups with different areas of expertise?

## 6. Human Diversity

- Policy change (Word docx) to adjust language re: leadership of PLANTS program if it is externally vs internally funded

### **MOTION to adopt new proposed language -> PASSED**

- PLANTS 2.0 is \$20k/year for 5 yrs and lots of BSA staff support. Ann S has talked to NSF folks and they have said that they would consider a third submission
- Diversity and Inclusion Grant wrap-up: Catrina Adams and Kyra Krakos; \$60k for one year and very slow to come through so it came through extremely late. Purpose to reach out to tribal colleges and community colleges and underrepresented undergraduate groups. Tribal college students especially provided feedback as to the power and impact of the event. \$15k is left and they plan to ask NSF to use these remaining funds in AK to support the same initiatives (noting that only one tribal college in AK and it is remote and completely inaccessible)
- NSF has URM definitions/criteria and we are trying to meet those
- Movement to providing whole list of mentors and research interests in addition to pairing mentors and mentees
- PLANTS 3.0: new PIs are TBD, submit by May

## 7. Investment Committee

- ESG investing (environmental; social; governance)
- What should we be asking Brian B from Morgan Stanley
  - Can be a gradual move
  - We're invested in pipelines and that should top our list of things to get out of
  - Have models run by the time the strategic plan comm meets
  - SMAs vs index funds
    - Our fees are over 1% and we could save money moving to indexed funds that use ESG investing principles
    - What kind of timeline are we talking about? Two years?

## 8. Conference Update

- Allies Harassment Training: new this year; two from each society nominated or selected by each society so 12 total
  - Wear large button: Botany Allies
  - Societies were asked to put out a call for volunteers for allies
  - Training is via in-advance webinar that we have access to in the future (\$2k and available for future reuse)



- Allies can consult with Sherry after being approached with potential incidents
- Choosing Rep for Code of Conduct Committee
  - They are involved only after something has gone to/through Sherry; she provides the committee with the possible repercussions and the committee decides among them
  - They are supposed to be anonymous
  - Previously appointed by President-Elect and Board agreed to continue this process; Pres-elect reports that name to Rob
    - Cannot be pre-tenured
    - Must have cell phone and be at conference without too many other duties
  - Should the Board of each society know who the reps are? Sherry could communicate the best practices (especially re: confidentiality) to the other societies
- New procedure for last-minute cancellations
  - Registration must be paid in full *by presenting author* by a certain date or your abstract gets pulled
  - Lots of reminders and warnings
  - Presenting author can be changed
- Too many colloquium proposals (19!)
  - Not enough rooms and some sessions are poorly attended
  - How do we limit them? What is our target number?
  - You are allowed one or two 30-min talks

#### 9. Student Report

- 90% student members are from US and unequal across state
- What caused the October spike in new members? Gift membership? Announcement about free registration lottery
- Student travel to BOTANY 2020: Random selection from list of students and postdocs, but how do we affirm that students do not have access to other sources of funding?

**MOTION to approve \$5k in funding to support travel to BOTANY 2020 via lottery -> PASSED**

- They compiled a list of external sources of funding and would like to advertise these, but also include some relevant questions on the member survey to find out where students are getting their

#### 10. Election Committee Slate for Approval

- List of nominees on website
- Our policy is to have two names on the ballot but it is not in the Bylaws and we have had three in the past; majority votes wins
- Interest in getting a second name on the list for Director-at-Large: Development, and quickly!

**MOTION to approve slate for President-Elect, Program Director, and Human Development -> PASSED**

#### 11. Education/ Funding for PlantingScience

- Concern about overlap with Teaching Section
  - Their session is now called “Education and Outreach” and is much better attended
  - Proposal that they change the name of the section to match that: the section has to do this
- Proposing all-conference best undergraduate presentation (talk or poster) award
  - Recommend separate awards (~\$100) for poster *and* talk
  - PLANTS attendees
  - Could be reason for fund-raising and \$2k would cover that forever
- Education initiative funding
  - Planting Science Digger Deeper is in no-cost extension ending Sept 30.
  - A new grant is in the works but unknown
  - Right now the Education Director’s salary is 70% funded by the grant and the Education Technology Coordinator’s is full time and is 100% funded by the grant
  - Board agrees to fund that 70% salary in the interim if there is a gap in external funding, as Planting Science is critical to our mission and the education activities are highly successful
    - Expectation that applying for highest levels of funding is required part of job, including 70% salary
  - We may need \$85-90K (inclusive of 70% salary) to cover a baseline of Planting Science activities for the next year if the new grant does not materialize and we want to keep it running
  - We may be able to get a second no-cost extension

**MOTION to commit BSA resources to continue to fund the 70% salary plus funds to support baseline continued Planting Science activities -> PASSED**

12. Nagoya Protocol; Rachel Meyer provided an update in a report on \$2500 funds provided for website development

13. Decadal Vision and Future of PSRN

- Decadal Vision Exec Summary – OK to circulate
- Continued frustration with last minute nature of ASPB’s request for input on initiatives, or failure to involve the BSA in decision-making but benefiting from our work on Planting Science and diversity initiatives.

14. Other Business

- Request for clarification on Botany.org website and who is going to get the bids
  - Concern re: involvement of our staff in the process and commitment to existing open-source software and design
  - Strong opinions that our website redesign does in fact need to start from scratch (complete redesign) and not be a superficial aesthetic make-over.
  - Web redesign committee membership and structure should be revisited
- SICB has a division of botany (new) and Chris Martine is the chair of the division
  - How can we formalize a relationship?

- We could support an award at the meeting (Rising Star in Botany)
- Wiley has asked if AJB wants to sponsor an award at SICB and they will pay for it: the board supports this
  - Could co-sponsor a session or colloquium
- Integrative and Comparative Biology is Oxford University Press
- Special session honoring Vicki Funk (Smithsonian) at the next SICB meeting in D.C.

*Meeting adjourned 12:40 pm*