

SICB Exec Committee

4 January 2003

Sheraton Centre Toronto

Present: Al Bennett, David Borst, Beth Brainerd, Lou Burnett, Mary Alice Coffroth, Ron Dimock, Martin Feder, Frank Fish, Patricia Glas, Jeff Goldman (guest-AIBS), Penny Hopkins, Kevin Kelly, William Kier, Rachel Ann Merz, Rich Mooi, Michael Moore, Dianna Padilla, Wendy Ryan, Peter Smallwood, Kathleen Smith, Stacia Sower, Nora Terwilliger, Gunter Wagner, Marvalee Wake, John Wingfield, Donna Wolcott, Tom Wolcott, Miriam Zelditch

BAI Staff Present: Brett Burk, Sue Burk, Mike Johnson

Welcome

Marvalee Wake welcomed the group and called the meeting to order.

Wake noted there have been questions regarding the existence of a Procedures Manual for Committees and Committee members. She noted that a Procedures Manual should be created in conjunction with newly elected members. Wake asked that Committee members prepare procedures using Kevin Kelley's Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee report as a model. The due date for procedures will be mid June 2003.

Minutes

Minutes from the SICB Executive Committee Meeting, 2 January 2002, were approved by consensus.

Committee Reports

Marvalee Wake commented that reports from all committees had been provided for the board packet and asked that everyone review the reports attached. Wake then asked for any committees to comment further on their activities or bring any recommendations to the board that may require action. The following committees presented further information:

Membership Committee

Al Bennett reported on the activities of the Membership Committee and the current state of the Society's membership. Bennett stated that there are a large number of members in arrears this year even though the Society's interest level seems to be holding steady. Although memberships are down, meeting registrations have increased. Donna Wolcott stated that full members attending the meeting are the most active and constitute the most important sector of the membership.

Martin Feder posed the question whether the society must grow to remain self-sustaining. Ron Dimock pointed out that the dues were decreased this year and library subscriptions have been on the decline so we will need to grow over time to remain self-sustaining. Marvalee Wake stated that beyond the fiscal, the Society remains viable based largely on new programs and volunteerism. This is impacted heavily by generating new members willing to be active and bring fresh enthusiasm and ideas. Kevin Kelley suggested that there be an effort to ask past members why they are no longer with the Society so that we may better respond. Frank Fish stated that past dues and meeting registration increases were a factor, Miriam Zelditch added that the timing of annual meetings may also be a factor. Bennett informed the

committee that a letter was sent to members who might have dropped because of the dues increase to explain the new dues structure. Wake suggested that ideas for increasing membership should be sent to Al Bennett.

Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee

Wake stated that adding the Chair of the Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee to the Executive Board is included in the proposed bylaw changes. Kevin Kelly supported the recent addition of an extra student drink ticket and the doubling of student awards and the positive outcome of these changes.

IBRCS

Jeff Goldman from AIBS was an invited guest to explain NEON and IBRCS. Goldman stated that the process for NEON was somewhat backwards in the beginning; the specifics were not developed when the funding was requested and the funding was initially denied. The scientific community was cautiously optimistic at that point. In part due to its large number of society members, AIBS was approached by the NSF to run a grant to coordinate the scientific input into NSF for NEON; this project has been called IBRCS. Given the funding defeat of NEON, the IBRCS project goals are to provide for communication from the scientific community and to help solidify what the NEON program should be.

Goldman stated that there is now a working group of 20 members who have developed a White Paper with an expected release of March. A listing of the working group may be found on the web at www.ibrcs.aibs.org. A series of Town Meetings have been designed to provide feedback from the scientific community. Goldman had some ideas on how SICB could fit in to the IBRCS and NEON program. The Division of Ecology and Evolution is an obvious fit regarding an ecological observatory interest. Also, the society offers an integrative approach to the program, which would be available to all SICB members.

Wake thanked Goldman for coming and commented on the breadth of SICB's collective expertise. Wake will write a statement to AIBS on what SICB may offer to help extend the environmental monitoring to a much broader scope. Tom Wolcott suggested that the Society could be very helpful to the project and would be mostly concerned with the interaction between animal and plant biology. Wolcott added that the search for monitoring procedures could produce new ways of monitoring. Dianna Padilla suggested that if the ecological sciences could be written more broadly, then SICB would be a good fit for providing commentary. Wake asked that the committee members discuss the project in their divisions and send any comments or suggestions to Goldman. Wake also thanked Goldman for his work and for discussing the issue with the board.

BioOne

Brett Burk discussed the details of BioOne. BioOne publishes journals online for institutional access. For its participation, SICB receives a royalty. Participating librarians are pleased with the project and institutions are renewing. The project has met with great success for all those involved. Burk will attend a scheduled meeting of BioOne participants in March.

Division Reports

Wake stated this is the first year reports have been solicited from the divisions. Two were provided and were included in the board packet.

Program Planning

Stacia Sower reported on the progress of the current and upcoming Annual Meetings. Sower stated that this year the website was used much more extensively. One discussion point has been the ideal number of symposia to present. The current suggestion is one to two society wide symposia plus one for each division. Sue Burk pointed out that the symposia for New Orleans and some for San Diego have already been set. Burk stated that by starting the process early there were not as many large changes in the process.

Sower commented on the addition of a Program Meeting this year. Sower worked with Burk to arrange the meeting and put the program together in the allotted two days. This meeting resulted in a lot of positive energy and synergy being developed. Sower sincerely thanked Sue Burk and Lori Strong for the wonderful work they have done.

Burk pointed out that for future Annual Meetings, North America has been split into three regions in which to rotate the meetings. For the 2006 meeting, we will be back in the East with the DC area being examined as a possible venue.

Sower mentioned that posters are displayed for two days at this meeting, but there are still some conflicts with competing sessions. Sower also commented positively on having some of the symposia at this meeting also provide a workshop. Miriam Zelditch pointed out that some of the symposia this year are Canadian only and not eligible for NSF funding. Rachel Ann Merz suggested that organizers reference GrantNet for available funding.

Finances

Ron Dimock presented an overview of the finances through 2001. Through 2001, the Society's total assets are at approximately \$1.5M. Dimock pointed out that approximately \$700,00 of the assets have been invested per the approval of the Executive Committee. At the moment we are at -9% for our investments with the S&P at -23% over the same period.

Dimock indicated that more than 50% of the Society's income comes from the journal. There has been some decline in library subscriptions but these numbers seem to be holding steady this year. Dimock indicated that many libraries are still re-trenching so the future of these numbers is unsure. Income from membership dues will reduce in the coming year due to the reduction of dues rates.

Dimock pointed out that due to BAI's work on the Annual Meeting, there has been an approximately \$100,000 turn around on loss. Dimock attributed this to BAI's efficiency and the fact that they do not charge in the same manner as the former management company.

The proposed budget for the year was lower than in recent years. Dimock pointed out that the Society is doing more with its money and is able to intentionally reduce dues rates for members. Included in the budget is a proposed 1.5% merit increase proposed by the Finance Committee for BAI's services. The GIAR and GTSF were both heavily applied for, justifying the doubling of award amounts. Discussion concerning the journal needs to take place, but John Edwards was not able to attend the meeting so this item will have to be resolved at a later date. Dimock discussed budget requests with Divisions and Committees and also asked them to preliminarily discuss the 2004 budget. Some requests for budget items have been made for 2004 and 2005 already.

Dimock noted that due to the Society's current budget and income, we are able to fund more innovative and effective programs.

Motion to approve the budget-unanimously approved

Elections

Penny Hopkins announced that the elections process seems to be on schedule now. Elections will be featured in the Spring Newsletter and ballots will also be held in the spring. The submission deadline for biographies to appear in the Newsletter will be March 4th. The Newsletter will appear online on April 19th. The polls will open on May 15th and will close on June 15th.

Integrative and Comparative Biology

Marvalee Wake noted that due to a minor injury, John Edwards was unable to attend. A written report on the Journal's status was submitted and included in the board packet. A special section was added to the meeting evaluation form to seek input regarding the Journal and its contents.

David Borst mentioned that since the consortium model was put in place, the Editorial Board seems to have gone unused. Wake has asked Edwards for some input into this issue and mentioned that there will be a meeting of the Editorial Board on January 6th to discuss these and other issues.

Constitution and Bylaws Revision

Penny Hopkins chaired the Constitution and Bylaws Revision Committee and described the process undergone to this point. Much of what was done was standardization of the existing documents. There were many minor changes, but the major goal for revisions was to bring the documents into compliance with our actual practices.

Marvalee Wake asked the Committee to work through the revisions at this meeting and then return on January 7th with commentary and feedback. After the Annual Meeting, the revisions will be posted on the web site before the Newsletter is published containing the ballot. Voting for the revisions will be held in conjunction with the election ballot scheduled to open in May. David Borst mentioned that under membership, the voting comments must be standard. Nora Terwilliger mentioned that the quorum threshold might be too low. Wake agreed that the threshold should be high in theory. Tom Wolcott state that in elections, there is always concern that if you cannot get people interested then there will not be enough participation. Wendy Ryan expressed appreciation for the presentation of the changes and suggested that it should be presented in a similar fashion on the web site. Ryan also questioned the level of interest that may be generated from the membership. Michael Moore suggested also presenting a one-page summary of the changes. Wake pointed out that the meeting evaluation form also provided an opportunity to provide input on electronic communications usage and may provide insight regarding this topic.

Strategic Planning

Marvalee Wake mentioned that there have been a couple of sessions with the core officers to discuss the Society's strategic plan. This group has considered a mission statement and a series of goals and would like input from the Board on the process thus far. Gunter Wagner suggested a slight change in the last sentence, Rachel Ann Merz suggested simply starting the last sentence with "Because" as an option. William Kier suggested one of the Society's strengths has been student participation and support and this might be emphasized more in the plan. Wake suggested substituting "influence" in MO5 for visibility. Beth Brainerd suggested using the work "advocate" instead.

Wake notes that some Divisions have mission statements, but not all do. After the adoption of a mission statement by SICB, perhaps the Divisions may consider following suit.

Dianna Padilla suggested that there is not enough of an effort to alert local press of the meetings. Patricia Glas discussed announcing the meeting at local colleges and possibly high schools. Tom Wolcott suggested producing a downloadable poster for local universities and institutions to be able to post. Peter Smallwood mentioned holding another workshop to educate scientists on dealing with journalists. Wake deferred this discussion to the second Executive Committee Meeting.

Divisional Structure

Marvalee Wake asked the group to consider the Divisional structure of the Society. Patricia Glas pointed out that more people seem to migrate towards more specific Divisions instead of the broader based ones. This has caused the broad based Divisions to suffer a loss of membership and participation.

Committee Structure

Wake also asked the group to consider the current Committee structure for future discussion.

Evaluation of BAI

Ron Dimock distributed an evaluation form for BAI's performance. Dimock asked the Board to complete the form and return to him by January 8th.

Responsiveness of Membership

Marvalee Wake presented the decreased responsiveness of the membership as a major issue facing the Society that should be considered for future discussion and action if necessary. Patricia Glas mentioned, for example, that she had not been able to find anyone to succeed her as DDCB Chair.

SICB Exec Committee

8 January 2003

Sheraton Centre Toronto

Present: Sunny Boyd, Beth Brainerd, Ron Dimock, Martin Feder, Frank Fish, Robert Full, Patricia Glas, Kimberly Hammond, Penny Hopkins, Kevin Kelly, Catherine Loudon, Karen Martin, Rachel Ann Merz, Rich Mooi, Michael Moore, Dianna Padilla, Peter Smallwood, Stacia Sower, Nora Terwilliger, Gunter Wagner, Marvalee Wake, John Wingfield, Donna Wolcott, Tom Wolcott, Miriam Zelditch

BAI Staff Present: Brett Burk, Sue Burk, Mike Johnson

Welcome

Marvalee Wake welcomed the group and called the meeting to order.

2003 Meeting Post Mortem

Stacia Sower reviewed the number of attendees this year, just over 1060. Sower also mentioned that poster sessions were experimental this year and that some tinker will be done for next year. Next year, the posters will be displayed from 3:00 until 5:00 each day and 2:00 until 5:00 on the third day with no posters on the last day of the meeting. There will also be an attempt to eliminate competing sessions. Sower responded to comments regarding having more sessions concurrently next year as a possibility with the moving of poster session times.

It was brought to attention that there were difficulties with some speakers' electronic hook-ups for Power Point presentations. Speakers were asked to bring their presentations on CD to aide in the consistency. Several suggestions were made to alleviate these problems in the future including buying a VGA video switch and providing a room for organizers to prepare a CD with all presentations. Options will be examined for future meetings.

Sue Burk indicated that the floor plan for New Orleans had been distributed to vendors for selection of booth space. In the exhibit hall next year, the posters will be in the middle of the room with the vendors around the perimeter. The vendors also commented that the usual vendor breakfast could be eliminated in the future.

Sower indicated that by October, symposia for 2005 would be set. It will be required to develop a website for each symposium. This will help in providing advanced notice to the media. Cathy Loudon will be in charge of organizing the symposia for 2005 with a goal of having fewer symposia with more cross-fertilization. Tom Wolcott suggested setting up at least one public lecture on "gee whiz" biology. Another suggestion presented was to conduct sessions for local educators. In response to a suggestion for adding blank pages to the program for notes each day, Sower commented that starting next year, the program book would revert to the old version with such additions. Donna Wolcott asked the group to urge session chairs to attend the divisional business meetings.

Committee and Divisional Reports

Marvalee Wake invited anyone interested to report on his or her respective committee or division progress to this point. The following reports were given:

DEDB & DCB

Gunter Wagner reported that DEDB and DCB met together to discuss possibilities of joint interaction. Wagner proposed a contract of association between the divisions that could be dissolved at any time by either party. The association would create a joint leadership while keeping separate program officers. Wagner indicated that there was strong support for the proposal during the divisional business meeting. Gunter Wagner and Patricia Glas will work together on this.

Motion to approve proceeding with the contract of association approved unanimously.

DVM

Frank Fish reported that the DVM meeting went very well this year. There was a presentation of a film that was very well received. Fish also reported that there were a number of excellent papers presented from the division.

DIZ

Rich Mooi reported that DIZ also had a successful meeting. The division will host an auction next year in support of the Libby Hyman fund.

Membership Diversity Committee

Marvalee Wake read a report submitted by Beth Brainerd. The meeting this year was the first real meeting for the committee. It was reported that the meeting went well and proved to be very dynamic. Dianna Padilla suggested that it is time to start applying for grants and demonstrate financial backing and content for the grants of interest. Padilla would also like the Society to begin collecting demographics on the membership to identify underrepresented groups.

Division Officer Nominations

Penny Hopkins noted that divisions needed to establish their nominating committees. Nominees must be selected soon and biographies must be presented by March 1st for the Newsletter.

Publications Committee

Karen Martin reported that the committee met, but there is still confusion regarding their purpose and function. Up to this point, they seem to be mandated to address problems as they arise and not be involved in the daily operations of the journal. Martin also mentioned that the three current members are willing to continue but there is also room for one more member. Chuck Crumly from Allen Press presented an interest to the committee for publishing a series of books based on SICB symposia.

Marvalee Wake conveyed a sense of foreseeing a strong role for this committee in the Society's future. John Wingfield suggested that one of his first tasks, as President, would be to contact the Editorial Board to meet with the consortium. Wingfield emphasized that it will be important to work with the Publications Committee and establish a specific role for them.

Program Advisory Committee

Fred Janzen provided a report on the committee's activities, which was included in the board packet. Marvalee Wake pointed out that this committee was established as a three-year experiment to determine its usefulness. This three-year period has come to an end and it did not seem to generate any innovative new symposia or ideas. Fred Janzen advocated sun setting the committee. Wake agrees in the light of the energy and innovation coming from the DPO meeting that she ran this year and will also run next year. Michael Moore noted that this committee used to fund the Howard Bern Lectureship. Brett Burk suggested requesting these funds through the divisional budget requests in the future.

Motion to dissolve the Program Advisory Committee approved unanimously.

Constitution and Bylaw Amendments

Penny Hopkins suggested deleting the position of Past Program Officer. Stacia Sower commented that this issue had been addressed by going to a two-year term for Program Officer and keeping the position of Past Program Officer. Sower commented that deleting this position would be an unfortunate change due to the large responsibility of the Program Officer and a need for continuity in the position. Wake reminded the committee that the current structure was derived from recommendations from current and past Program Officers.

Straw poll on approving the deletion of Past Program Officer defeated unanimously.

Hopkins also presented a request for changing the title of "Divisions" to "Sections" the reasoning of which is an integrative society should not be divided. Hopkins pointed out that this is a semantic argument and not a functional one. Wake proclaimed this does not seem to be a concern of the Executive Committee and moved to dismiss.

Tom Wolcott pointed out that it is not specified in the Constitution that divisional officers must be members of the division. Wake noted that this has traditionally not been a requirement given that members are limited to two divisional affiliations. Penny Hopkins mentioned that there has been discussion regarding the required quorum number of 50 being too low to assure a balanced vote of the entire membership. Mike Miller pointed out the varying enthusiasm for issues brought to a vote and supported 50 as a quorum. Wake mentioned that the membership must be well informed of the issues prior to the Annual Meeting in order to solicit a larger voting audience.

Straw poll to keep a quorum as 50 approved by majority.

Member Volunteerism

Marvalee Wake pointed out that there has been some good volunteerism generated at this meeting and suggests that we investigate ways of generating more throughout the year. Penny Hopkins suggested adding a check-off box to the Annual Meeting Registration Form to solicit more volunteers. Miriam Zelditch suggested staggering the divisional business meetings as a way to encourage more participation. Dianna Padilla proposed sending an email to the membership asking for volunteers, directing the responses to the appropriate person. Stacia Sower commented that a follow-up phone call to anyone offering to donate his or her time could make a difference. Sower commented that this type of personal contact is always appreciated.

BAI Evaluation

Mavalee Wake asked the board to return their evaluation forms to Ron Dimock by the end of the meeting.

Strategic Planning

Tom Wolcott had some changes to make to the document and will forward these to John Wingfield.

Welcome New Officers, Thanks

Marvalee Wake thanked all board members, especially those she has worked closely with during her term as President. Wake thanked outgoing officers: Miriam Zelditch, Kimberly Hammond, and Penny Hopkins, the latter of which has done a yeoman's task while in office. Wake thanked Ron Dimock for being the "World's Best Treasurer". The Society is in wonderful shape and Wake thanked Brett Burk and BAI for being a responsive support.

Wake passed the gavel and President's Ribbon to John Wingfield with anticipation of a superb Presidency to come. Wingfield thanked Wake for her years as a member and leader of the Society. Wingfield looked forward to working closely with Wake as Past President. A bracelet made by Trish Morse was presented to Wake in thanks for her years as President. Wingfield adjourned the meeting.