

SOCIETY FOR INTEGRATIVE & COMPARATIVE BIOLOGY
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, Second Meeting
7 January 2007
Hyatt Phoenix
Phoenix, AZ

Executive Committee Members Present:

President – Sally Woodin
President-Elect – John Pearse
Past President – not present
Secretary – Lou Burnett
Program Officer – Linda Walters
Treasurer – Ron Dimock
Member-at-Large – John Long
Member-at-Large – Rachel Merz
Member-at-Large – Sönke Johnsen

Divisional Chairs

DAB – Scott MacDougal-Shackleton
DCB – Robert Full
DCE – Robert Denver
DCPB – Pat Walsh
DDCB – not present
DEDB – Billie Swalla
DEE – George Bakken
DIZ – Janice Voltzow
DNB – not present
DSEB – Don Swiderski
DVM – Beth Brainerd
Editor-in-Chief, ICB – Harold Heatwole
Student Postdoctoral Affairs Committee Chair – Larry Riley
Educational Council Chair – Robin Cooper
Executive Director (ex officio) – Brett Burk (via teleconference)

Others present:

Heidi Rohland

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 a.m. by President Woodin.

Minutes of the 2006 Executive Committee were approved as distributed.

I. Meeting Refinements

- There was discussion about possible meeting refinements.

- Woodin noted that we might want to extend the breaks and lunches somewhat. There is a question about whether this would impact our concern about fitting symposia into single days.
- Woodin also noted that there was a concern about the posters and was curious whether they could be up longer than one day.
- It was suggested that we could have the exhibit hall open during lunch if we had a poster session in there.
- Poster presenters are required to stand by their posters for one hour – that is the current minimum – we could/should encourage them to be there for longer (currently, the instructions imply that it is a one hour requirement).
- There was discussion of changing 20 minute talks to 15 minutes. The following points were raised.
 - There was a discussion about changing talks from 20 minutes to 15 minutes.
 - Woodin noted that if we do this, perhaps we could lengthen our coffee breaks.
 - It was noted that in the SICB Business Meeting on January 6, 2007 a straw poll was taken and the majority felt that the 20 minute talk format should be retained.
 - Moving to a 15 minute format will cut down on the discussion.
 - There are other things going on that also eat into time – fumbling with projectors, etc.
 - Walters stated that it would be difficult to do both 15 minute and 20 minute talks because of scheduling.
 - Having a discussion session at the end of a contributed paper session is not ideal since people come and go to those.

II. Education Council Report

- The Education Council will be talking about the digital library in their meeting today.
- They are already working on the San Antonio meeting.
- Woodin thanked them for bringing the high school students to the meeting this year.

III. Budget

- Dimock gave an overview of the budget and what the different sections of the budget are.
- Dimock reminded the group that the 2007 budget is established and we are focusing on the 2008 budget.
- Dimock noted that we have over \$1.5M in assets and so are not in fiscal trouble – the proposed deficit is about 5% of our assets – but this is not a long term sustainable situation.
- Dimock remarked that because we are budgeting in advance, we have the opportunity to set the budget for the next annual meeting.
- We can increase revenue via registration fees or reduce expenditures.
- One option to improve our annual meeting outlook is to get sponsorships for the coffee breaks to reduce the overall expenditures.
- Dimock noted that in 2009 we will benefit from a \$50K AV credit that BAI negotiated.
- Discussion of student support at the annual meeting.
 - It was pointed out that a number of students get support from SICB many years in a row.
 - One suggestion for this is to cap the eligibility at two years.

- A concern was expressed that a 2 year cap will drive away a significant number of students from the annual meeting.
- Woodin suggested that another option is to set a fiscal cap – give priority to those who are the first two years and then divide up the rest among the others – their co-pay would be fluid depending on demand.
- Voltzow said that she would rather have more students than some of the meeting items we currently fund such as pastries.
- Walters noted that there is some concern about students canceling if they don't receive funding – this would mess up the program if they make the decision late in the process.
- Another suggestion was that we could ramp the co-pay so that they would know the amount in advance.
- Woodin spoke with NSF about getting general support for students to come to the meeting – they are not likely to support this kind of expenditure.
- There was a suggestion for capping the student support at three years.
- There were some comments about students' readiness to come to the meeting – there are some talks that are clearly not ready – having a cap would make them think before just coming.
- It was stated that if this line item doubles, we should find other ways to fund it
- Burnett noted that we need to advertise all of the things that we do for students. We plan to have a tab for them on the revised web page.
- There was a comment that with the current method of student support, we really have an open-ended commitment each year.

The discussion then moved to other areas of the budget.

- Divisional socials – Dimock noted that some are asking for \$2,000 whereas the norm is around \$750. This disparity and the socials in general engendered considerable discussion.
 - One of the challenges with the divisional socials is the ability to hold them given the high costs of food at the hotels.
 - It was suggested that the Finance Committee could set the base divisional social costs.
 - One option discussed was to have the funding based on a per-head basis for each of the divisions.
 - Another suggestion was to have a general social with divisional sections within it.
- There was discussion about having a set amount for divisions to be able to use for symposium sponsorships.
 - Woodin would be opposed to the symposium support being flat.
- Woodin noted that the budget is a real budget this time – we really need to think about removing things as we add new things to try to remain balanced.
- Woodin noted that the Finance Committee has suggested that we cap the student support item.

- It was suggested that BAI consider the services that the SICB might cut to reduce the management fee (top three) and suggest them back to the group.
- Student cap reconsideration
 - Woodin summarized the main options that had been proposed.
 - One suggestion was that perhaps we could give the students an idea of SICB support before the abstract deadline. This would require moving the student application deadline forward.
 - ***Motion by Swalla: Cap the student support at 3 years (with the current co-pay of \$75).***
 A friendly amendment was accepted to this motion to identify those students who have received 4 or more years of meeting support and to apply any budgeted funding that has not been used on those who have received funding for 3 years or less.
Amended motion: Cap the student support at 3 years (with the current co-pay of \$75). Identify students who have received 4 or more years of meeting support and apply any budgeted funding that has not been used to those who have received funding for 3 years or less.
Discussion of the motion:
 - Woodin stated that we could even set up an additional committee that would review the 4+ people for the award to be competitive.
 - ***The motion carried with 10 in favor, 3 opposed, and 0 abstained.***
 - ***Motion: Place a cap on student support at \$60,000; any student requests that increase the total costs above \$60,000 would require an increase in the amount of co-pay that the students pay.***
Discussion of the motion:
 - We could set the cap at \$70K as we transition the mechanism toward enforcing a true cap.
 - ***Voting on the motion: 6 in favor , 6 opposed, and 0 abstentions. President Woodin broke the tie in favor of the motion. The motion carried.***
 - ***Motion by MacDougal-Shackleton: Cap the net functions line in the budget at \$60,000.***
The motion was defeated with 4 in favor, 7 opposed and 2 abstained.
 - ***Motion by Robert Full, seconded the Rich Satterlie: Refer the issue of a cap on student support to the membership for approval.***
Discussion of the motion:
 - Burnett commented that this is a very bad idea – making such decisions on budgetary matters is the job the Executive Committee was elected to carry out.
 - ***The motion was defeated with 1 in favor, 11 opposed, and 1 abstained.***

- Burk will send out to the Executive Committee expanded and detailed budget sheets (including functions). The Executive Committee will then have two weeks to ask for additional details. A vote on the budget will then be held.
- Discussion of the change in the cost of life membership as proposed earlier in the meeting (3 Jan 2007) will be held on a conference call among the Executive Committee to be scheduled.

IV. Appreciation

- President-Elect John Pearse acknowledged outgoing President Sally Woodin for her excellent leadership and hard work, thanking her on behalf of a grateful society.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.