

**Minutes of the DIVISION OF VERTEBRATE MORPHOLOGY BUSINESS MEETING,
January 4, 2008, San Antonio, TX**

Recorded by Mark Westneat for Gary Gillis

(1) Kurt Schwenk

Welcome, Introduction, Chair's Report

Commander Schwenk called the meeting to order, noted the excused absence of Gary Gillis due to twin baby arrival, acknowledged Beth Brainerd for her service as Chair, and urged folks to attend the DVM social immediately after the business meeting. Among the items of business were:

1. A successful NE regional meeting, URI (honored Karel Liem)
 - many thanks to Cheryl Wilga and Jackie Webb (and their students) for organizing
 - next fall's NE regional meeting will be at UConn, organized by Commander Schwenk and Margaret Rubega (assisted by grad students Tobias Landberg and Diego Sustaita)
 - there will be an email announcement

2. New budget:
 - there is a new, fixed budget across all divisions, which means a significant reduction for DVM
 - primary effects on symposium funding, regional meeting funding and quality/quantity of food at socials
 - combining social budgets with other divisions (e.g., DCB) as Jeff has done this year is one way to make our money go farther
 - discussion on whether we should add a \$5 fee for DVM membership?
 - \$5 extra fee would give us much more flexibility – several other divisions do it;
 - the SICB Executive Committee came into DVM business meeting - some challenges to this new budget were voiced by several people; the mob became unruly; Schwenk thanked the Executive Committee (sincerely) for its outstanding work and commitment
 - NOTE: Schwenk raised the budget issue at the subsequent SICB Executive Committee meeting; his complaints about the new divisional budgets fell upon unsympathetic ears. Schwenk moved that divisional budgets be proportional to membership. The motion was defeated (only one other member voted with Schwenk). Obviously other divisions and SICB officers find the new system superior; it is certainly easier to manage and it helps to make the society's budget more predictable; these may be good enough reasons to keep it. DVM needs to consider the \$5 surcharge

3. Bylaws: Several previous bylaws changes were passed by membership vote
 - principally change in terms of PO and Secretary to 2 years with possibility of re-election to another 2 yrs.
 - need to try this awhile to see how it works, but already there are indications that we might be better off going to one 3-yr term... Will discuss with recent POs

and see how it progresses.

- new proposed bylaws changes will be posted on the web; email announcement to be sent (creation of formal PO-elect and Secretary-Elect for one year prior to initial election)
- issue of D. Dwight Davis Award competition was raised (see Chair's report, above)

4. Nominations:

- Schwenk announced that it is time to nominate candidates for Secretary and PO
- volunteers for positions or nominating committee contact me
- if you have questions, talk to Jeff Walker at meeting, email Gary Gillis.
- note, see below for the recent nominees for each position

5. Issue of DVM identity, membership numbers and attendance at business meetings; please encourage your students to attend; raise awareness through special publications?

- also drop in number of symposium proposals that identify DVM as primary sponsor (perhaps Jeff can address this); is this indicative of trend or is it random fluctuation? what can we do about it?

6. SICB business

- Society is now requiring annual divisional reports prepared by the Chair. Request was made so late in semester that only one Division got its report in by the meeting; Schwenk will submit a DVM report soon. Not sure of purpose, but probably a good idea. Secretary Lou Burnett is fantastically good at keeping things organized and has been a terrific benefit to the Society and the Division.
- budget is in good shape, but there will be cutbacks in hotel food spending at annual meetings (one of largest costs owing to rip-off prices)
- Journal is in excellent shape – published all 2007 symposia in same year! Drop in institutional print subscription, increase in online subscriptions

(2) NSF Program Officer Goggy Davidowitz

Goggy presented statistics on funding levels- higher than rumored, around 17-18 % for IOS. He also mentioned that RCN grants are somewhat undersubscribed - may represent an opportunity

(3) Jeffrey Walker

Program Officer's report (see Jeff's contribution above)

(4) Kurt Schwenk and Bret Tobalske (for Gary Gillis)

Secretary's Report

—photo submissions for SICB webpage and to highlight individual DVM labs

—feedback necessary to indicate members' needs/wants for DVM web page

- job postings?
- idea feedback page?
- cautionary note: pages on which you can post on are open to web crawlers that install advertising and porn; but SICB has a web guru that might be able to prevent this

(5) Kurt Schwenk (for Russ Main)

Student and Postdoc Affairs Committee (SPDAC) report

- workshop for grads and postdocs with NSF representation (Goggy Davidowitz)
- workshop title: “I have a great idea, but who will fund me: How to write a grant.
- Time and place: Sat, 6:15-8:00, room 201 (I have handouts here)
- Thank Russ Main for his excellent work
- Introduce Tobias Landberg, DVM SPDAC nominee

(7) Kurt Schwenk

Closing comments

- Spirit of volunteerism is alive and well in DVM! Many thanks to volunteers who have helped with running the show
- Also: Mark Westneat, Chair-Elect, for filling in Gary Gillis by keeping the minutes of this meeting; And Brett Tobalske – probably a record for a last-minute appointment – for agreeing to attend the SICB Secretary’s meeting
- future plans:
 - increase visibility of modern morphology in biological community
 - publish special journal issues on ‘state of the art in morphology’
 - *JEZA* (Günter Wagner, ed.) and *Zoology* (Matthias Starck, ed.) are definite possibilities. Possibly *J. Morph.* (Rick Harrison, ed.)
 - Schwenk will talk with membership about suggestions for topics, authors and organizers/editors, but welcomes nominations, including self-nominations
 - *JEZA* wants to sponsor a student prize (SICB – across all divisions); prize would be monetary and the student would be invited to publish their paper in *JEZA* with cover art; would be featured at *JEZ* booth in exhibition hall.
NOTE: Schwenk brought this to the attention of the SICB Executive Committee; they are excited about pursuing it and are in discussion with editor Günter Wagner and publisher Wiley.
 - Schwenk needs feedback from membership with ideas to increase visibility of DVM in ways that will project vitality and encourage a new generation of membership (apart from the suggestion that Schwenk step down as Chair)

Submitted by Mark Westneat for Secretary Gary Gillis