

BSA Board Meeting Minutes

Saturday, June 24th, 5:00 - 9:00 pm CST. Omni Forth Worth

1. Call to Order – 5:10pm
2. Minutes from Spring Meeting – VOTED: APPROVED
3. Treasurer's Report, 2016-17, plus Year to Date Financial Information

Viewed Profit and Loss spreadsheet:

- most activity is in the summer, esp July
- investment portfolio has done very well
- this conference is small (700) and unlikely to break even

Proposed budget:

- We're going to hit the same cash flow issue that we always have in the Fall (subscription money from libraries comes in in October historically; Wiley pays us in January)
- income and expenses are both going to go down precipitously because of the Wiley deal
- \$729,500 is the minimum guaranteed (royalties may increase this figure but we do not know by how much; 47.5% or 48.5% of profit on journal – some disagreement as to which was the correct figure)
- signing bonus (100k) should go into the operating budget to offset the cash flow issue we'll have in the fall
- General discussion followed about whether we should be using investment fund interest to support operating budget or continue to function the way we have been.
- Heather and Bill will present some options to the Board about how to resolve the cash flow

Endowment & investment strategy:

- Investment account has reached 5M+ which gives us a (very small) reduction in the management fees. 75-100k are our current (1.15%) fees (Do these numbers add up?)
- Portfolio is very aggressively invested and actively managed. Where do we fall in the non-profit range? We are fairly high risk for our size. There are big questions about active vs passive management. Does a high risk portfolio match our aspirations as a society?
- We do have regular inflows of cash, but cash on hand is a different thing. \$200-300k is the typical cash flow shortfall (compare to 100k signing bonus).
- Do we have an investment policy statement? Bill thinks it is online.
- Suggestion made that we revisit how we maintain cash-on-hand.

4. Publication Director's report

AJB broke IF 3! APPS IF also went up to (1.492)?

Wiley negotiations:

- Reviewed history. Site visit in Dec with Joe, Dick, Theresa, Amy, Pam was very positive experience. In Feb Otto (transition) and Gillian (day-to-day contact) came to AJB in St Louis. Hoping to sign contract this week or shortly thereafter. First contract came off the shelf but Paula and lawyers have helped modify it to our satisfaction. Some remaining issues:
 - 2015 numbers were used by Wiley but that's before we went online; led to some adjustments (subscriptions went down with shift).
- Joe and Sean will meet with the Council
- Meeting with editors for general publication discussion forum on Monday. (3:15pm; Wiley will be there, as well as at IBC) OA rates and subscription rates are likely to be of great interest.
- Wiley is paying for a grad student mixer
- Discussion about who has final say in OA and subscription charges
- Noted that we could/should leverage increasing impact factors.

5. Program Director's report

About 2/3 normal attendance for understandable reasons.

Not in report: Policy of asking for symposium proposals before conference, but Amy decided to not do that because the timeline was too compressed this year (just didn't seem feasible, and next year we are meeting with the Can Bot Soc (ALBS will not be here 2018))

10-11 lightning talks (Tues afternoon; talks really need to be loaded ahead of time). Three min three slides.

6. Sections Report

No concerns voiced from Sections

Young Botanists Award – all got them (9 women, 5 men).

One action item from spring meeting: reinvigorate Phycological Section. Started with Louise Lewis but did not receive an encouraging response. She contacted about 70 members, none were coming. We used to have joint meetings with the PSA. Tim Nelson (Pres PSA + past pres) contacted and they want to in future. Rittencourt was enthusiastic. But a joint meeting is a ways off, so what can we do to reinvigorate the Section before that?

At Council meeting tomorrow, (1) Joe and Sean will say something about publications, (2) Request to announce Planting Science and need to drum up mentors (they want to double numbers)

7. Student Report

- Speed dating luncheon (might need to modify if it too big)
- PSB articles working with Mackenzie
- Wiley sponsoring mixer

8. Report from the nominations committee and Corresponding Members
 - Nominations and elections are done
 - Corresponding members committee really beat the bushes and put out a call, and we have 5 proposed new additions (Brazil, Taiwan, China, Spain (?)): MOVED to APPROVE, VOTE = UNANIMOUS APPROVAL
 - We'll be doing something at IBC to recognize them (Will the members from Spain be there?) We will have plaques made up.

9. Report from the committee on committees
 - Contacted Comm Chairs and Board for recommendations, also given spreadsheet. We now have a full slate.
 - Question from Ann regarding (questioning) the idea that the New Human Development at Large position should also be chair of Human Diversity committee. Education is the only Chair who isn't the at Large Director and it creates a disconnect, so we're hoping to have them all share that structure.

10. Education Director's report
 - Planting Science: Digging Deeper will have >100 teachers involved and needing ~400ish mentors; Need/want to create a buzz about it at the meeting to garner attention
 - Teaching Section: 29 talks this meeting, 13 posters, might be a record
 - In the future:
 - Botany Education in the 21st Century Facebook Page (great source of teaching ideas). Can we elevate this group to a more formal status? You need permission to join.
 - PSRN (Mike D. not coming to this meeting): Not much activity since March
 - BSA is uniquely positioned to contribute to this expansion into the undergrad realm in particular. Think about how BSA and PSRN can mutually benefit on this expansion. Structure of RN is on societies, and we need to have a voice.
 - Allison was on a grant for an extension and it is in review and its status is not known.
 - Mike Donohue is the BSA rep.
 - Recommended that we form a small BSA group to interact with PSRN more formally
 - Planting Science ends in 2019. BSCS is a partner and they are already working on the next grant.

11. Marketing & Membership
 - Trying to provide high quality membership experience
 - PLANTS grant going strong
 - Meetings
 - Attendance 30% down for meeting
 - hoping Rochester meeting will get back up (not competition with Evolution)
 - Membership
 - Down by 10% this year (renewals)
 - New membership type this year: 3-year professional (12% took up offer)

- Recommended that we return to lower rates for students and postdocs (\$20, \$40 , respectively); currently a bit higher than sister societies
- Will need to hire membership coordinator as Heather fulfills Bill's role interim; considering hiring a new IT person too: ideal if they could hire one person who could do both of those things (hard but worth a try)
- Transferring two other societies to CitiCRM product
- Heather hasn't been able to get to hosting webinars; they did one on PLANTS as a pilot test (mentees and mentors) but no bandwidth to implement
- Subscriptions
 - AJB subscriptions drop due to online only. 11% drop this year (5% likely due to normal drop)
 - Wiley print-on-demand option is in the contract (\$120/year estimate in addition to your membership fees). We're proposing to create a buffer, setting society price at \$175/year. In 2016, ~220 members took the on print demand. Wiley charges us \$120 and we charge members \$175. Question about whether they can get back issues in print – Heather's not sure (members might want the continuity)
- DISCUSSION re: membership numbers – They've been going down regularly; we need to have a broader conversation about this trend and what's going on. SSE vs BSA – how do they compare in terms of age? Is it a demographic issue? Do student members drop out as they cease to be students? Bill's vision had been to get the students in the door and then retaining them is the problem. It was requested that we look at a decade trend for three categories (pre-professional, professional, emeritus); concerned about lack of engagement of emeritus members since we need the most for development; would be helpful for Development.
 - Is ASPB having the same trends that we are? They have made a big push to brand themselves as THE place for all plant biologists.
 - Free publication in AJB is a membership perk (not OA) and that this is a big draw. China & Latin American has more interest in BSA than ASPB, perhaps because we have more traditional botanical values.
 - Gift memberships may be a key to get them in the system
- Samuel Torpey Diversity Student Travel Award
 - UW and UIdaho want to start a travel award in someone's memory (PLANTS mentee and mento?) named the Samuel Torpee Student Diversity Travel Award (would be for additional student to the conference with the PLANTS grant).
 - UW and UI want BSA to create the portal and they want to donate to it.
 - This raises the issue of naming things without it being part of the endowment, and that is a bad precedent in that it is likely a small amount of money and not enough to sustain anything in perpetuity.
 - Another alternative is to encourage them to give to the existing PLANTS fund, which already has this mandate. E.g., Donate in memory of him to the PLANTS program.

12. Meeting grants

- Travel grants – 19-20 applicants and we awarded 10 (\$10,000) and it was a lottery as long as they were eligible. We need to look at how much we give away as awards and develop a big picture for allocation.

- IBC Awards for travel were also given out (early career faculty and earlier in the pipeline)
 - Note that the IBC reception plans suggest they are planning something more elaborate than we had in mind
 - We can give out the Corresp Members awards there
- DISCUSSION: How do we approach internationalizing BSA?
 - Officially internationalize the VP? Latin American VP? Biggest opportunity for growth in outside of N. America. International Liason? There are concerns about restricting it to Latin America (what about China and Africa and India?). Could be an automatic appt as a liason (Lat Am Bot Congress Pres is selected for 4 years.)
 - Could be Corresponding Members. What's our goal? Membership, Journals, Meetings? All of the above? It needs to be someone ACTIVE – but this is an HONORARY position so there's a little bit of a conflict here. The Corresponding Member is for life – ask them to sit on a committee for a term?
 - We also need a point person on the Board – some accountability and real interaction. Using elected officers of other societies is also a good idea because they are already active.
 - Latin American work would be great to get into the AJB and there's a huge amount of good work going on there.

13. Education

- 3x increase in size – need more mentors for Planting Science
- Working on IES grant for this year (mostly as a learning experience – replication grant so they might be too early)
- Am Phytopath Society – looking at damping off with seed germ
- Life Discovery Conference is coming up and there will be some funding for under-represented faculty
- Brought community college profs to BOTANY 2017 (w/ BRIT)

14. IT

- Created three different award evaluation systems for three societies – front ends mostly done; shared viewing of applications
- Base server image (90-95% complete BSA website, BOTANY conference still needs to go, as do the other societies we support)
- New website themes, mobile friendly
- CitiCRM membership database integrated into Botany.org website (e.g., auto-populate BoD)
- Started working on real membership directory

15. Publications Reports

- Still doing PSB in house (not Wiley)
- IF's went up for both AJB and APPS
 - Special issues: Polyploidy; pollen; plant-animal mutualism
 - Next year: tree of life issue ideally Jan 2018 w/ Wiley breakout; Tree of Death (Gar Rothwell)

16. Meetings

- Staff at hotel has been fantastic
- We're doing better than Austin in 2005, previous IBC
- Working on contracts for AK in 2020, but on hold at the moment

17. DDIG Situation and BSA Letter - BSA_DDIG_letter.docx (Actual 18 / last before Closed meeting)

- Ann will be a rotator at NSF for one year next year so she can't do this due to conflict of interest.
- It's the administrative burden that they are trying to reduce (or so they claim)
- Options proposed: (1) base the decision on the student record and not the proposal (2) give the money to societies and let them allocate and administer the grants (we do it with travel grants).

18. Executive Director Replacement Process

- Need to hire an office coordinator, ideally with IT skills
- Bill reviewed relationship with MOBOT
 - BSA Staff are MoBOT staff for benefits and payroll (economy of scale)
 - Bill evaluates staff through MoBot eval system, but the Board evals the Exe Director
 - Our contract is for the space.

19. Closed Board Meeting