

BSA Council Meeting / ZOOM
7/28/20 5pm

Meeting called to order 4:03pm Central

1. Introductions & highlights

- Thanked everyone for patience in postponing conference; saved 300k (BSA absorbs 50%)
- 25 grad students awards at 1500 a piece
- Investment portfolio is going ESG (environmental, social, governance)
- First Kaplan Award this year (dissertation \$10k award)

2. Approval of Minutes of the 2019 Council Meeting

MOTION to approve minutes -> APPROVED

3. Reports of Executive Committee, Editors, and Staff; Reports from Committees, Sections, and Representatives to other societies

MOTION to approve all reports -> APPROVED

4. New Business

A. Sectional Funding Issues and BSA Policy for Requests

Sections can ask for additional funding in Oct of each year with a budget and justification. No fixed allocations to sections as in past. Sections can do anything they want with their dues. Sections cannot have receptions at meetings (unless for special reasons, e.g., new section) supported by 'BSA Central'. Also discouraged or not allowed are research awards, symposia or colloquia at meetings because this is a duplication of efforts.

Questions:

- Q re: allocation of grad awards between MS and PhD; no policy for this yet – just best applications selected, but noted that there were MS projects selected.
- Will we track which sections apply for funds every year? Yes.
- BSA Central will be especially attentive to new sections or sections trying to reactivate. We expect to be generous and support section activities. A few long-defunct sections were retired.
- Question about a way to pay for sectional dues separately from when you want to renew your membership

B. FY2021 Budget

- Draft budget presented
- Reminder that the procedure is that the Council approves it and recommends it to the full membership for approval (that meeting is Thursday)

- BSA is in good financial shape; virtual meeting has been great for membership increase and we have great meeting attendance
- MOBOT handles our payroll and thus we benefited from the PPP (covid-19 paycheck protection) so this covered our staff pay for 60 days (not a loan; a grant)
- Investment portfolio has largely recovered from downfall
- Changes to note in budget:
 - New NSF grant – \$4M!!!
 - Annual meeting being handled differently now re: the budget. Meeting expenses are handled as a separate account since there are partners. We have incorporated more realistic numbers this year.

MOTION to recommend proposed FY21 budget for approval to the full membership -> APPROVED

C. Board Recommendations

- 2021 Student Gift Membership \$10
- 2021 3-Year PostDoc Membership Option \$105

MOTION to approve these changes to the dues structure -> APPROVED

D. General Questions/Discussion

- What was the cost for the virtual meeting: 1300 people – way more than we expected and it is increasing the cost.
- Comment that the virtual conference is FANTASTIC and smooth so far.
- Question about meeting expenses and scale: we never know how the meeting balance sheet looks for a few months.
- There will likely be a request for a virtual component for future meetings (e.g., hybrid meeting)
 - Hybrid is a huge challenge: costs of in-person and technology platform
 - SSE has already decided that they will *not* do a hybrid for these reasons
 - A hybrid meeting would not be the same experience for the people attending remotely
 - Expenses may come down in the future
 - We could alternatively commit to doing one online meeting every few years / rotation (useful for membership and reaching international audience)
 - International members are also interested in being able to submit recorded talks in the future for in-person meetings
 - SSB does a satellite meeting every 18 months (more topical)
 - Comment that a hybrid meeting in Anchorage could be important
- Diversity changes and initiatives:
 - BIPOC mixer
 - Forum on equity and inclusion run by a facilitator
 - Diversity training for Board is being planned
 - Changes in wording to Emerging Leader and Distinguished Fellow descriptions
 - Changes in how we gather info about membership demographics (important for initiative assessment)

- Ongoing discussion about how we populate committees and nominate officers
 - Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (renamed)
 - Going to make lunch panel an open event in the future
 - Question about committees discussion summary:
 - Current way that committees are populated *does not work*
 - Desire to increase transparency and have broad membership inclusion
 - Open to suggestions on how to improve the process
 - Question about role of Systematics section and relationship to ASPT
 - Suggested that this is up to ASPT and the Section; not a unique situation to systematics
 - Sections are semi-autonomous
 - Giving new section membership access to previous years' reports could help
 - Committees are slightly different and not autonomous
 - Overlap between the teaching section and education committee presents some odd overlap
 - Pteridological Section and Fern Society: they have a regular working relationship with real integration
 - How long do we have access to the conference, including the chats? Heather thinks it is available for one year, but we are not sure about the chats. You can copy and paste them into a Word doc.
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- Many thanks to members rotating off the Board: Amy Litt, Ned Friedman, Min Ya, Andi Wolfe, Ann Sakai
 - Cindi Jones is the incoming President and Mike Donoghue is President-Elect
 - Many thanks to sectional Program Directors who are organizing much of the meeting program
 - Many thanks to our amazing staff and Linda Watson who will soon be Past President
 - HUGE THANKS to Heather for conference organization and execution

Meeting adjourned at 5:14pm Central