

BUSINESS MEETING, BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA, 2007 MINUTES

The 2007 Business Meeting of the Botanical Society of America was called to order by Christopher Haufler at 5:05 PM on July 10, 2007, who welcomed those attending the meeting.

I. The minutes of the 2006 Business Meeting were approved unanimously.

II. Reports of Executive Committee, Editors, and Staff

- A. President Christopher Haufler noted that reports of the executive committee, editors, and staff were available on the web, and would not be repeated at the Business Meeting, with the exception of a few attendees who wished to provide additional information.
- B. Treasurer (Kent Holsinger) Kent noted that the endowment is doing very well, and now stands at \$3.7 million, which is \$600,000 more than last year. The proposed budget is 1.32 million, and incorporates two significant changes. The first of these is an \$80,000 grant from Monsanto to fund PlantingScience. The second major change is that the BSA will provide business office services to the Society for Economic Botany. Compensation to the BSA for these services will add \$100,000 to the BSA budget. The proposed budget was unanimously approved.
- C. Program Director (Karen Renzaglia) There was a round of applause for Karen Renzaglia, our program director, for her efforts on behalf of the BSA.
- D. *American Journal of Botany* Editor in Chief Judy Jernstedt noted that the impact factor of the *American Journal of Botany* increase significantly. The ranking increased from 22 to 16 in the plant sciences, probably because of green tree issue. The Journal must build and sustain this trend. Judy urged that members of the society submit articles, and cite them. Chris Haufler extended his thanks to Judy for her efforts.
- E. Marsh Sundberg, the Editor of *Plant Science Bulletin* (Marsh Sundberg) commented that *Plant Science Bulletin* should be in sync with *AJB* and on time next year. Bill Dahl noted that we are going to switch printers. Difficulties with Allen Press led to problems that caused delays in publication.
- F. Webmaster Bill Dahl reported that we had a good year in terms of growth of usage of the web site, but that the curve is starting to level off after earlier tremendous growth. We need to have new material on the web site if we wish to attract new users. Bill wants to build student profiles on the web site, first using award winners. Most of the material on the web is devoted to promoting our mission.
- G. Bill Dahl, the Executive Director, had four recommendations. The first recommendation concerns the pricing of the *American Journal of Botany*. University and Library subscriptions have been increased by 9.5%. Bill would like to recommend a \$5 increase for members for the print version. Student prices will remain the same. There was a motion to approve these increased which was seconded. Pam Soltis asked about post docs, and whether their prices would remain the same. Judy Jernstedt wanted to know whether the on line version was adequate. Prices will be kept at the professional level for postdocs, and the motion was not modified. The motion was unanimously approved. Memberships rates will stay the same. The response to the emeritus offering last year was very positive. Student members receive a 50% discount if they renew before Jan. 1. New student members can be nominated for 10 dollars. Sections should waive rates as well to encourage professional members. There was a motion supporting these suggestions that was seconded and passed unanimously.

III. Reports of Committees

A. Standing Committees (Administrative). Reports from the following committees are available on the BSA web site. Representatives also updated those reports in some cases:

1. Executive Committee (Christopher Haufler)
2. Annual Meetings Program Committee (Karen Renzaglia)
3. Archives & History Committee (Shirley Graham)
4. Committee on Committees (Pamela Soltis). Pam Soltis noted that all committee positions had been filled.
5. Conservation Committee (Kathryn Kennedy)
6. Education Committee (Gordon E. Uno)
7. Election Committee (Edward Schneider). Ed Schneider noted that the election was successful, with substantial participation of members. Karl Niklas is now our president elect, and Laura Galloway is our new treasurer. Although most members voted electronically, there were also quite a few paper ballots.
8. Financial Advisory Committee (Jack Horner)
9. Membership and Appraisal Committee (Suzanne Koptur)
10. Publications Committee (Patrick Herendeen)
11. Webpage Committee (Bill Dahl)

B. Ad hoc Committees

1. BSA Development Committee (Edward Schneider). Ed Schneider noted that the BSA has never had a cohesive or concerted effort to ask members to support the society beyond subscription and dues. The BSA Development Committee met in February to identify a good development strategy for the BSA. The Committee determined that the best opportunities would be to have older members thinking in terms of planned gifts and estate gifts. To date, 50 people have joined the newly formed Legacy Society, which will have its first social on Wednesday. Many of the individuals at the February meeting have agreed to participate in an ongoing committee effort. The committee will refine ways of promoting giving. With the current membership, well over a million dollars have been committed. Very few individuals were willing to commit to an amount for their planned giving. Ed stated that the most effective mechanism for fund raising is for members to promote the idea. The next step is to promote the idea of planned giving to members who joined later- this will require a different kind of letter.
2. BSA International Committee (Anitra Thorhaug). Anitra Thorhaug reported that about 40 people attended this meeting, illustrating interest and energy in international outreach. Foreign representative provided a great deal of information. International meetings will now be listed on the BSA web site. It may be possible to send old issues of AJB to some countries, which would be a form of positive outreach to these countries.

Retiring faculty may have literature collections that they would be willing to donate, if they knew where to send it. Universities may be willing to pay for shipments. Bill Dahl suggested that Joe Armstrong has ideas about how to do this.

IV. Old Business

The suggestion that BSA should sponsor a dance was mentioned. We have a student representative who should be asked for ideas about what might appeal to Society members. The program committee had a breakfast to talk about these ideas.

The Physiological Section was very happy to have met with ASPB.

V. New Business

A. Corresponding Members. Ed Schneider reminded members who attended the Business Meeting in Chico that we discussed the need for more than 50 corresponding members in an era of increasing globalization. It was agreed that five corresponding member should be added. Four nominations were made (Dr. Stephen Hopper, the new Director of KEW from Perth Australia, Dr. Brian Huntley, past Director of Kirstenbosch Garden, Cape Town, South Africa, and who now is senior conservation advisor to the government, Dr. Paula Rudall, of the Jodrell Laboratory, Royal Botanical Gardens KEW, and Dr. Bao-rong Lu, Professor in botany and genetic resources, Chairman of the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology of Fudan University, Deputy Director of the Institute of Biodiversity Science, Fudan University, and Chairman of Academic Committee of the Ministry of Education Key Laboratory for Biodiversity Science and Ecological Engineering), all were recommended, and these were approved by council on Sunday. Corresponding members are senior scientists who work outside the US. The names of these new corresponding members will be sent to Chris, and mentioned at the banquet. There was a motion to add these individuals as corresponding members. The motion was approved.

B. The Financial Advisory Committee has provided \$50,000 for special initiatives – those concepts and activities of the BSA that have been recommended.

C. Membership rates will remain the same.

D. *American Journal of Botany* rates will increase slightly for members in 2008 to match the increase in institutional rates.

E. The major changes in the BSA budget result from an award from the Monsanto Company that will be used to support PlantingScience, and another \$100,000 that will come from the Society for Economic Botany in return for managing their business affairs.

F. Executive Committee Recommendation

1. Updating and streamlining of Bylaws. Bylaws should reflect professional management. Currently, our bylaws do not reflect this change. We need to separate “Bylaws” from “Policies and Procedures.” Detailed descriptions should be removed from the Bylaws to make them a core structure that will serve us for a longer period of time. We can have a separate list of policies and procedures. The bylaws should specify the duties and responsibilities of Executive Committee and Council. We need to ensure that these governing elements provide the best kind of leadership. A Bylaws Revision Committee will be appointed over the next few days

2. Developing a New Strategic Plan for the BSA. A strategic planning meeting in 2001 was very successful, and all elements have been accomplished, including hiring an executive director. Professional management provides freedom from day-to-day operations, and gives us the opportunity to plan more conceptually.

3. Several “Strategic Themes” were suggested to focus the future of the BSA:

Education – “PlantingScience” is already in place. Two additional grants have been submitted, and well reviewed, but not decisions have been made.

Communication: A number of suggestions have been made to improve communication (including hiring a science writer), membership services, community outreach, international outreach, increase underrepresented groups, and integrate the activities of the BSA with other plant-focused professional societies.

Student involvement: The BSA should improve mentorship of students and provide them with more opportunities for leadership

Public Policy: The Society could become more active in national agendas (evolution debate, NSF) and other issues affecting public policy.

BSA Development: The BSA should plan for the financial future of the Society.

2. Establishing a Strategic Planning Committee

This is an exciting time to be in BSA because with professional management, we have the time to be more creative about expanding the realm of society.

There was a motion to approve electronic balloting to change bylaws. Those attending the Business Meeting were asked to recommend to the membership that we have a more efficient means of running elections. No one will be cut out of the balloting process. The Society would like to get more involvement of the membership, and electronic ballots would do that, although currently the bylaws exclude electronic ballots. The motion to permit electronic balloting passed unanimously.

It was noted that there were under represented groups at the meeting, including 3-4 disabled people. The noise next door resulted from the new member social.

A motion to adjourn passed unanimously.