

**Business Meeting, Botanical Society of America  
Student Union Building, University of British Columbia  
July 29, 2008**

President Pam Soltis called the meeting to order at 4 PM and thanked all those in attendance for coming to the 2008 BSA business meeting. Pam also thanked Chris Haufler (outgoing Past President), and Karen Renzaglia (outgoing Program Director) for their efforts on behalf of the BSA.

Attendees included:

Joe Armstrong, Diane Byers, Heather Cacanindin, Jim Cohen, Bill Dahl, Janice Dahl, Margaret Devall, Ed Etxeberria, Laura Galloway, Kent Holsinger, Harry Horner, Mackenzie Taylor, Karl Niklas, Dick Olmstead, Muriel Poston, Karen Renzaglia, Scott Russell, Gerald Seiler, Larry Skog, Judy Skog, Pam Soltis, David Spooner, Roxi Steel, Steve Weller

I. A move to approve the minutes from the 2007 BSA Business meeting was passed unanimously. The location of the 2007 meeting will be added to the minutes.

II. Reports from the executive committee, committees, and sections are on the website, and will be included in the minutes of the 2008 Council Meeting. In addition to those reports, there was discussion related to various committees as follows:

A. David Spooner, the Program Director for BSA, met with the various BSA sections to discuss the venue (Snowbird) for the 2009 meetings. The merits of campuses versus convention centers, and the limitation of having only 12 symposia per meeting were debated. Advantages to both campuses and convention centers as venues for meetings were noted, and the Society tries to have a mix. Some smaller sections felt they did not have enough power or influence to have symposia. Section heads voted to maintain the 12 symposia limitation, but to communicate via the web to reach a democratic decision about symposia. David stated that there would be a standard call for symposia emphasizing cutting edge science with a clearly thought-out plan. Quality of the symposia will be the major consideration for acceptance of a symposium proposal, along with gender balance. The Society needs to have criteria for evaluation of symposia proposals. All sections will have an equal vote. Symposia, colloquia, and workshops are for any themes. Judy Skog noted that depending on how many societies we meet with, the number of symposia could mushroom. If these other societies are not allowed to sponsor symposia, they would not want to meet with BSA. Bill Dahl said that we would work with other societies to make sure that we have an appropriate number of symposia. Diane Byers asked if there would be a deadline for symposia proposals. David Spooner and the section heads will put together a plan to standardize the method for symposia selection. David will discuss this issue with Pat Herendeen (ASPT symposia coordinator). Joe Armstrong noted that there is sometimes overlap between symposia sponsored by the different sections. David commented that there are sometimes bugs in the program. Section heads will look at the final program to find any problems.

B. The Committee on Under Represented Groups met on Sunday. A website on women and science has been established, and the first Women in Botany lunch was held earlier in the day. Over 100 women attended the meeting. There were several proposals for advancing the cause of women in science, including a list serve to share concerns, and an e-mentoring system to link students and professionals. Under-represented groups and the UMEB program were discussed. Ideally, these students should be identified and encouraged to attend BSA meetings.

C. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), which was established one year ago, met in St. Louis in March. They accomplished a great deal in one day, and assembled a draft of a plan for the future. One issue that arose was the development of a survey to get a broader idea of what people in the Society would like. The response to the survey was unusually high, indicating that members care about the Society. At a meeting this morning, the SPC was presented with the results of survey. The goal of the SPC is to develop a set of objectives to share with the membership by the end of the year. The Executive Committee will discuss these objectives next year.

D. Anitra Thorhaug noted that the International Outreach Committee is interacting with the Peruvian Botanical Society, and will share with them our concepts of cutting edge biology. They will share their knowledge of their biodiversity with the BSA. The International Outreach Committee would like to exchange information with different countries every two years. The exchange will be open to the entire membership. The committee is determining how to begin projects.

E. The Development Committee will have a reception on Wednesday.

### III. New Business.

A. Corresponding members. The nomination of Professor Sun Ge as a corresponding member was moved and unanimously supported.

B. The Financial Advisory Committee provided \$35,000 for special initiatives.

C. Membership rates will remain the same. The Membership Committee recommended creation of two new membership categories, for postdoctoral fellows (rate = \$40) and for community college teachers (rate = \$30). Between October and December 31, we would give individuals in these categories a 50% reduction in rate.

The committee recommended a new drive for student membership beginning in October. The rate would be \$15. Another recommendation was to drop the section fee, in an effort to get students interested in the sections.

Karl Niklas made a motion to take one vote for all proposals from the Membership Committee. Karl's motion was seconded and unanimously supported. The proposals were passed unanimously.

D. Institutional subscription rates for the American Journal of Botany were proposed to increase by \$60, or from \$540 to \$600. The proposed increase for members would be \$5, or from \$85 to \$90. This increase would only be for individuals receiving the print copy. Muriel Poston asked if libraries were maintaining subscriptions. Bill replied that subscriptions are down about 2% per year, and that we may be losing some strata. Karl Niklas noted that many 2-year colleges cancelled AJB because botany curricula were being dropped. Bill noted that with Heather Cacanindin as a staff member, the BSA will try to encourage institutions that dropped subscriptions to take them up again. Because we are faced with environment of open access, we need to figure out how to shape our position. Scott Russell suggested different levels of subscriptions for different types of institutions. Bill replied that we could go in this direction. Scott felt it might be realistic approach. Jeff Osborne cautioned against undervaluing our product.

Pam asked for approval of the recommendations on subscription rates. The proposals were moved, seconded, and unanimously approved.

E. The proposed budget for 08-09 is modeled directly on this year's model with very few differences. Pam Soltis moved for acceptance of the budget. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

G. Bylaws committee. The committee worked with Jan Dahl (of Anchor Management) to revise by laws. Jan and the committee led a discussion of the proposed changes on Monday, July 28. Pam summarized the process for approval of the new bylaws. Under current bylaws, the proposed changes to the bylaws need to be posted for 30 days, and then a paper ballot is mailed to voting members.

In the ensuing discussion, Scott Russell noted that our business model has changed- we are accepting grant funds for example. Previously, all committees were defined in the bylaws. This approach was extremely restrictive. With new bylaws, we will be much for flexible in the future. Jan Dahl noted that because of rapid changes in how non profit organizations are run, we need to be in a flexible situation. The Society needs to be as safe under the current legal system as possible, but still be flexible.

Scott noted that the biggest difference was that the Executive Committee will be changed to an Executive Board. The Bylaws committee tried to model the new bylaws on what has worked best, and put that into practice. Incorporation in both Connecticut and Missouri was investigated.

Harry (Jack) Horner asked whether the old bylaws and new bylaws can be compared, and whether it is easy to see the differences. Pam replied that the two sets of bylaws are not directly comparable, but that both are on the web for comparison. Jeff Osborne asked where fiduciary responsibility rests. Scott replied that it rests with the membership. Jan

Dahl stated that the fiduciary responsibility actually resides with the board of directors, which is doing what the Executive Committee did before. The Council will be advisory.

Jack Horner noted that the membership, through the business meeting, approves the budget, as it always has.

Pam noted that there are some possible amendments to by laws (changes in membership classes, for example). We would need to amend the proposed by laws, and repost them, according to the current bylaws.

The two amendments are:

- 1) Modify the membership classes to include postdoctoral fellows and community college teachers.
- 2) For the election of the chair of the advisory council, delete “of the sections”

There was agreement that these changes should be made to the proposed bylaws, which will then be reposted for 30 days.

Pam thanked the members of the bylaws committee for their efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 PM.