

BSA Board Meeting MINUTES
February 24, 2023, via Zoom
10:00am-1:00pm Central

Who attended:

BSA Staff: Heather Cacanindin, Amy McPherson, Catrina Adams, Tricia Jackson

Board Members: Norman Wickett, Vivian Negron-Ortiz, Rachel Jabaily, Ioana Anghel, Melanie Link-Perez, Emily Sessa, Michael Donoghue, Eli Hartung, Brenda Molano-Flores (arrived 12:38pm)

Other: Gillian Greenough (Wiley) (left 11:44am)

Success Stories and Business Office Report – Vivian and Heather

The role and appreciation of the BSA board and executive committee was emphasized by Vivian. The many successes and awards of BSA in 2022 were acknowledged. The positive finances of 2022 and expected 2023 deficit were discussed, particularly with reference to the new Wiley agreement, which should yield royalties in 2024. Additional discussions included the completion of performance reviews, groundwork for Botany 2023 in Boise, and review of contracts for Botany 2024 in Grand Rapids.

Heather provides an summary of the highlights in the Business Office report.

Wiley Publications Report & 2022 Publications Financial Performance – Gillian Greenough (Wiley)

The current status and outlook for AJB and APPS were discussed. 2022 was a strong year for AJB in 2022 – over 8,000 institutions with access to AJB, largely due to a big increase in transformational agreements. 2022 did show a decrease in downloads and article views, which is likely a combination of better bot detection and a reduction in number of published articles, largely due to the impact of the pandemic on publishing (this is across all Life Sciences). Many new marketing and promotion activities are underway, in part due to a reduction of emphasis on impact factor, as Wiley has signed on to DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment). APPS had a good financial year (income increase of 64%), whereas AJB saw a decrease in subscriptions, in part due to subscriptions switching over to transformational agreements (AJB is not an outlier in this sense). The board discussed the need to encourage authors from institutions with transformational agreements to publish in AJB and APPS.

The need to increase publications in AJB to meet revenue goals was discussed. Transfer agreements were discussed, e.g., New Phytologist moving rejected papers to AJB, but the buy-in from New Phytologist (particularly given their new open access journal, PPP) is not there yet. The board also discussed when AJB can flip to fully open access, but for the moment it appears that this would be detrimental to AJB and overall finances. The role of editors in encouraging publication and working with authors to get papers into the journal was discussed – in general, our current rejected papers are fundamentally flawed, rather than rejected because of lack of “fit” for AJB.

Financial Report – Allison and Heather

The transparency and conscientiousness of BSA financial management (Heather and Tricia) was acknowledged and commended. It was emphasized that BSA is not worse off than other institutions or organizations that rely on investments; however, the projected publication revenues from Wiley are concerning. The timing of when to draw from the investment portfolio to cover operational costs was discussed. Heather and Tricia will prepare a projection for or next meeting that projects out when BSA may need to take a draw from the investment account (the draw having previously been approved last summer by the Council and membership).

Vote to approve BSA FY2022 financial statements. Move to approve: Allison. Second: Rachel. Approved.

ASPT IT Support Proposal – Heather

The board discussed the role in which BSA has been providing support to SEB and SSE for IT support (server maintenance, website certification, etc.). There are management agreements in place that pay BSA for these services with SSE and SEB. However, for years these services have been provided to ASPT at no charge. The board discussed having ASPT pay a small fee for this IT support.

Motion to approve the proposal to request payment of \$750 from APST for these services: Vivian. Second: Emily. Approved.

BSA Election Slate – Michael

The election slate was discussed; it is close to being finalized and should be ready by the next Board meeting. Potential candidates were discussed for President Elect, Director-at-Large for DEI, Director-at-Large for Development, Program Director, and Student Representative. The board discussed how an increase in student self-nominations is likely tied to a Botany360 event that was held by current student representatives.

Break: 11:25-11:35am

Corresponding Member Award Revisions – Michael

A new revision of the Corresponding Member Award guidelines was discussed as presented to the Board in the meeting agenda. Because these changes require a change to the bylaws, it was discussed that the revision should be put to membership when bundled with other prospective bylaw changes. However, the revision does not impact how the process for nominations will be handled in 2023 so a call for Corresponding Member nominations can still proceed.

Move to approve that the changes to the Corresponding Member description in the BSA policy document and change to the bylaws, which will be presented to the membership. Michael moved to accept. Second: Vivian. Approved.

DEI Activities Update – Catrina Adams

A short update on DEI was presented. Publication fee waivers, election reforms, and a DEI self-assessment of the society were briefly discussed, with the latter likely occurring after the Root &

Shoot capstone projects are wrapped up. The possibility of providing bystander training was also discussed. An update on the Botany & Beyond grant was provided. The deadline for the BSA Impact Award will be in April or May; the board discussed how BSA members should be spreading the word to make nominations.

Student Reps Report – Ioana and Eli

The increase in funding for student awards was discussed and celebrated. Student membership has dropped slightly since 2021 but remains at 31% of membership. Student attendance at conferences is staying relatively constant in terms of percent of total attendees. The board discussed how, in general, students want to continue the hybrid conference model and given that students make up a large proportion of attendees, it is important to consider their needs when planning conferences. The success of student events at Botany 2022 was summarized. The board discussed adding a publication-focused Botany360 event for students at Botany 2023 (or later conferences).

Staff Reports and Q&A – Vivian

The Synthesis Prize and the makeup of the committee was discussed, as was the Bessey award; the participation of the past president or president-elect in these committees was encouraged.

Publications Report

The board discussed this previously during the discussion of the Wiley contract.

Membership and Communications Report

The loss of professional members was discussed, as was a strategy to reach out to members with lapsed membership.

Botany Conference Report

The board discussed that, because of financial constraints, a smaller in-person conference in 2024 will be offered, as the expense of doing a small virtual meeting alongside a small in-person meeting is prohibitive. BSA wants to continue offering a hybrid option and the goal is to have it happen in 2025. The discussion of a joint meeting with the Mexican Botanical Society was revisited.

Motion to move into executive session at 12:50pm to discuss Botany & Beyond issues and staff performance reviews: Vivian. Second: Michael. Approved.

Emily moved and Melanie seconded the motion to come out of Executive Session and adjourn the meeting at 1:10pm.