

BSA Board Call MINUTES

November 6, 2019 (2-4pm Central)

In attendance: Heather Cacanindin, Ned Friedman, Shelly Gaynor, Amy Litt, Lucinda McDade, Ann Sakai, Emily Sessa, Rachel Spicer, Linda Watson, Andi Wolfe, Min Ya, Chris Martine

1. Minutes Approval

- Board Meeting 7/27/2019
- Board Meeting 8/1/2019 (AMENDED: Shelly's name is misspelled; extra "e" should be removed)
- Exec Committee Email Vote 9/13/2019

Minutes are approved as amended.

2. Financial Update

Business Office Report

- Discussion about meeting profit and why it was so successful and yet barely yielded a profit - the venue and the food and beverages were expensive
- Social Media Liaisons have been hired, oriented and will be paid quarterly
- Cash accounts are high but it is money to last through the year
- Sections have responded well to being asked to consolidate accounts
- Q: re: Financial Advisory Committee: They have not met yet and Heather and Lucinda are working on a charge document. Suggestion that they will also advise on the budget (draft budget review and recommendation to the full Board). Their charge document includes this.

FY2019 Profit & Loss

- FY2019 Budget to Actual still in process with pending account reconciliations with Schowalter & Jabouri, accounting firm)
- FY Oct 1->Sept 30
- Bottom line is that we are in very good shape
- Generous Kaplan gift / needs formal plan
- Accounting fees difference is due to the audit (22k)
- Q: Why did travel go up so much this year? A: We sent several people to the Latin Am Bot Congress on Quito
- Change in the way Sections and symposia & colloquia are now included under "Conferences" and they have not been in the past
- Line 8500: typo; not Botany 2011 (should be 2019)

Investment Performance - September IC Report

- IC met with Morgan Stanley investment manager at BOTANY 2019
- discussed ESG investments (environment, social, governance - i.e., socially responsible investing)
- Calendar year for portfolio was good and made back a significant amount that had been significantly down-valued previously

Audit Resolution with NSF

- Process of even submitting the report and corrective actions was laborious
- Report and actions have been conditionally accepted
- We do not anticipate crossing the federal funding threshold again that triggers this anytime soon

3. Sections and Funding Requests/Issues

- Sections responded well to request to simplify accounts
- It was suggested that we do not award them any money automatically and further that we consider not allowing money to roll over at the end of the fiscal year
- There is a desire to draft policy that Sections request funds in writing against a budget, with it submitted in time for conference events to be included in the program. Spring Board meeting would/could serve this purpose
- It was proposed that their own sectional dues can be used for anything
- Symposia are selected by, and funded by, the Board: Should sections be allowed to apply for more? Also, sections have been supporting colloquia; the Board does not support colloquia.
- Suggestion that we think about this for one year from now.
- It was noted that there will also be requests that come from outside of sections and that we need to think about how to handle these.
- Requests thus far have been for social stuff like mixers, breakfast
 - Most felt this was acceptable if it is for something specific and is evaluated against their budgets
 - What about travel awards for students, etc? We do it for comm coll and developing countries currently.
 - It would be a different group of students each year
 - Require sections to make the case for it each year
 - Should students be required to be members in order to apply for funding?
Mixed opinions here.
- Sections also want to request research award money
 - Not much support for this on the Board because it is already happening at the society level
 - Another point against it is that it will be annual and become a standard annual expectation
 - An informal vote -> voted down
- Sections want to award cash prizes for posters and talks at meeting
 - Sections could use dues or raise money on their own for this
 - These are small sums and the value of the award is largely symbolic
 - Again, danger that it becomes an annual expectation
- What about requests for activities at other meetings
 - Does this help with recruiting members?
 - Should we use funds to send a student to a different meeting? Varied opinions about what is acceptable with little resolution
- Lucinda summarized discussion as follows: Sections can use dues for anything. For budget requests: special case social events may be allowable; will not support research awards; will not

support symposium or colloquia through requests; travel awards to annual BOT meetings are OK for requests; sectional money ok to be used at non-BOTANY meetings and for any awards

4. California Native Plant Society Request for California's Botanist Certification Advisory Committee

- We endorse this and our logo is on their website but it was never brought before the Board. Do we want to continue to be part of this?
- Professionals in the field are not favorably impressed (an understatement) with this certification program. Societies have never been asked for feedback or input.
- Board agreed that we request to be removed from their website.

Lucinda left meeting following this decision

5. Conference Update

BOTANY 2020 planning meeting: planning needs to happen early because of tourist popularity, especially with regard to field trips

- May be Denali field trip after the conference
- 13 symposia proposals and 17 colloquia proposals; We can fund 6 symposia and the number of colloquia is becoming a big problem
- Conference will be in two locations that are about 5 blocks apart
- Guidelines suggested that symposium get about 4k and colloquia get a few hundred (??)
- Cancellation policy: If you submit an abstract but have not registered by a certain date, following some reminders, your abstract will be pulled. (Too late to implement a fee system this year.)
- Q: re: Going greener with the conference: expense of this is venue-specific; Can we have an opt-out of the bag? Suggest bring own cup or mug?

Childcare: underutilized but popular

- It's really expensive!
- We could provide childcare grants that they can use however they want, but onsite won out in a survey
- Should those using the service have to contribute?
- Informal vote: We agreed to continue with the same model at BOTANY 2020

Emily Sessa left meeting following this decision

6. Strategic Planning

- Membership survey: Encouraged to look carefully at member survey and think about specific questions; some questions are tracking questions for continuity
- 15 people for strategic planning and maybe meet in May for 2 day meeting with consultant; Board will be consulted on committee composition

7. Sherry Marts and Allies Training

- Two-hour webinar training for \$2k for 10-12 people (allies)
- Suggests fairly senior people for Allies; some from Society partners
- \$2k fee is considered reasonable if we can record and reuse it - she has agreed to this provided we do not post it online and make it more widely available; i.e., very restricted use.
- Previous proposal was for onsite and 4k plus travel.
- Board approved this approach
- Are we paying for this or is it a conference expense? We agreed that it would be a conference expense and split among the societies

Andi left meeting following this discussion.

8. Code of Conduct

- Emily suggested training for moderators, but we will never be able to get them together at the same time.
- Suggestion that slide could be flashed up between sessions (not much support for this)
- Also consider introducing it at the Plenary and/or at the beginning of each session segment
- Develop a written document for the moderators (they already get this; need to make sure that this reaches all special sections)
- Back of name badge will have Code of Conduct contact/action information

9. Kaplan Dissertation Improvement Award

- Kaplan Committee will review these
- Lots of effort has gone into planning this
- Proposed that meeting registration be waived the year that they come to present their work at BOTANY meeting (which is a requirement)
- There is also a requirement that the recipient do some outreach (pub in AJB and talk at BOTANY meeting + non-technical abstract)
- Question as to whether there is a gift agreement in place yet? There is not. The money has been transferred but there is no gift agreement in place.
- Q: re: electronic award portal. Cost split across societies. This does exist but we are modifying it a little (needs to accept letters of reference from people); plan is that it will be ready Jan 1

9. Development

- Potential donor wanted to create an award that was restricted to women; Question about whether this is OK if we receive federal funding
- We need clarity on our policies here

Ann left meeting after this discussion.

10. General Update

- Publications report: Heather highlights that income for the year is down relative to last year
- Outreach in Aquascalientes

- Education report: Staff put through ringer with Planting Science platform trying to fix a broken system; tons of work
- AIBS / BSA is member
 - Request for additional funds to participate in President's Roundtable
 - \$2500 additional payment for new benefits
 - Agreed that too many people have left at this point that we need to circulate to the Board for feedback
 - General mixed feelings and unimpressive reaction to services and benefits

Meeting adjourned at 5:32pm