

Society of Systematic Biologists 2013 Council Meeting
21/06/13

Snowbird, Utah: 1:00-5:00, room Magpie A

Final agenda sent to ssb-council@utlists.utexas.edu and ssb-exec@utlists.utexas.edu on June 13, 2013

In attendance: Officers: L. Lacey Knowles (President), Jack Sullivan (Past President), Jack Sites (President Elect), Ron Debry and Andy Anderson (editors), Jen Boyd (Oxford University Press), Brad Shaffer (Treasurer), Bryan Carstens (Program Chair), Sean Brady (Awards Chair); David Hillis (Trustee)
Council Members: Erika Edwards, Luke Harmon, Mark Holder, Brian O'Meara, Karen Cranston, Stacy Smith, Chelsea Specht, Mike Steel, Susan Perkins, Tracy Heath
From 2:30-4:00 pm: David Mindell (NSF program officer)

1. Welcome and joint council meeting report. L. Lacey Knowles
 - a) Evolution meeting plans for future venues and the formation of a joint committee across SSE, ASN and SSB to plan future venues (Bryan Carstens will be the SSB representative)
 - b) Vote to support a meeting in Brazil, 2015, passed unanimously
 - c) Snowbird report indicated all was on track, with revenues exceeding costs; 1400 registrants
2. David Mindell solicited input from SSB on the rewriting of the cluster descriptions for SBS at NSF and what to do with AVATol (input needed by August)
3. Treasurer report. Brad Shaffer.
 - a) The society is in good shape, and there was broad support for adding more funds to the student awards, as well as creating travel awards for students and postdocs. A specific budget will be sent to council for comment and a vote.
 - b) A proposal will be written and voted upon by the council regarding the policy for handling buyouts when transitioning between editors.
4. Awards report. Sean Brady. We received very competitive grant applications and strong applicants for the Ernst Mayr symposium.
5. Program Report. Bryan Carstens. Workshop proved to be very successful and strong support to continue annually.
6. Editors Report. Ron Debry and Andy Anderson. Increase in number of submissions.
7. Oxford University Press. Jen Boyd. Increase in impact factor and discussion of issues with open access.
8. Discussion of open access. Karen Cranston. Will add to the journal website to make it clear that pre-print is possible when publishing in Systematic Biology. Karen will head and assemble a committee (with student representatives) for discussion on open access. Discussion will be considered jointly with publishing models and consultation with Jen Boyd and Oxford University Press.
9. Trustees Report. David Hillis. The society has recovered past losses with stock market crash (now slightly above the 2008 level), and stocks are performing steadily.
10. Strategic Planning.

- a) Discussed how to assure that the society is meeting the needs of its broad membership. Topics of discussion included the possibility of expanding the current journal and/or starting a new journal. Jen Boyd will assist in putting together a questionnaire for society members to get their input.
- b) How to increase web presence of the society and foster more interaction with members
- c) Add 3 student members for 3-year terms to the council (unanimous support in official vote). To establish and maintain institutional memory, one student will be elected each year, with the exception of 3 students appointed initially to start the new policy. Of these initial 3 students, one will have a one-year term, one a two-year term, and one a three-year term. After that, each new appointment is a three-year term. Students will apply, and the duties will need to be defined in a proposal to be submitted to the council for approval.

SSB Exit Meeting, June 25, 2013

1. Additional discussion about publishing model. Possibly starting a second SSB journal that could cover good systematics papers, but without the methodological interest that SystBio papers often have. There was a concern that traditional systematists in SSB currently may feel excluded from SystBio, and a new journal would provide a society venue for them to publish in. Some of the top MPE papers might go to this new journal instead. A majority of members favor a serious effort at a second journal, and Jennifer Boyd (OUP) mentioned something an initial 'free run' for a year or two at Oxford Press. A second objective of a new journal might be to perhaps boost our membership just a bit, by publishing very high quality taxon-focused treatments while supporting a society, instead of MPE.
2. Increasing the relevance of SSB to members. Set up a forum to gather input on NSF likes and dislikes. Increase web presence: video talks (presidential address?) and talks on favorite subjects, support phyloseminar with official SSB sponsorship; feature more early career people to highlight and help with career development.
3. Additional discussion, particularly in the context of a potential new journal, about green vs. gold open access, library subscriptions when journals go open access, NSF's perspective on open access, etc. That discussion occurred across several meetings of different groups, but was all very relevant to the idea of a new, more empirically oriented journal.