

29th Annual Gibbs Conference on Biothermodynamics
Minutes of the Business Meeting held on October 5, 2015
Touch of Nature Conference Center, Carbondale, IL

Respectfully submitted by Liskin Swint-Kruse

Attendees: *Organizers:* Ernesto Fuentes and James Horn

Board in Attendance: Patricia Clark, Liskin Swint-Kruse, Jack Correia, Madeline Shea, Vince LiCata

Past Organizers in attendance: Doug Barrick, Karen Fleming, Treavor Creamer, Clay Clark, Kathleen Hall, Timothy Lohman, Dorothy Beckett, Aron Fenton, Jim Cole, Luis Marky, Aaron Lucius, Andrew Herr, Steven Whitten, Glen Ramsey, George Makhatadze, Jonathon Chaires, Rohit Pappu, Bertrand Garcia-Moreno, Vince Hilser

The meeting was run by Patricia Clark, President

A. Report from the current organizers (Ernesto Fuentes and James Horn). 220 applicants applied and several had to be placed on the wait list. 207 registered to attend. About a quarter of the attendees stayed off site; ~75 stayed in cabins.

B. Treasurer's Report (Jack Correia): The fund-raising by the organizers was very successful this year; donations are \$8,750 with \$2500 pending from Genentech. Prices are creeping up; without the fundraising we would have run in the red by about \$3000. Income from registration was \$36,398.98 and expenses were ~\$42,592.46 (of which \$1,654 was for the abstract books). We now have a balance of \$57,527.01.

C. Election of new organizers. Sarah Bondos (Texas A&M Health Science Center) and Nicholas Fitzkee (Mississippi State University) were elected organizers for the 2016 meeting.

D. Transition plan for the board. The group discussed the need for a transition plan for the board. The president-elect, president, past president, treasurer and secretary as well as two permanent board members (Jack Correia and Madeline Shea) serve as the standing advisory committee to the two elected organizers, who are often organizing a meeting for the first time.

Although, in theory, anyone can respond to the organizers about meeting arrangements and Gibbs Society precedents, in practice much of the correspondence is handled by Jack and Madeline. They serve as "graduate directors" for new organizers, helping them understand the checklists and practices of prior meetings. Jack and Madeline would like to promote a mechanism such that others who are committed to the long-term success of the meeting make a formal commitment to help field questions and advise the organizers while Jack and Madeline are still on the Board.

The primary duties of President are light (running the annual business meeting, making welcoming remarks). One option to garner advisors is to extend the term of President-Elect to 5 years (president-elect, president, past-president, followed by an additional 2 years as a board member), starting with this year's president-elect. Discussion indicated that a five-year commitment is more than some would like or may be suited to accept. Another option is for the President to take a more active role in advising new organizers. It may also be fruitful to recruit additional at-large members of the Board to serve a specified term (such as 5-years) in staggered intervals to help preserve institutional memory.

No final decision was reached, although the incoming President (Vince LiCata) indicated a willingness to make a 5-year commitment, and President-Elect Jim Cole accepted a more involved position for a standard 3-year term.

An IT position was also formally added to the board. Nathan Baker has put in many years of service regarding the conference application website, the registration website, and PayPal payments. Rohit Pappu may be able to help with this in the future.

E. Selection of president-elect. James Cole was elected president-elect. Vince LiCata is now the current president. Patricia Clark is now the past-president.

F. Report from Saturday Night Thermo (Vince LiCata). 108 trainees RSVP'd, and the maximum attendance was 78. Reports of the flash talks and the career panel were very positive. Vince LiCata and Susan Pedigo are available to do it again. Susan Pedigo had a family emergency this year and Sarah Bondos filled in for her at the event.

F. Miscellaneous.

- We will add the new speakers to the mailing list and send it out to the former organizers for suggested names to add.
- The poster session is too loud and crowded. Suggestions were made to move about half the posters to the dining hall. The vendor placement – between the bar and the posters – was very satisfactory.

G. Post-Gibbs29 email discussion Oct 7-16, 2015

Email Addressees: All former organizers and Gibbs30 new organizers

- a. It was suggested that the current Board create a Board Handbook that describes the expectations and responsibilities of membership so that we can share that easily with prospective Board Members. There are several documents that Jack, Liskin and Madeline have created that can serve as the foundation for such a manual.
- b. Suggested training for student moderators.
 - Student moderators could use more training so they are more comfortable cutting off speakers and reminding the audience about speaking loudly, to better facilitate the discussion. They could be included in the training notes and instruction already given to the Saturday Night Thermo moderators. They should

be encouraged to sit nearer to the center of the room, so that the speakers can see them better.

- The schedule had built in “buffer” time this year, but the student moderators did not seem to be aware of it. This should be kept in next year’s programs and used during the session for extended Q&A (although not extended speaker time).
- c. Please eliminate the pizza lunch from the menu.