

**24<sup>th</sup> Annual Gibbs Conference on Biothermodynamics**  
Minutes of the Business Meeting held on September 27, 2010  
Touch of Nature Conference Center, Carbondale, IL

Respectfully submitted by Peggy Daugherty

**Attendees:**

*Organizers:* Elisar Barbar and Vince Licata

*Board in Attendance:* Jack Correia, Madeline Shea and Michael Johnson, Karen Fleming, Bertrand Garcia-Moreno

*Past Organizers in attendance:* David Bain, Brian Baker, Doug Barrick, Dorothy Beckett, Jannette Carey, Brad Chaires, Clay Clark, Trevor Creamer, Peggy Daugherty, Karen Fleming, Bertrand Garcia-Moreno, Kathleen Hall, Michael Henzl, Tim Lohman, George Makhataдзе, Luis Marky and Liskin Swint-Kruse.

The meeting was run by Jack Correia.

**A. Report from the current organizers (Elisar Barbar and Vince Licata):**

Two new donors were recruited (Bruker and ICX), 2 old donors lost (but organizers feel they will return). They were able to raise \$3600 from sponsors.

Two new programs were added to the meeting. The Flash Talks and an Outreach Program were added.

The cost of printing the programs was ~\$1600.

It was thought that the registration and abstract submissions worked well. The half-page abstract limit worked well (word limit). There was a comment that the Paypal system was appreciated.

The organizers requested more information about cancellation deadlines/refund deadlines to be provided to the next set of organizers.

There was a count of 178 participants for the meeting. The organizers paid the registration and for the invited speakers. The total income was \$33,000, with an estimate expense for the meeting at \$31,850.

**B. Election of officers:**

Peggy Daugherty was reinstated for another 3 year term as Secretary (2010 –2013).

The Society members voted to elect Doug Barrick (Johns Hopkins University) as President-Elect.

**C). Treasurers Report by Michael Johnson:**

The Society has ~ \$25000 in reserve. Although it was noted that this was essentially enough to provide for the expenses of one meeting, the consensus was that the money would not be used in that manner.

**D). Update on the *Biophysical Chemistry* tribute edition from Jack Correia**

Authors (28 sets) have been invited to contribute and have a deadline of Jan 28 to submit. The goal is to have manuscripts reviewed by March, so that the edition will be published in time for the 25<sup>TH</sup> Annual Gibbs Conference.

The goal is to be able to provide copies for everyone at the upcoming meeting. The cost per copy (which will not be defrayed by the publisher) is ~\$30 per copy.

It was negotiated that authors will be provided copies, but all other copies will have to be bought. Several suggestions as to how to defray the costs included a \$15 per person fee incorporated into next year's meeting, or in fact, some type of fund-raising to help to defray the costs of the books. The general consensus was to try to maintain the reserve that the Society has in the bank.

#### **E). Discussion on the format of the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Gibbs Conference led by Madeline Shea:**

The intention is to have a "big celebration" that celebrates biothermodynamics and helps to bring back some of the attendees that haven't participated in a few years. The main ideas that were presented and discussed are summarized below.

##### *Organizers:*

The primary responsibility for organizing the meeting will lie with the Board of Directors.

##### *Dates of Meeting:*

It will be the responsibility of the Board to discuss the dates with Touch of Nature.

##### *Specific Sessions:*

The idea that past organizers would act as "Session Organizers" was presented as a means of incorporating more ideas and more expertise.

This brought up the idea that we return to the idea of specific sessions and "lost topics" (it was noted that the meeting has been pretty light on nucleic acids recently) and that session organizers would read abstracts and select talks. Madeline suggested that she collect suggestions on what topics would comprise the specific sessions and that we would vote on the final session topics.

There was some discussion as to the nature of the meeting with regards to invited speakers. It was proposed that perhaps the upcoming meeting might have more talks by PIs. There were several members that voiced concern that the meeting distinguishes itself by having a significant amount of student and post-doctoral presentations. It was suggested that this character of the upcoming meeting should not be changed.

##### *Some ideas for specific sessions included:*

An early session (arrival a day early) to be organized and led by students. This logistics of this in terms of housing availability was discussed. It was noted that NSF may have applicable funds to help with student events. An advantage of this is that it appears to empower students to participate in subsequent talks and discussions.

A career fair was proposed. Michael Doyle indicated that he would be interested in participating in sessions relating to the pharmaceutical industry.

A session on historical perspectives and/or the future of biophysical research was proposed.

The innovations with the current meeting were proposed to be continued, if new organizers wished to do so.

*Concern on an increased attendance:* There are approximately 200 labs on the main attendee list. It was noted that the upcoming meeting might be well-attended, since it is a "landmark" meeting. If there is an oversubscription to the meeting (we are limited to 180 attendees), that will be dealt with at the appropriate time (and by the Organizers).

**F). Discussion of the future of the meeting – led by Bertrand Garcia-Moreno:**

The overall goal is to keep the emphasis on the application of thermodynamics to investigate problems of biological importance. The importance of quantitative approaches was stressed, and the question asked as to how we can keep the meeting from becoming qualitative or from becoming “off-topic”.

There was the suggestion that we try to pull in the past attendees who are no longer participating in the meeting. As the number of faculty who used to attend decreases, it might be useful to “match up” an experienced faculty member with a more junior faculty member to organize the meeting. The overall goal is to keep the faculty invested in the future and nature of the meeting.

**G). Discussion of Other Items of Business**

Dorothy Beckett raised the issue that biothermodynamics has become an underrepresented group within the Biophysical Society. She proposed that a subgroup be formed and devoted to this subject (a tentative title of “Biomolecular Stability and Molecular Interactions” was suggested). In order to do so, a petition with 100 signatures would have to be presented to the Biophysical Society, plus the meeting would need to be well supported by attendees. This idea was very well-received by the members of the Gibbs Society. Additional comments included that fund-raising would have to be a part of the process of starting a subgroup to pay expenses (speaker reimbursement, AV requirements, refreshments, etc). Brad Chaires indicated that the calorimetry industry people might be favorable to supporting such a subgroup.