

EB-ESA Executive Committee Meeting, Ocean City, Maryland

Sunday afternoon, March 10th, 2002 Meeting Minutes prepared by R. R. Youngman, Secretary

Members present: Franco Badenes-Perez (Student Affairs Committee Representative for EB-ESA), George Hamilton, Ellen Klinger, Tom Kuhar, Jay McPherson (current President ESA National Organization) Brian Nault, Jan Nyrop, Jim Steffel, John Stoffolano, Susan Whitney, and Rod Youngman

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks by EB-ESA President: Jan Nyrop

2. Comments by ESA President: Jay McPherson

Jay McPherson discussed the vague budgeting style of Darrel Hanson, the Executive Director from 1979-1994. He said there was no micromanaging or any real oversight of the budget by the ESA Governing Board. After Hanson stepped down, the next two Executive Director's also were fairly hands-off. Money was set aside for building maintenance, but this was not being done. In 1998, the Governing Board hired an engineering firm which determined that renovating the DC building would be more expensive than constructing a new building from scratch. The needed repairs would not increase the market value of the building. Only the land occupied by the current building was valuable. Building repairs were estimated at \$1.4 million over 5 years. In addition, computers at the DC office are antiquated. The necessary upgrading and maintenance was estimated at \$200,000.

In 2000, the Governing Board adopted a \$267,000 deficit. This was necessary for electronic publishing, etc. In May 2001, the deficit budget was actually over \$400,000 due to lack of sales. To solve this problem, Paula Lettice was asked to save \$250,000. Paula came close to meeting this target. Unfortunately, inflation for the next year will cost an additional \$100,000 to \$150,000. This led to major restructuring. At the 2001 San Diego meeting, the Governing Board came up with 64 items needed to run the organization. The strategic plan has not changed, just some things the ESA National organization has done in the past have been shelved indefinitely.

The following Motion was passed: "Moved to eliminate sales of merchandise, the public affairs function (excluding the *ESA Newsletter*), and meetings support; consolidate marketing and membership; outsource membership services to save money; investigate outsourcing journal editing to save money; investigate outsourcing the Annual Meeting process to save money; consolidate financial management into a chief financial officer position;

reengineer the awards process to save money; reduce administrative staff to consolidate the functions of personnel management, governance, administrative support, and mail, and accomplish this with the ultimate goal of saving the equivalent cost of five full-time positions (or approximately \$270,000) in 2002."

3. Representative to ESA Governing Board Report: Brian Nault

Brian Nault reported on the current sales status of the ESA office building. He said a prospective buyer has provided a letter of intent. The ongoing financial problems of the ESA national organization continue to be discussed and addressed.

The ESA Governing Board agreed that the following four items were the most important functions of the ESA national organization:

- 1) Membership
- 2) Meetings
- 3) Publications
- 4) Finances

Publications: There is a new editorial structure for the journals.

2002 membership projections: There were 6,160 members in 2001; as of February, 2002, membership renewal was 80% of projected renewal figures despite dues increase to \$125.

4. Past President's Report: Dick Casagrande - not present

5. President Elect's Report: Susan Whitney

Susan Whitney reported that plans for Harrisburg 2002 meeting are on track. The Potomac Division of the American Phytopathological Society is on board. Program chairs for Harrisburg meeting are D. Ames Herbert, Jr. and Faith Kuehn. A June planning meeting in Harrisburg has been set for 1 p.m., 17 June, through 4 p.m. 18 June. George Hamilton and Susan Whitney will make a preliminary trip to meeting site in April.

6. Treasurers Report: George Hamilton

George Hamilton reported that EB-ESA has taken in \$11,000 and that the current meeting expenses are estimated at \$9,500. George indicated that his Treasurers Report was one-week old as of this meeting. At start of fiscal year, July 1, 2001, EB-ESA had \$20,638.34. Total funds available as of Dec. 31, 2001 were \$63,416.58. Jan Nyrop asked if we are on the right track about our budget-saving measures, such as increasing meeting registration dues by

\$10, minimizing morning and afternoon coffees, etc. George reported that we were on track.

7. Secretary's Report: Rod Youngman

Rod Youngman discussed need for moving to an all electronic format for EB-ESA mailings. Jan Nyrop felt this was a good idea, but he had two concerns about moving to an all electronic format: First, some people do not have access to e-mail; and second, by not having paper in hand, some members simply will disregard meeting and registration announcements. George Hamilton raised a third concern about those members who routinely delete e-mail attachments without opening them because of the possibility of embedded viruses. Jan inquired if there was a way to get the best of both. One suggestion was to have a single mailing using a single piece of paper that instructs branch member to fill out and return the hard copy if they want to continue to receive paper mailings; otherwise they will only be sent electronic mailings. Someone suggested we send out a postcard to conduct this exercise.

What about non-ESA members?

Could we utilize html documents in the EB-ESA website?

Could we include text directly in an e-mail sent out on our listserve?

Bill Gimple needs to include Susan Whitney and George Hamilton as primary users of EB-ESA listserve.

8. Committee Reports:

a. Program: John Stoffolano

John Stoffolano noted that we ended up accommodating the presentations of ten individuals who submitted materials after the deadline. Should we continue to accommodate late comers? Tom Kuhar spoke to the issue of not being able to tell people what was on the final program, and said we need to do a better job of getting the program out earlier next year. Susan Whitney felt that having something up on the web is better than nothing, but Jan Nyrop said the problem with that is the program still needs to be organized ahead of time to the extent that every presentation needs to be assigned its particular date and time.

b. Auditing: Jim Lashomb - not present

c. Awards: Dick Casagrande - not present

d. Graduate student: Ellen Klinger

Jan Nyrop singled out Ellen Klinger for all her efforts in putting together the student symposium and scheduling student volunteers. Ellen said she increased University student representatives from 7 to 11, and she coordinated the 2002 Asa Fitch and Comstock award winners.

e. IDEP: Mark Rothschild - not present

f. Site selection: George Hamilton

The Harrisburg 2003 meeting will take place 16-18 March with room rates set at \$92 per night. George mentioned that the Binghamton, NY site was good, but possibly too central for the majority of the EB-ESA membership. Jan Nyrop disagreed, and went on to say that he felt being too central was not a problem, and he proposed that the branch select a central "corridor" of meeting sites for future meetings. George went on to discuss potential sites for the 2004 meeting. Mystic, CT was ruled out because it was unable to accommodate a group as large as ours. Subsequent discussion ensued around a possible meeting site at the Marriott Hotel in Trubee, CT, and the OMNI Hotel in New Haven, CT. After brief discussion about the proximity of the OMNI Hotel to Yale and the Peabody Museum, the OMNI Hotel was approved by unanimous vote for the 2004 meeting.

g. Nominations: Peter Shearer - not present

Jan Nyrop said he asked Peter if we could announce the winners of this year's elections at the 2002 meeting. Unfortunately, the nominations committee had not received the ballots from the National office.

h. Registration and hospitality: Tom Kuhar

Tom reported that the latest number of meeting registrants was 150 of which about 60 were students. This compares to 33 students who attended last year's meeting. Ellen Klinger said many students felt the registration packet was unclear about their need to pre-register. Jan Nyrop said it must be made clear that students need to pre-register for future meetings. Tom Kuhar asked about the possibility of using the 2002 student registration numbers to determine which Universities have student representatives and which do not. This would be done for the purpose of targeting Universities which currently lack student representatives to send more students. The Executive Committee felt it might be useful to look at these results for future meetings.

i. Screening for EB-ESA awards: Frank Drummond - not present

Jan Nyrop asked to make three comments: First, EB-ESA is not receiving the nominations that it should be for these awards, and he encouraged us to

make sure eligible people are nominated from our departments. Second, there are no pictures of awardees for the 2002 meeting because several of the provided pictures were not of suitable quality. This should be addressed in time for the 2003 meeting. Third, Frank Drummond has asked that he be relieved of his responsibility as chair of the awards committee. George Hamilton suggested Sridhar as someone who might be interested in taking over the awards committee.

j. Linnaean games: Glenn Holbrook - not present

George Hamilton proposed not providing travel money to winning team until after the students return from the National meeting and submit receipts to Treasurer. The Executive Committee strongly supported this proposal.

k. Corporate support: Jim Steffel

About \$3,000 of the \$6,000 pledged by 18 sponsors for the 2002 meeting has been received. Paul Bystrack has agreed to help Jim with his effort toward increasing Corporate sponsorship.

Susan Whitney inquired about the possibility of a conflict if EB-ESA and APS ended up sharing some of the same sponsors. If this is the case, will the sponsors end-up paying twice? Subsequent discussion felt this would not be the case; and concluded we might end up with better overall sponsorship and support as a result of the combined meeting.

l. 5k run: Richard Hoebeke - not present

9. New Business

Susan Whitney inquired if EB-ESA makes it known that winners of student poster/presentation sessions receive a cash award. Subsequent discussion indicated this was not the case. A suggestion was made to add text to 2003 registration materials indicating that cash awards are provided to student winners.