

THE SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF NATURALISTS  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND OFFICERS  
AT THE 59<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING,  
UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DEL ESTADO DE MÉXICO (UAEMEX)  
VALLE DE BRAVO, ESTADO DE MÉXICO  
ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL DE UNIVERSIDADES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR,  
THURSDAY, 19 APRIL 2012

Present: Loren Ammerman, Ricardo Ayala, Armando J. Contreras-Balderas, Michael Dixon, Robert Dowler, Adam Ferguson, Stanley Fox, Hayley Gillespie, Bruce Hoagland, John Hunt, Michael Kennedy, Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero, Celia López-González, María de Lourdes Lozano Vilano, María de Lourdes Romero Almaraz, Karen McBee, Nicté Ordóñez-Garza, Susana Perea-Fox, Cornelio Sánchez-Hernández, Gary Schnell, and Matt Watson.

President Robert Dowler called the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Association of Naturalists (SWAN) to order at 1341 h with a quorum of Officers and Governors present. The Board of Governors (BOG) approved the minutes of the meeting of the BOG and Officers and the minutes of the Business Meeting for the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting at the University of Texas at Tyler, Tyler, Texas (published in *The Southwestern Naturalist* volume 56(3), and available on the SWAN webpage at (<http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/swan/>).

Michael Dixon, presenting on behalf of Treasurer Phil Sudman, reported on income and expenses for the Association during 2011, trends with respect to membership and dues, and a summary of financial contributions.

Dixon reported income in 2011 of \$117,753 (including \$33,864 from dues, \$14,163 from contributions and proceeds from the annual meeting, \$25,405 from meeting registration, \$14,080 from page charges, \$0 from sales of back issues, \$30,241 in royalties, and \$0 from earned interest). Dixon noted that proceeds from the 57<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in 2010 at the Llano River Field Station were not deposited until 2011, making proceeds appear higher than normal (i.e., it represents 2 years of proceeds from meetings).

The Treasurer's report detailed expenses totaling \$95,551, including \$497 for Treasurer's expenses (office help \$0, postage \$497, printing \$0, office supplies \$0); editorial expenses (office help \$4,000, Editor and indexing \$5,100, shipping and mailing \$170, Spanish translation \$500); Historian expenses \$0; Allen Press volume 55(4)-volume 56(3) \$46,855 (printing *The Southwestern Naturalist* \$45,721, PDF files \$1,134); Wilks Award \$1,000; Hubbs Student Poster Award \$600; McCarley Awards \$5,000; Student Travel Awards \$7,325; 2011 meeting expenses \$19,980; Student Advisory Committee \$378; AIBS dues \$200; BioGraphics (award plaques and certificates) \$386; CPA charges (preparation of tax return) \$600; merchant card (credit card) fees \$2,938 and bank fees of \$22. The bulk of non-journal related expenses continue to be merchant card fees, indicating that SWAN members continue to be taking advantage of using online credit card payments for membership, meeting registration and page charges.

The checkbook balance at the beginning of 2011 was \$42,153; income exceeded expenses by \$22,202, which is higher than typical years because this includes proceeds from both 2010 and 2011 meetings. A total of \$29,164 was transferred to the Trustees for

investment (endowment \$811, Student Research Fund \$1,050, Student Awards \$570, Life Memberships \$3,350, 2010 meeting proceeds \$9,733, and 2011 meeting proceeds \$13,650. The checkbook balance at the end of 2011 was \$35,191.

Dixon presented the 2012 income-to-date (1 January 2012-9 April 2012), which included \$16,919 in dues, \$841 in contributions, \$5,997 in page charges, and \$25,011 in royalties---which was well ahead of total royalties as of this time in 2011---and \$0 in interest. Total income to date was \$48,764.

Dixon presented the most recent 10 years of data on membership. Although the number of institutional memberships continues to decrease, we have seen increases in royalty revenues due to increased institutional access to online journal-subscription services. The Association received 81 new applications for membership in 2011. Although there were 52 new student members in 2011 (16 of which were free student memberships awarded by the Membership Committee), the BOG expressed concern about the drop in student memberships from 155 in 2010 to 85 in 2011.

Michael Dixon presented the names and amounts associated with a total of 27 contributions to SWAN for 2011 totaling \$922. Michael Kennedy recommended that we simply list the amounts of contributions made by the membership and not the names of contributors during the Business Meeting.

The BOG congratulated those members who completed their life membership payments and expressed appreciation to Phil Sudman for his duties as Treasurer and to Michael Dixon for agreeing to succeed Sudman in this position.

The Trustees report was given by Loren Ammerman (Chair--Jake Schaefer; Members--Robert Dowler and Loren Ammerman). There were three transactions made by the Trustees in 2011: two transfers from the Treasurer of the 2010 and 2011 meeting proceeds totaling \$28,629.08 (minus \$843.89 paid in transaction fees) and one transfer from the money market account of \$13,000 (minus \$258.96 in transaction fees). Ammerman reported that the American Mutual and Washington Mutual funds are doing well, and that chair Jake Schaefer and Rene Cordell (a registered representative of Securities America, Inc., who performs investment transactions) agreed to be more conservative with investments. While we are still not back to 2007 levels, the total market value of the Association's investments on 31 December 2010 was \$582,691.28 and on 31 December 2011 was \$594,517.60, an increase in value of \$11,826.28, or 2.03%.

The BOG expressed concern that the Student Naturalist Fund did not show up this year as a fund that could be contributed to on the annual dues form or meeting registration form, and suggested that this should be remedied for the 2013 dues process. Gary Schnell suggested that we explore options for financial management that might incur lower fees.

The BOG expressed thanks to Trustee Jake Schaefer who has been the driving force in management of the Association's funds since the passing of Jerry Choate. Ammerman reported that since Fi Choate's retirement, the same financial management company is still working with the Trustees and that Fi recommended Rene Cordell at Securities America, Inc. to perform investment transactions. The BOG discussed options to officially recognize Fi Choate's many contributions to the financial management of SWAN. Karen McBee moved that we recognize Fi Choate's 25+ years of service through the management of the Association's funds by awarding her a Presidential Award to be

presented at the 2013 annual meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the BOG.

At the annual meeting of SWAN in 2007, the BOG approved a budget that called for funds to be transferred from the Trustees to the Treasurer to meet expected expenses of the Association. That transfer had not been needed and there was no transfer made in 2011. The Trustees remain committed to cautious management of SWAN assets. All dividends will continue to be reinvested unless the Trustees are directed to do otherwise by the Officers and Governors.

Beginning the committee reports, Robert Dowler reported for the Conservation Committee (Florence Oxley–Chair; Members–Jack Clinton Eitnier, Jennifer Frey, Fausto R. Mendez de la Cruz, James Ott, and Kendra Phelps). The committee nominated the following article for the George Miksch Sutton Award in Conservation Research: J. N. Fries and J. R. Gibson. 2010. Critical thermal maxima of captive-bred Devils River minnows (*Dionda diaboli*). *The Southwestern Naturalist* 55(4):544-550. The nomination was seconded and unanimously approved by the BOG. Following a 2011 decision by the BOG to present the Sutton Award the next year to allow the recipients time to make arrangements to attend the meeting, this award will be made at the 2013 meeting of SWAN.

Loren Ammerman reported for the Student Awards Committee (Chair–Loren Ammerman; Members–Michael Dixon, Michelle Haynie, Bruce Hoagland, Nicté Ordóñez-Garza, Monte Thies, and Julie Waits). The committee received 13 proposals for the Howard McCarley Student Research Award (down from 26 in 2011), and this will be the first year that seven awards are made (to be announced at the annual banquet). McCarley applicants were affiliated with seven different institutions. Thirty-four posters were submitted for the Clark Hubbs Student Poster Award. The winner will be announced at the annual banquet. Stanley Fox and Loren Ammerman recommended sending early reminders on both the main SWAN and SWAN-students listservs announcing the McCarley Award to encourage a greater number of submissions; Karen McBee recommended publishing the amount of awards and number of applicants when we make this announcement. The Student Awards Committee will take these recommendations into consideration for the 2013 calls for applications.

John Hunt reported for the Public Relations and Publicity Committee (Chair–John Hunt; Members–Stan Gehrt, Meredith Hamilton, Renn Tumilson, and Caryn Vaughn). During 2010, the committee composed news releases about selected articles published in *The Southwestern Naturalist* and for each of the SWAN award winners for 2010. No news release on articles was made in 2011, but the committee plans to continue this activity in 2012. Press releases were made for award winners. President Dowler recommended adding a Spanish speaking member to the committee to help when an awardee's institution has a Spanish-only website, and Celia López-González volunteered to help with translations, but is not officially added to the committee.

President Dowler reported for the Membership Committee (Chair–Gregory M. Wilson; Members--Amanda L. Husak, Julio Lemos-Espinal, Joseph D. Maness, Dwight W. Moore, and Christopher M. Taylor). As approved by the BOG at the 2004 annual meeting, free student memberships are made available to individuals who previously had not been a member of SWAN. In 2011, 16 free student memberships (3 from Mexico and

13 from the United States) were awarded. No additional action was taken by the committee during the past year.

The BOG discussed ways in which SWAN can increase and sustain membership, particularly among students. President Dowler suggests that part of the membership decline is that people can access *The Southwestern Naturalist* through their institution's online databases and thus have less incentive to join. Several BOG members noted that declining membership is trending across other societies as well. The BOG suggested the creation of a "Why become a SWAN member?" document highlighting the benefits of membership. Other suggestions included creating additional incentives to join, such as offering discounted registration fees for members at the annual meeting. Bruce Hoagland suggested that more professional-development opportunities and workshops (perhaps offered to members only) may attract more participants to annual meetings. Loren Ammerman and President Dowler suggested charging the Membership Committee with formalizing these ideas; President Dowler will communicate these ideas to the committee and will report back to the BOG.

President Dowler reported for the Development Committee (Co-Chairs--Jake Schaefer and David Heins; Members--Robert Dowler, Phil Sudman, and Caryn Vaughn). The Development Committee met in 2011 to discuss progress and future plans for implementing four initiatives. The first is a push for lifetime memberships, including electronic-only lifetime memberships at a reduced cost. The committee recommends a study to determine the per-member cost of producing the paper version of the journal to determine future dues (regular and lifetime) with options for electronic-only access to the journal. The committee also suggests including specific donation amounts on dues notices and recommends streamlining the dues payments system to facilitate processing of payments. The use of PayPal for this purpose was approved by the BOG last year, but has not been implemented yet. This option will be re-examined with the shift to a new Treasurer this year. President Dowler also reported that the Development Committee will host its first silent and live auction at the next annual meeting to raise funds.

President Dowler presented the report for the Program Committee (Chair--Beth Leuck; Members--Ricardo Ayala-Barajas, William Lutterschmidt, William Matthews, O. W. Van Auken, María de Lourdes Lozano-Vilano, and Neil Ford). The committee reports that McNeese State University has offered to host the 2013 annual meeting in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and that the local committee chair is Matt Watson. President Dowler explained that while we are supposed to identify locations of meetings 2 years in advance, it has been difficult to do so this far in advance. The Program Committee continues to look for locations outside of Texas and Oklahoma and appeals to the Board of Governors and the general membership for help in identifying future host institutions. The program manual recently was revised to better reflect changes in technology that have affected how meetings are organized.

At 1518 h the BOG meeting was recessed for a short break and was reconvened at 1541 h by President Dowler.

Reporting on her activities as Historian, Karen McBee stated that materials from last year's meetings and journals were collected for submission to the archives, but that a trip was not made yet this year. McBee reported that there is an active correspondence record among the officers and Board of Governors until about 1990, presumably reflecting a shift to electronic communications. Because there is no record of e-mail correspondence,

McBee recommended that the President gather relevant correspondence for his or her time in office for inclusion in the archives.

María de Lourdes Romero Almaraz and Susana Perea-Fox presented the report of the International Relations Committee (Co-Chairs, María de Lourdes Romero Almaraz and Susana Perea-Fox; Members—Stanley Fox, Robert Edwards, Michael Kennedy, Ricardo Ayala, Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero, Cornelio Sánchez Hernández, Nikki Smith, and Nicté Ordóñez-Garza). Susana Perea-Fox expressed the committee's sorrow at the sudden passing of former committee member Bruce Stewart and that the committee appreciates the decision of the Board of Governors to rename the Student Travel Award as the Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award. She reported that after extensive discussion of what to do about differential meeting costs for Latin American students, no action was taken because some members believed that all students should have equal treatment in SWAN. The committee discussed the possibility of having some Latin American students do translations of abstracts for the meeting. However, the committee agreed that meeting abstracts are not published and do not need to be perfect as SWAN is a bilingual but relaxed association. The committee suggests having English and Spanish speaking moderators or bilingual moderators for sessions in future meetings, and that there should be a check-box on the registration forms to encourage such volunteers. The committee thanked Gloria Tapia-Ramirez for her 4 years of service and welcomes new member Nicté Ordóñez-Garza.

Stanley Fox presented the Web-Site Committee report (Chair—Dan Hough; Members—Mark Eberle, Stanley Fox, Jacob Schaefer, and Caryn Vaughn). Accomplishments this year were maintaining the meeting website for the 2012 meeting including online submissions of abstracts and meeting registration, updating the membership directory, updating the Student Advisory Committee pages, and updating the listserv. All 153 abstracts and 241 online registrations were processed successfully for the 2012 meeting. The SWAN web page received 121,211 hits from 11,264 visitors during the year. There are currently 1,204 members on the listserv and 230 members on the student listserv. There was brief discussion of whether SWAN should maintain a Facebook page, and which committee should be responsible for maintaining it, which was continued in the Student Advisory Committee report. The BOG applauded Committee Chair Dan Hough for his continued efforts on the SWAN website.

Adam Ferguson and Nicté Ordóñez-Garza presented the report for the Student Advisory Committee (Co-Chairs—Adam Ferguson and Nicté Ordóñez-Garza; Members—Sara T. Martinez-Chapital, Enrique Santoyo-Brito, and Matthew Troia). Ferguson reported that student membership in SWAN is at its lowest in 10 years with 85 dues-paying members this year (a 50% drop since last year). A total of 158 students registered for the meeting this year. The committee requested the help of the membership to recruit and retain new student members in the Association. The committee discussed discontinuing the job board and decided it would be more effective to maintain a list of good job-searching websites rather than trying to replicate the efforts of other job boards. The discussion of maintaining a SWAN Facebook page was continued, and the Student Advisory Committee recommended merging a new SWAN Facebook page with an old Facebook group so that there is one focal Facebook page for all of SWAN. Ferguson announced a new initiative of the Student Advisory Committee, "Lunch with a Scientist," in which student members can sign up to have an informal lunch with a member of the

Association. The topic of the Student Workshop this year is “Graduate Students in an International Setting: How to Successfully Apply to International Programs and Maintain Productive International Collaborations.” In 2010, the BOG discussed the possibility of (but did not allocate funding for) an abstract translation service for articles submitted to *The Southwestern Naturalist* in which bilingual students could translate abstracts for individual authors for a fee. President Dowler noted that there is a great need for such a service, but that implementation has been difficult. Stanley Fox indicated that such services are very time consuming and that the students should be paid for their translation services. Various BOG members put forth questions including whether there would be any legal implications to SWAN, whether this responsibility should rest solely on students, whether SWAN would be vouching for the quality of the services or simply be acting as a way to connect authors with translators. Stanley Fox moved that the Student Advisory Committee come up with a plan for structuring and implementing an abstract translation service. The motion was approved unanimously by the BOG, and the Student Advisory Committee will report their recommendations to President Dowler for further action by the BOG.

Celia López-González reported for the Wilks Award Committee (Chair–Celia López-González; Members–John Hunt, Ricardo Lopez-Wilchis, and Karen McBee). There were 14 applications from nine institutions (four in the USA and five in Mexico). One finalist was not able to attend the meeting, mainly due to lack of funds for travel, reducing the final number of competitors to three. President Dowler stated that the Association should consider helping the Wilks Award finalists attend the meeting. The BOG briefly discussed whether SWAN should help defray some of the costs of travel or give the finalists an honorarium for travel. Gary Schnell moved that all Wilks finalists be awarded a \$250 honorarium for travel. The BOG unanimously approved this motion and a \$250 honorarium will be awarded to the Wilks finalists beginning at the 2013 meeting, with the funds awarded at the annual banquet.

President Dowler reported for the *ad hoc* Committee on Disposition of Back Issues (Co-Chairs–Robert Dowler and Wesley Brashear; Members–Celia Lopez-Gonzalez and Edith Marsh-Matthews). This is the first year that no back issues have been requested, but two complete sets of *The Southwestern Naturalist* were given as prizes to the Wilks Award and Clark Hubbs Student Poster Award winners in 2011. The current price for back issues is \$1/issue for volumes 1-39. For volumes 40-44, the price is \$32/volume. For volumes 45-present the price is \$36/volume.

President Robert Dowler reported for the *ad hoc* Long Range Planning Committee, which has been inactive. He indicated that the committee will be reformulated and charged with retention and promotion of membership and issues pertaining to the journal.

Michael Kennedy gave the report of the Budget Oversight Committee (Chair--Phyllis Kennedy; Members–William Baltosser, Brian Chapman, Robert Edwards, and Beth Leuck). The committee examined the 2012 Treasurer’s report, a listing of debit transactions made by the Treasurer during 2011, invoices from Allen Press paid in 2011 and the annual 2012 report from the Board of Trustees. The committee determined expenditure and income information to be in good order, showing SWAN to be financially sound. The committee particularly commends the Board of Trustees for doing an outstanding job of handling SWAN’s assets.

Michael Kennedy also gave the Managing Editor's report for *The Southwestern Naturalist*. He began by thanking guest editors and individual reviewers for their help with processing manuscripts. Mara Alexander (plants), Neil Ford (herps), Kimberlie McCue (plants), Mark Pyron (fishes), and Lance Williams (fishes) were approved by the Board of Governors as new Associate Editors in February 2011. Kennedy indicated that additional Associate Editors are needed for birds and additional reviewers are needed in all areas. There were 117 manuscripts submitted in 2011 with a rejection rate of 47%. Troy Best and Michael Kennedy are stepping down as journal editors this year, and Kennedy announced that the journal is looking for a new Managing Editor and new Editor among the Associate Editors. The BOG applauded Kennedy and Best for their many years of service to *The Southwestern Naturalist*.

Stanley Fox gave the report for the Honors Committee (Chair—Mark Eberle; Members—Alice Echelle, Gary Schnell, and Paula Williamson). The Honors Committee approved the nominations of two award recipients for 2012, one for the W. Frank Blair Eminent Naturalist Award and one for the Donald W. Tinkle Research Excellence Award. Michael Kennedy moved that the BOG approve these nominations and the motion was seconded and approved by voice vote.

Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero gave a brief report as Local Representative. There were 241 online registrations processed for the meeting.

Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero also reported for the sub-committee on student travel. There were 20 applications for student travel awards for the 2012 meeting and 14 awards were granted. The sub-committee requested that more promotion be made before the deadline to encourage more applications. There was particular concern that the announcements are not reaching universities that are within the Southwest but do not have a current SWAN membership or presence on-campus. There was a brief discussion of why the deadline was so early (30 November 2011); it was made earlier to allow time for visa-processing issues for Latin American students traveling to the USA. The sub-committee will discuss whether the deadline should remain this early due to improvements in visa-processing times.

There were three items of Old Business. President Dowler explained that during the year the BOG passed a resolution to rename the International Travel Award in honor of Bruce Stewart, which will now be known as the Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award. As the possibility of an abstract translation service was discussed earlier in the meeting, President Dowler moved on to discussion of formation of an *ad hoc* committee to research the cost ramifications of offering an online-only membership option for the Association. President Dowler indicated that the BOG passed a motion in 2010 to do so, and that this *ad hoc* committee would be charged with implementation of the motion. President Dowler then took up New Business.

The BOG reappointed officers Hayley Gillespie, Secretary; Michael Kennedy, Managing Editor; and Beth Leuck, Program Director. Although officers Kennedy and Leuck have requested to step down this year, they agree to serve in their positions until replacements can be found. Phil Sudman, Treasurer, is stepping down. Gary Schnell moved that Michael Dixon be appointed as Treasurer with the transition to be made this summer. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote. The BOG reappointed Trustee Robert Dowler for an additional 2-year term as last year the BOG accidentally appointed Dowler for a 1-year term (Trustees are appointed for 3-year terms).

President Dowler announced vacancies of the Program Director, Managing Editor, and Editor positions. Matt Watson briefly presented information about the 2013 meeting at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to be held 4-7 April 2013. The BOG voted to accept an invitation from Oklahoma State University as the meeting site for 2014 with Karen McBee as Local Representative. President Dowler reiterated the need for the Long Range Planning Committee and Program Committee to work on identifying meeting sites outside of Oklahoma and Texas for upcoming meetings hosted in the USA.

Michael Dixon reported the proposed budget for 2013 for Treasurer Phil Sudman. During the proposed budget discussion, the BOG agreed to increase the number of McCarley Awards to eight, made the addition of the four \$250 honoraria for the Wilks Award finalists, and added second place (\$400) and third place (\$300) awards for the Clark Hubbs Student Poster Award for 2013. The BOG approved the balanced budget of \$98,200.

During other New Business Loren Ammerman and Michael Dixon moved that the Association award the newly approved second and third place Clark Hubbs Student Poster Awards at the annual meeting in 2012, funded by the President's contingency fund to make these additional awards in 2012. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by the BOG by voice vote.

The BOG applauded President Dowler for a job well done and the 2012 SWAN BOG meeting adjourned at 1810 h.

Respectfully submitted  
J. Hayley Gillespie  
Secretary