

THE SOUTHWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF NATURALISTS  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND OFFICERS AT  
THE 61<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL MEETING,  
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA, USA  
Thursday, 17 April 2014

Present: Loren Ammerman, Troy Best, William Caire, Brian Chapman, Raelynn Deaton Haynes, Michael Dixon, Robert Dowler, Mark Eberle, Adam Ferguson, Stanley Fox, Michelle Haynie, John Hunt, Mandy Husak, Michael Husak, Dan Hough, Michael Kennedy, Phyllis Kennedy, Beth Leuck, Day Ligon, Celia López-González, Sara B. González-Pérez, Bill Matthews, Edie Marsh-Matthews, David McNeely, Austin Osmanski, Susana Perea-Fox, Florence Oxley, María de Lourdes Romero-Almaraz, Cornelio Sánchez-Hernández, Jake Schaefer, Gary Schnell, Ingo Schlupp, Phil Sudman, Julianne Waits, Paula Williamson, Earl Zimmerman.

President Celia López-González called the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Association of Naturalists (SWAN) to order at 1330 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 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting at McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana (published in *The Southwestern Naturalist* volume 58(4), and available on the SWAN webpage at <http://www.biosurvey.ou.edu/swan/>).

Treasurer Michael Dixon reported on income and expenses for the Association during 2013, trends with respect to membership and dues, and a summary of financial contributions. He reported that budget changes for the year have been the most significant for the past decade.

Dixon reported an increase in the projected budget for 2015, up from \$93,000 to around \$129,000. Dixon stated that income is down and donation totals have decreased. He suggested that a drop in student registrations and memberships, the delay in the journal, and the lack of paper reminders this year could be contributing factors to the decrease in income. Discussion ensued regarding the necessity of paper reminders and potential benefits of SWAN Facebook page reminders. The BOG discussed ways to ensure that all members, new and old, get adequate reminders of dues and membership renewals. Dixon provided a breakdown of general membership and stated that the auction is a good generator of funds. He stated that \$9,021 will be given for investment and that royalties from JSTOR are over \$40,000. Fox asked whether page charges come primarily from individuals or grants. Matthews discussed retaining members, particularly students moving into careers. Schaefer asked again about royalties, and reminded the BOG that royalties from JSTOR and BioOne have gone up substantially from past years. López-González reiterated the purpose of SWAN, reminded the Board that no membership means no society, and called for attention to this matter.

The Trustees report was given by Jake Schaefer (Chair--Jake Schaefer; Members--Robert Dowler, Loren Ammerman). Schaefer reported on investment assets for the association, outlining five named funds (Endowment Fund, Life/Patron Member Fund, Wilks/Student Awards Fund, Howard McCarley Student Research Fund, and the Student Naturalist Fund). To maximize growth and reduce risk, the Trustees have diversified SWAN's portfolio via long-term investments in high quality mutual funds. Most of our assets remain invested in a conservative growth-and-income fund, a slightly more aggressive growth-and-income stock fund, a global growth-and-income fund, and a money market fund. He reported that no transactions were made

in 2013. The Association's market value has increased from \$687,790.15 (in 2012) to \$876,245.61 (in 2013), a 27.4 % increase.

Schaefer recommends SWAN invest into more conservative investments. He states that this year's return was only 1%, compared to 27% last year. Fox asked about recovery from the big dip about 10 years ago. Schaefer stated that the peak value before the big drop was about \$700,000, which has now been surpassed and is around \$900,000. The BOG discussed investment into other sources, such as green energy, etc. (proposed by Waits). Matthews asked if the Board is tracking management fees, and Schaefer replied that these fees are very low.

The Conservation Committee report was given by Flo Oxley (Chair--Flo Oxley; Members--Jack Eitniewski, Jennifer Frey, Fausto Mendez de la Cruz, Kendra Phelps). Oxley reported that there was no recipient of the 2013 George Miksch Sutton Award in Conservation Research. She then announced that the committee is trying to reinvigorate the group, and feels that we should be doing more as a society. Oxley reported that Gillespie has agreed to co-chair this committee. The committee requests a budget from the BOG. A discussion ensued, which centered on a need to reach out to our own members and the public. Oxley proposed integrating "green" ideas into the meeting and the possibility of hosting a mini art show with Gillespie. Marsh-Matthews mentioned that we had no nominations for the Sutton award this year, and that we need to remind the membership about this important award. Matthews stressed the importance of the George Miksch Sutton Award in Conservation Research and suggested that there must be one or more papers deserving of the award published each year in *The Southwestern Naturalist*. He emphasized that this award should be given every year. The BOG voted to assign a budget of \$500 to the Conservation Committee.

The BOG decided to send out blast emails/list serve reminders. Fox re-visited the discussion by reminding the Board that an important charge of SWAN is to raise awareness to conservation issues and that the Society needs to get involved like it used to do. Ideas were mentioned. López-González suggested a public lecture about SWAN. Waits proposed advertising to the local community about SWAN and having speakers for the public in conjunction with the meeting. She believes this is a good way to expose SWAN to the public and get more people interested. Marsh-Matthews suggested reaching out to local groups such as the Audubon Society, cactus groups, rattlesnake groups, other naturalist groups, etc. Eberle suggested that the local committee will be a key player in this, and that some places will work better than others.

The Student Awards Committee report was given by Raelynn Deaton Haynes (Chair--Raelynn Deaton Haynes; Members--Michelle Haynie, Julie Waits, Adam Ferguson, Monte Thies, Christopher Higgins). Deaton Haynes reported that this year there were 31 complete grant proposals for McCarley Awards, and 8 grants of \$1,000 each will be awarded. The committee recommended two undergraduate, four MS, and four PhD grant awards, and were in the process of verifying that each student has current membership in the society. Fox asked questions regarding award quotas, and questioned whether awards should be divided by degree (Bachelors, MS, and PhD), with a set number of awards in each category. Deaton Haynes explained that this was on the agenda for the Student Awards Committee to discuss the next day. Fox also suggested that the number of posters being considered for the Hubbs award may need to be streamlined, as the large number becomes onerous for the judges. Schlupp disagreed and thinks this would be counterproductive and all students should be able to enter the competition. Deaton Hynes raised the issue of finding enough volunteer judges. Schlupp asked about graduate students judging in the competition. Deaton Haynes said she would add this to her meeting agenda to discuss with the Student Awards Committee.

The Public Relations and Publicity Committee report was given by John Hunt (Chair--John Hunt; Members--Stan Ghert, Meredith Hamilton, Renn Tumlison). Hunt reported that a press release was written for each of the SWAN award winners for 2013 (Blair and Wilks Awards) and that each release was sent to the major public newspaper, university newspaper, and university public relations department of each of the respective award winners. He mentioned that no one had sent him any information for publicity from last year, and that it was difficult to track down student award recipients. Thus, he made a plea to the Student Awards Committee to forward information about student award recipients so he can better publicize. McNeely suggested that when Hunt sends letters to congressmen, to provide to them with a list of SWAN members in their district. Hunt also reported that a request was made to the President to reduce the number of committee members on the Public Relations and Publicity Committee until there is a need for additional members.

The Membership Committee report was given by Michelle Haynie (Chair--Michelle Haynie; Members--Nicté Ordóñez-Garza, Mandy Husak, Greg Wilson). Haynie reported that SWAN gave 13 free student memberships this past year, two of which were from Mexico and 11 from the U.S. Haynie also announced that the Membership Committee is getting together with the Student Advisory Committee and the Long Term Planning Committee to discuss planning strategies. She also explained that the committee is trying for the first time to have membership sign-ups available at the meeting. She also called for new members for her committee. A discussion ensued about the free society memberships. Haynie explained that there were 30 free memberships available, 11 of which were used last year, and 4 of which became paid members this year. She considers this a good return.

The Development Committee report was given by Jake Schaefer (Co-chairs--Jake Schaefer and David Heins; Members--Robert Dowler, Phil Sudman, Caryn Vaughn). Schaefer reported that the Development Committee did not meet in 2013, but they continue to advocate the following initiatives: pushing for lifetime memberships; including specific donation amounts on dues notices and streamlining of the dues payments system; aiding in recruitment and retention of members; and continuing to use silent auctions or raffles at annual meetings to raise funds. He announced that a silent auction was held in 2013, and one is planned for 2014. Matthews mentioned that we should push for larger donations.

The Program Committee report was given by Beth Leuck (Chair--Beth Leuck; Members--Ricardo Ayala Barajas, Neil Ford, María de Lourdes Lozano-Vilano, William L. Lutterschmidt, William J. Matthews, Jesús Rodríguez-Romero, O. W. Van Auken). Leuck reported that the 2015 meeting venue is set for San Diego, California. Todd Reeder and Marshal Hedin will serve as Local Representatives. Leuck also announced that, while several institutions have been suggested, a host institution in Mexico is still needed for the 2016 meeting. Leuck also called for those willing to host a meeting to let her know, or give suggestions on who may be willing. Leuck also reported that the Meeting Procedures Manual underwent no revisions this year, but comments and/or suggestions are welcome. Leuck reported that only four of the eight-member Program Committee appeared to be current SWAN members, and called for an update of the committee membership. Finally, Leuck reported that she will resign as Program Director at the end of 2014 and a new Chair will need to be identified for 2015.

A discussion ensued regarding a possible meeting location in Mexico. López-González suggested holding the 2016 meeting in Oaxaca. The BOG asked López-González to pursue this opportunity. Mexico City was also discussed as an option. Sanchez-Hernández then agreed to host the meeting in Mexico City. Sanchez-Hernández said he will ask for the support of his

institution and felt positive he will get it. M. Kennedy moved that the 2016 meeting take place in Mexico City. Schnell seconded. The BOG approved to hold the 2016 meetings at UNAM, Mexico City.

Following the break, Past-President Dowler introduced representatives from Allen Press to present to the BOG a proposal for the Southwestern Naturalist to move to an online submission system. Allen Press representatives demonstrated an example website and presented set-up costs and associated fees for moving to an online submission system. Cost breakdown was as follows: \$30 per paper that goes into the system (\$3,210 for an average year based on 107 manuscripts per year); managing editing \$23 per manuscript page for a total of \$2,760 per issue; copy editing, \$6.50 per page for a total of \$1,950 per issue, for a total of \$4,710 per 120 page issue x 4 issues per year; or a total cost of \$22,050 per year for SWAN (plus a \$1,500 set up fee, paid the first year only). Standard contract = 3 years. A discussion ensued about early online publishing and early release through BioOne. The BOG agreed to hold off on these additional features until a later date.

López-González then announced that we would revisit committee reports.

The Historian report was given by McBee. McBee announced that she had nothing new to report at this time.

The International Relations Committee report was given by María de Lourdes Romero-Almaraz (Co-chairs--María de Lourdes Romero-Almaraz, Susana Perea-Fox; Members--Stanley Fox, Robert Edwards, Michael Kennedy, Ricardo Ayala, Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero, Cornelio Sánchez-Hernández, Nicté Ordóñez-Garza and Sara González-Pérez). Romero-Almaraz reported that the committee met at 12 pm on 19 April 2013 at McNeese State University, where several items were discussed, including the Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award, and the possibility of rotating the position of Chair every two years to better re-allocate the workload of the two committees (International Relations and Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award). Romero-Almaraz volunteered to start this year, and the committee thanked Rodríguez-Romero for his support during the past years. The committee also reported that it set a submission deadline of 1 February each year for the Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award applications, with the option of extending the date to 5 February if necessary. The committee will remind all SWAN members of the deadlines several days before. The committee also agreed to give priority for this award to students who are SWAN members presenting a paper or poster, and to give this award to a student up to only two times.

The Bruce Stewart Student Travel Award Committee report was given by María de Lourdes Romero-Almaraz (Chair--María de Lourdes Romero-Almaraz; Members--Susana Perea-Fox, Felipe de Jesús Rodríguez-Romero, Stanley Fox). Romero-Almaraz reported that this year travel funds were limited to students from outside the U.S. She also reported that SWAN received 19 applications from 7 institutions in Mexico, 1 in Guatemala, and 2 in the U.S. The committee granted 11 awards ranging from \$350 to \$1,072 US\$, for a total of \$10,000.

The Web-Site Committee Report was given by Dan Hough (Chair--Dan Hough; Members--Stanley Fox, Jake Schaefer, Mark Eberle, Caryn Vaughn). Hough reported that hits on the SWAN website are up 50% from last year. He also reported that SWAN has 1,271 members currently on the list serve, 232 of which are current student members. SWAN also has a PayPal link for the silent auction on the website. Hough recommended to the BOG that Jeff Kelley replace Vaughn on the committee since Kelley is new director of the OU Biological Survey.

The Student Advisory Committee report was given by Adam Ferguson (Co-chairs--Adam Ferguson, Nicté Ordóñez-Garza; Members--Enrique Santoyo-Brito, Austin B. Osmanski, Rachel

Eguren, Adam Simpson, Emma K. Roberts, Lynne E. Beatty, Ali Ituriel Villanueva-Hernández, Jared White). Ferguson announced that there are 109 dues-paying students and that the SWAN Facebook page is now updated. Twenty-two students signed up for the Modeling Workshop. A CV writing workshop for undergraduates and MS students was provided this year. Ferguson and Ordoñez-Garza are stepping down from the committee; Ferguson called for someone to replace them as co-chairs. López-González called for a round of applause for their great job with this committee.

The Wilks Committee report was given by Phil Sudman (Chair--Phil Sudman; Members--Jesús Fernández, Michael Husak, Ray Willis). Sudman announced that there were 9 applications from 7 different institutions for the Wilks' competition. Papers dealt with a wide variety of topics, from general ecology, to climate change, to systematics. The applications featured invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Four applicants were chosen to compete as finalists at this year's SWAN meeting.

Robert Dowler gave the report for the ad hoc Committee on Disposition of Back Issues of *The Southwestern Naturalist* (Co-chairs--Wesley Brashear, Robert Dowler; Members--Austin Osmanski, Celia López-González, Edie Marsh-Matthews). Dowler announced that three complete sets of *The Southwestern Naturalist* were set aside as prizes for the Wilks Award and Clark Hubbs Student Poster Award winners in 2014. Complete sets of back issues for the 2012 recipients in Mexico were transferred to López-González at the McNeese State University meeting. The committee filled two requests for back issues during 2013. The advertisement in *The Southwestern Naturalist* continues to run in English and Spanish. Back issues are being housed in the Department of Biology at Angelo State University at no cost to the Southwestern Association of Naturalists.

Mandy Husak gave the report for the ad hoc Auction Committee (Chair--Mandy Husak; Members--Alex Lamle, Ann Maxwell, Jake Schaefer, Jessica Roy, Jared White). Husak announced that last year's silent auction came about as a result of both a 2011 Development Committee recommendation and a personal request from then President Dowler. Over 100 items were donated, the majority coming from SWAN members. The total amount raised was \$3,023, of which \$1,401 came from books, \$592 from art, and \$505 from field equipment. She also announced that SWAN has great items this year for the auction, mostly books. She encouraged everyone to participate. Finally, she noted that PayPal has been added as a payment option for this year's auction.

Robert Dowler gave the report for the ad hoc Long Range Planning Committee (Chair--Robert Dowler; Members--Mark Eberle, Stanley Fox, Sara González-Pérez, Michelle Haynie, Bruce Hoagland, Dan Hough, Michael Kennedy, Jake Schafer, Phil Sudman). Dowler reported that one goal of the Long Range Planning Committee is to figure out a way to keep the journal sustainable. He also reported that the committee is addressing the decline in membership and hoping to develop some plan to turn this around. Other topics on its agenda include modernizing the web interface of SWAN, addressing the need for stability in editors, getting the journal caught up, and finding new managing editors.

Stanley Fox gave the report for the *ad hoc* new Student Field Natural History Award Committee (Stanley Fox--Chair; Members--Loren Ammerman, David McNeely, Day Ligon). Fox reported that David and Bonnie McNeely have proposed a new award for SWAN, the Student Field Natural History Award, to be presented for the outstanding student paper with a substantial field component presented at the annual meeting. The McNeely's have pledged \$10,000 to start an endowment fund to finance the award pending BOG approval and a

matching contribution from SWAN in an amount equal to the total of all gifts contributed by members to initiate the award (including the \$10,000 gift from David and Bonnie), or at least \$10,000. The BOG voted in September 2013 to support the pledge of David and Bonnie McNeely of \$10,000 for a new Student Award, with a matching amount from SWAN.

The committee was charged with proposing a mechanism to implement the new award. They proposed that the Wilks Committee also judge this award, and expand the number of students competing for this award or the Wilks award from 4 to 5-6. The award will be presented annually and for the same amount (\$1,000) as the Wilks. An individual can win either the new award or the Wilks award only once in a lifetime. Fox proposed adding this award to next year's competition, and explained that the establishment of the award does not violate the constitution. Matthews moved to accept the proposal and BOG authorization to use matching funds from the SWAN endowment fund. The motion was seconded by M. Kennedy. Dixon asked if he needed to add \$250 extra into the budget to support travel of the finalists. The BOG agreed to add \$1,500 extra for this award to the new budget, which would cover the award plus two \$250 travel stipends for the possible two extra finalists. After in depth discussion, the BOG voted to pass the proposal as is, with votes of 15 yeas, 9 nays, and 1 abstention. The proposal passed as originally written by the committee, to be implemented in the next meeting, with the possibility of future adjustment, if necessary. A round of applause was given to the McNeely's. Schell stated that the new award should not bias the Wilks Award against field work. He asked that this point be put on record as the understanding of the Wilks Award committee.

The Budget Oversight Committee report was given by Phyllis Kennedy (Chair--Phyllis Kennedy; Members--William H. Baltosser, Brian R. Chapman, Robert J. Edwards, Beth E. Leuck). P. Kennedy reported that they are currently assessing budget reports.

The Managing Editor report was given by Michael Kennedy (Co-editors--Michael Kennedy, Phyllis Kennedy). M. Kennedy reported that although the journal is a little behind, it is still in good shape with respect to both finances and manuscripts. He recognized those who recently stepped down as Associate Editors, and thanked them for their effort. He reported that Janis Bush (Plants) and James Kennedy (Aquatic Invertebrates) stepped down as Associate Editors in 2013. Robert Edwards will step down as an Associate Editor in 2014. He thanked them for all their work and service to SWAN. He asked the BOG to show appreciation for reviewers with a round of applause. He reported the following new Associate Editors for 2014 (as approved by the BOG in 2013): Fredrick Govedich (Aquatic Invertebrates), Clay Green (Birds), Eddie Lyons (Birds), Jesse Meik (Herps), James Moore (Plants), and Charles Watson (Herps). M. Kennedy reported the breakdown in terms of number of papers submitted, rejected and accepted, with 110 submissions this year compared to 107 last year. Page charges are currently \$80 per page. Kennedy reported that the journal is doing well in JSTOR and BioOne, with revenue of over \$30,000. Kennedy announced that additional Associate Editors are needed for Birds (2), Mammals (1), Fish (1), and Plants (1). Reviewers are needed for all areas. M. Kennedy also reported an increase in the number of plant papers last year. Rejection rate was 24.8% last year, compared to 36.1 % this year. He also announced that the journal is well within budget and that the editors are spending about \$50,000 per year on the journal. This will increase an additional \$22,000 by starting on-line submission, with a rough budget of around \$80,000 per year for the journal. M. Kennedy reiterated the need to proceed with the Allen Press online submission system. López-González inquired about consideration of impact factor, and the BOG agreed that the direction we are taking will help with that.

The Honors Committee report was given by Robert Dowler (Chair--Robert Dowler; Members--Alice F. Echelle, Gary D. Schnell, Paula Williamson). Dowler reported that the committee received no nominations and took responsibility for not asking the membership at large for nominations. He announced that he will make only one award at the banquet, to Fox, who will receive his plaque for the Donald W. Tinkle Research Excellence Award, as Fox was unable to attend last year's meeting when it was to be awarded.

The report for the Local Committee was given by Stanley Fox (Chairs--Karen McBee, Susana Perea-Fox; Members--Stanley Fox, Tony Echelle, Alice Echelle). Fox reported an update on the meeting statistics. As of the BOG meeting, 270 people were registered, with hopes of breaking 300. Fox then presented the meeting agenda, explaining that there would be one large poster session in the Exhibit Hall from 1330–1515 h on Saturday, 19 April, with no talks during this time.

López-González then moved to new business. Fox opened a discussion on moving *The Southwestern Naturalist* to an online submission system with Allen Press (Peer Track). Fox moved proceed with Peer Track. M. Kennedy seconded. Schlupp suggested that the “online first” option be explored and added, if not too costly. After discussion of pros and cons, the vote was unanimous for the Allen Press peer track system and early online publication. Regarding *The Southwestern Naturalist* editors, Fox suggested that we solicit interest at the business meeting. The suggestion was then made that the BOG find an interim editor and continue searching. McBee agreed to be the editor in three more years, but an interim is needed to cover the period of time before that.

López-González announced the appointment of Deaton Haynes as secretary, replacing Gillespie. Sudman moved to accept Dowler's continuation on the board of trustees. The motion was seconded by Hunt. The board voted unanimously in favor of this motion.

Dixon then discussed the budget for 2015 and showed the outcome of necessary new adjustments. He explained that \$25,000 was added for the new online submission management system, another \$500 for travel expenses for up to six finalists of the student awards (Wilks and the new Student Field Natural History Award), and \$1,000 for the Naturalist Award itself. Dixon explained that it is realistic to expect about \$84,000 in income, based on dues, royalties, and page charges. However, this will not cover the full budget; thus, the BOG has agreed to use 5% or less out of the endowment if necessary. M. Kennedy suggested increasing the Index Editor budget from \$400 to \$600. The BOG thanked Best for doing this job for many years. Williamson suggested adding \$500 for the Conservation Committee. Dixon then moved to accept the adjusted budget. Dowler seconded. The BOG voted unanimously to approve the amended budget.

The 2014 SWAN BOG meeting adjourned at 1805 h.

Respectfully submitted,  
Raelyn Deaton Haynes, Secretary