

Biological Society of Washington Annual Meeting, 4 June 2013

President Stephen Gardiner called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM in the Vertebrate Zoology Seminar Room, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. Council members present: Carole Baldwin, Richard Banks, Stephen Cairns, Michael Carleton, Bruce Collette, Stephen Gardiner (President, Editor), Ron Heyer, Lynne Parenti, Martha Nizinski, Victor Springer, Kenneth Tighe (Treasurer), and Richard Vari. Allen Press Business Association Manager and Associate Publisher, Nick Dormer, also was in attendance.

Gardiner welcomed the attendees and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the 2012 Society meeting, which were published in volume 125(2): 208–210. The minutes were approved without discussion.

Reports for FY 2012

Audit Committee representative Mike Carleton reported that he and Robert Reynolds had conducted an audit of Society finances on 22 May 2013. They found no discrepancies. The Audit Committee report was approved.

Treasurer Kenneth Tighe then summarized the Treasurer's report for FY 2012. As is typical for the Society, most expenses were related to production of the *Proceedings*. Income was less in 2012 than in 2011, mainly due to a drop in dues/subscriptions, and the Society's General Fund has experienced a consistent loss over the past few years. An increase in the Endowment fund of \$11,355.57 offset the losses, and overall the Society did not experience a substantial net gain or loss. The Endowment Fund currently has a total balance of \$110,512.11. The Treasurer's report was approved.

Editor Gardiner provided the following report: "This was my seventh year as Editor of the Society's publications. The staff of Associate Editors remained the same as in 2011. As always, I extend my sincere appreciation to all who are serving as Associate Editors for the Society. Their devoted efforts to excellence in the review process are reflected in the quality of the manuscripts published in the *Proceedings*.

"No *Bulletins* were published in 2012. Issues 1, 2, and 3 of the *Proceedings* were published in 2012, issue 4 was published in 2013 and statistics are as follows: 1) issue 1 – 4 April 2012, 9 manuscripts for 96 pages, 2) issue 2 – 14 August 2012, 8 manuscripts for 112 pages, 3) issue 3 – 9 October 2012, 8 manuscripts for 94 pages, and 4) issue 4 – 22 January 2013, 1 manuscript for 306 pages. Total manuscripts submitted – 38, total manuscripts rejected – 1, total pages published – 608, and total pages subsidized by the Society – 32 (= ~11% when calculated using only issues 1 through 3; this represents a considerable reduction compared to 2011 [18%]).

"The number of manuscripts submitted in 2012 decreased slightly from 2011 and continues to remain substantially lower than historical numbers for the *Proceedings*. Twenty-six manuscripts were published in 2012. This number is lower than the number of manuscripts published in 2011 (33), [but issue 4] was a single manuscript. The breakdown by taxa for vol. 125 is as follows: 1) vertebrates – 9, 2) Crustacea – 5, 3) Annelida – 4, 4) Cnidaria – 3, 5) Tardigrada – 2. Manuscripts were also published for the Hemichordata and Mollusca. Similar to the circumstances for 2011, the majority of manuscripts published in 2012 were submitted by authors who have previously published in the

Proceedings. Use of the Peer Track web site for submission of manuscripts was mixed. Some authors still wish to send their manuscript materials directly to the Editor.”

Gardiner also noted that the *Proceedings*' Impact Factor declined dramatically in 2011 to 0.292—much lower than in previous years, but it is up to 0.662 in 2012. He reported that eleven color figures were published in issues 1 through 3, and every issue had a color figure on the cover. This is the highest use of color in any volume of the *Proceedings* to date. The editor further noted that “Issue 4 was dedicated to the herpetofauna of Guyana, but, nevertheless, it included 39 color plates with a total of 216 individual color figures. It is clear that authors are willing to use more color in their manuscripts now that the cost of color figures is reduced to \$300 each. In 2012, one of the members of the Society donated \$3000 specifically to cover costs of color figures.” Regarding Issue 4, Gardiner noted that hits on the Society's web site were up by 220% in 2012 in large part due to the publication on Guyana herpetofauna.

Allen Press representative Nick Dormer reported that membership and subscriptions decreased in 2012 from 303 to 272 individual subscriptions and from 130 to 118 institutional subscriptions. Increases in the cost of the *Proceedings* offset the losses, and revenue has actually increased. Licensing, thanks largely to BioOne, is increasing, and licensing revenue continues to exceed subscription revenue. Dormer commented that these figures do not ease his concerns about the future of the journal given consistently low manuscript submission rates. Discussion ensued about ways to maintain the journal but reduce publishing costs. There was general consensus to further investigate the possibility of publishing all articles online as soon as they are ready and then combining all of them at the end of the year into a single

hard-copy volume. Publishing one versus four hard-copy issues would substantially reduce Society publishing costs.

New and Ongoing Business

With the departure of current Society Secretary, Wayne Mathis, Gardiner noted that the Council needs to find an interim Secretary to serve until the next regularly scheduled election. He then asked for approval to continue financial support for publication of invited manuscripts in the *Proceedings* in amounts up to \$10,000 per volume from the Society's endowment. The motion to continue providing this support was approved. The possibility of devoting a special issue of the *Proceedings* to the 15th International Meiofauna Conference was discussed, and the following motion was approved: The Biological Society of Washington is willing to dedicate a special issue of the *Proceedings* in 2014 for the proceedings of the Fifteenth International Meiofauna Conference, given editorial acceptance of manuscripts and funding for publication costs.

In other new business, Gardiner noted that Article 3 of the Society's Constitution deals with emeritus and life members, but that it does not provide hard guidelines on eligibility. Gardiner and Dormer agreed to edit Article 3 and circulate for discussion. The Society needs a logo, and President Gardiner presented images of some candidate logos. He requested that members send additional ideas to him for consideration. Finally, Gardiner noted that he is retiring in September from Bryn Mawr College but will remain as the *Proceedings*' editor. He was thanked for serving as both editor and president. The meeting was adjourned at noon.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carole C. Baldwin
Acting Secretary