**WSSA Summer Board Meeting Agenda – July 9 and 10, 2020**

**Zoom Meeting**

**In attendance:**

Bill Curran, Eric Gustafson, Larry Steckel, Stanley Culpepper, Anita Dille, Dawn Refsell, Rakesh Chandran, Greg Elmore, Francois Tardif, Phil Banks, Rob Richardson, Lee Van Wychen, John Byrd, Darrin Dodds, Lynn Sosnoskie, John Lindquist, Wykle Green

**Call to order:**

Bill Curran at 10:02 a.m. Eastern Time.

**Approval of agenda**

Motion to approve by Phil Banks, seconded by Larry Steckel.

**Approval of minutes:**

Additions:

Rakesh – add a link to the explanation regarding format to poster session format to reduce crowding in the February 29 minutes

Anita Dille- Correct Jim Kells affiliation (USDA NIFA not EPA NIFA)

Motion to approve by John Byrd, seconded by Anita Dille

**2021 WSSA Meeting Discussion and Affiliated Society Updates:**

Bill Curran suggested allowing regional representatives discuss their plan for 2020/2021 meetings.

Greg Elmore (NCWSS) – A December meeting in Minneapolis, MN, is scheduled and the NCWSS is considering their options to proceed at this time (in-person, virtual, hybrid or cancel). There are concerns associated with each of the options and the BOD has surveyed their members to ascertain their opinions about moving forward. 242 respondents (approx. half of membership) have replied to the request. 57% of respondents prefer and in-person meeting and 65% would stay at the conference center, but many people have personal and work-related conditions that could restrict their attendance. As such, the NCWSS is also considering what a virtual program will look like (similar in format to an i.e. abbreviated, live online, pre-recorded). Delaying/rescheduling the meeting may help for avoiding hotel penalties.

Rakesh Chandran (NEWSS) – A survey was sent out to the society members to assess their views on the 2021 meeting scheduled to be held in Gettysburg, PA. 101 people (2/3 of membership) replied. Most respondents stated that they were unsure about their attendance at the meeting, hoping to attend or planning to be there, although they were not likely to take their students. Safety and organizational restrictions will likely drive ultimate decisions. Membership would possibly attend a virtual meeting and would like almost all of the components of the traditional meeting (although cost should be adjusted to reflect the lack of physical meeting space needs ($100 or less).

John Byrd (SWSS) – The viability of the meeting in Knoxville, TN, is being questioned as many industry members are projected to be unable to attend. The society is looking to reschedule.

François Tardif (CWSS (Société Canadienne de Malherbologie)) – The BOD has decided to go virtual (3 days) for a November meeting expecting provincial and industry restrictions on travel. The meeting operator went bankrupt, which got the society out of their contract. They have signed a contract with a separate company to host the virtual conference (support of videos and breakout rooms).

Rob Richardson (APMS) – Minimal interest in a virtual meeting and have agreed to return to the original venue in 3 years (new contract has been agreed upon).

Greg Elmore (WSWS joint with Western APMS) – Looking at options including in person, virtual, hybrid and cancelled conference. The facility for the March meeting is open and are being flexible about possible penalties that could be incurred.

With respect to the 2021 WSSA, the BOD conversation focused on cancellation fees (which exceed $200K after August 15, 2020), the ability to adjust room blocks if attendance does not meet expectations (the hotel does not appear to be flexible with 2021 groups at this time), event cancellation insurance (which the society does have but which may not cover COVID-related event terminations, even if other mitigating factors (such as financial distress) are proposed), and the possibility of a virtual conference. BOD members who have participated in virtual meetings (Curran, Dille, Refsell, Steckel) note that interactions are difficult/limited, and events can be difficult to navigate but virtual meetings may be better than nothing at all. However, there are options for virtual meetings that facilitate enhanced engagement (such as providing avatars, albeit somewhat ‘video gamish’ in nature) although they may come with a significant price tag). Less sophisticated meetings may cost $8-10k whereas more involved events (live streaming, multiple breakout rooms) may approach $90k.

Returning to the situation at hand, it was noted that the decision to cancel in February 2021 will “cost” the same as a decision made on August 15th, 2020. It may not be necessary to have a quick response but would be prudent to prepare for alternative scenarios (i.e. a virtual conference). The decision to cancel an in person meeting will likely be decided in response to multiple factors outside of the control of society members including state mandates, business policies and university restrictions on travel (i.e. in state, out of state, overnight) and compliance with social distancing guidelines. WSSA members will be surveyed regarding their meeting preferences, factors that could limit their ability to participate in the 2021 meeting and the cost that individuals would be willing to shoulder for any event that is put on by the society.

**Symposium discussion:**

Anita Dille reported on the ranking of the six submitted symposia, as well as the comments associated with each. As determined by the WSSA BOD, the proposed topics were ranked as follows:

1. Sensors and weed management
2. Beyond the boom (which is appropriate for TX/western US given the subject matter)
3. Aquatic weed management
4. Sustainable weed management (but too Corteva focused?)

5. Federal opportunities (better as a workshop/webinar)

6. PPO herbicides (too many dollars spent on the travel for a single WSSA member?)

Given that these is discussion regarding the 2021 meeting becoming virtual, is there a need to choose between the proposed topics (i.e. if there is now limited costs (through the elimination of travel) associated with the individual events, why can’t all be put forward with BOD support), especially the ones that were submitted and not approved for 2020? BOD members agreed that the Federal opportunities symposium should be held as a workshop/webinar and that other proposed sessions be requested to further develop their topics and speaker lists, further (i.e. Sustainable weed management). The decision was made to alert organizers to the BOD decisions and request that they prepare for the potential of a virtual meeting and adjust their budget requirements.

Motion to accept all proposals made by Anita Dille, seconded by John Byrd.

**Finance report:**

The society is in very good financial shape considering economic fluctuations that have occurred in recent months. Across all accounts (Bank, endowment, CD, general fund), the WSSA has more than $2M. Approximately $150,00 (i.e. payment from Cambridge) has not been posted yet. The approximately $200,000 available in renewable CDs are considered a ‘rainy day’ fund that could be tapped in case of an emergency (such as cancellation penalties associated with the 2021 meeting). Accounts are still under review with an accounting firm. Based on our MOU with the WSWS, profits from the 2020 meeting were split evenly between the societies. Phil Bank’s position is up for election this year and he has asked Roger Gast, who serves as an internal auditor on the finance committee to consider the role. The board approved innovative grants program is recommended to be delayed because of economic volatility.

**Graduate student reports and TEE plans:**

Wykle Greene reported that 14 applications have been received for the TEE program. Board members debated what to do considering that the current COVID pandemic could make travel between states (possible 14 day quarantines upon arrival and return) difficult and social distancing guidelines (that reduce contact with mentors) and restrictions prohibiting visitations to farms, campuses and industry facilities could significantly affect the value of the experience. Lee Van Wychen suggested that the optics of canceling the program could be undesirable considering many applicants prepared and submitted their proposals in a very short time as the original announcement was delayed. Other members of the board suggested that an illness originating from a visit would be worse with respect to public perception. Stanley Culpepper and others suggested picking the top five candidates from 2020 and supporting them (as well as five candidates in 2021) in the following year. This raised concerns about the fairness to students who would be graduating and unable to take advantage of an opportunity awarded to them (possible virtual meetings?). It was recommended to give the committee instructions to review candidates and select their top five with the intent of delaying the experience for a year (Motioned by Anita Dille and seconded by Lee Van Wychen). With respect to planning purposes for the graduate student section of the WSSA, it was recommended that Wykle Green should sit on the program committee.

**Graduate student contest plans:**

Darrin Dodds reported that the format for this event would be very dependent on how the society chooses to meet. A 3 minute thesis presentation may still work for papers in a virtual, but not hybrid, meeting. It was recommended that the contest not be finalized until it is known what form the event will take. It was recommended that Darrin Dodds should sit on the program committee (for planning purposes).

**IMI update:**

Eric Gustafson reviewed the meeting schedule for the next few years including 2021 (San Antonio, TX), 2022 (Vancouver, BC, Canada - Joint with CWSS), and 2023 (Arlington, VA – tentative with the NEWSS). The possibility of a joint meeting in 2024 with the SEWSS was discussed although plans to engage in formal arrangements with businesses should not be undertaken at this time. Although it is usual to initiate arrangement as far in advance of an event as possible, Eric is leery to do so for the 2024 meeting because of COVID-related uncertainties.

**EDSP report:**

Lee Van Wychen reported on Jill Schroeder’s replacement on the science policy committee (good review to Cameron Douglass), remarked that the EPA is working through registration reviews, everyone is watching the 9th circuit with respect to dicamba and Enlist Duo, and that the House Ag bill bumped up the IR-4 (the first increase in over a decade). Lee would like to be able to get the society presidents to DC this October to ensure that different government agencies and personnel can meet with weed science experts (COVID dependent). With respect to the USDA ARS National Program Leader for Invasive Pests/Weeds, a weed scientist was interviewed but not offered the position because of “entomology politics” and, as such, the position is being re-advertised. Janis McFarland followed up on Lee’s comments and suggested that qualified applicants be urged to apply during the next round.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was proposed by Greg Elmore, seconded by Anita Dille at 12:01 pm Eastern Time.

**July 10, 2020**

**In attendance:**

Bill Curran, Larry Steckel, Stanley Culpepper, Anita Dille, Dawn Refsell, Rakesh Chandran, Greg Elmore, Phil Banks, Rob Richardson, John Byrd, Darrin Dodds, Lynn Sosnoskie, John Lindquist, Wykle Green, Janis McFarland, Francois Tardif, Chris Willenborg

**Call to order:**

Bill Curran at 10:02 a.m. Eastern Time.

**Motion to enter executive session made by Larry Steckel at 10:04 EST am. Seconded by Anita Dille. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Executive Session –**

**Motion to exit executive session made by Phil Banks at 9:28 am. Seconded by Anita Dille. Motion passed unanimously.**

Eric Gustafson and Lee Van Wychen joined Zoom meeting at 10:30 am EST.

**MOP/Constitution Update – John Lindquist – Discussion** centered around edits and questions provided by John Lindquist. Items included (but not limited to): remove harassment policy from table of contents and let code of ethics stand on its own; language regarding WSSA financial audits. Vote to adopt constitution changes will need to occur at next WSSA business meeting.

WSSA Graduate Student Organization added to MOP. Additional language changes to sustaining membership section. No language under section 5.9, 5.10, and 5.10.1 – Chris Willenborg will add language and document will be reviewed at later date.

**Motion by John Lindquist to adopt MOP language changes as presented. Seconded by John Byrd. Motion passed with one board member dissenting.**

**Publication Report – Chris Willenborg –** Sales to individual institutions generated revenue of $43,876; consortia subscriptions generated $96,769; BioOne total sales equaled $151,330. Back volume sales were $3,661; page charges and APC totaled $96,309; licensing generated $22,783; permissions and single article sales totaled $5,568; and digital archive sales generated $46,097. Revenue forecast from Cambridge is up from 2019. Weed Science and IPSM impact factors increased (2.258 and 0.905) whereas Weed Technology slipped slightly (1.259). Submissions to IPSM are down but ones received appear to be of higher quality than in years past. Weed Science and Weed Technology are receiving similar submissions as in years past.

**NIFA Fellow Report – Jim Kells –** Jim Kells last visit to NIFA was August 2019. NIFA transfer to Kansas City and COVID-19 had impeded travel to Kansas City. All work Jim Kells has conducted has been through email and monthly Zoom meetings with Mike Fitzner.

NIFA Director Scott Angle has departed for a position with the University of Florida. The new NIFA Director will be Parag Chitnis. Mike Fitzner and Meryl Broussard have become Division Directors. In addition, Vijay Nandula will be relocating to Kansas City as National Program Leader. NIFA has worked to standardize RFP’s and Jim has worked diligently to pass along all RFP’s to the WSSA website. Discussion centered around pre-proposal that has been accepted and a full proposal is being prepared regarding weed genomics.

NIFA is still seeking to fill many vacancies and will reside, along with ERS, in two floors of a Kansas City office building. New space for NIFA is being acquired/built. Mike Barrett inquired about other societies and do they have positions similar to those of Jim Kells – Jim indicated some have similar positions but WSSA’s position appears to operate in a more efficient, consistent manner than others.

**EPA Liaison Report – Greg Kruger –** Bill Curran indicated discussion had been held regarding formation of an advisory committee for the EPA Liaison position; however, nothing has been formalized. The goal is to provide guidance to the person in the position as well as a resource for ideas, etc. Jim Kells asked for advisory committee for NIFA Fellow to be formalized as well.

Greg Kruger indicated that issues brought forth by Jim Kells that have inhibited meeting have also inhibited his activities as well. Greg also indicated that dicamba has been a considerable issue at EPA that has been challenging. Very positive feedback was received on seminar presented by Anita Dille on weed/crop competition. Greg does not anticipate any physical trips to Washington D.C. due to COVID-19. Some shuffling has occurred with leadership of the Office of Pesticide Programs.

Mike Barrett inquired about status of EPA move – move appears to be on track to occur before the end of 2020.

**CAST Report – Jill Schroeder –** Jill started in the position in January 2020. Dallas Peterson provided insight on position duties, etc. and was very helpful. A number of publications/webinars have been held addressing issues related to weed science. CAST traditionally meets in October of each year; however, conversations are underway regarding method of meeting delivery for fall 2020.

Jill Schroeder initiated (with help of Carroll Moseley), in cooperation with others, discussion on how to engage society members.

**Updated Committee List – Stanley Culpepper –** WSSA has 44 committees and 42 are complete. 25 new chairs have been identified. We should be in good shape for the next couple of years with respect to committee chairs and assignments. All chairs are aware of committee members. Program committee needs to be completed but will be dictated to some degree by 2021 meeting format. P-22B committee has no MOP thus very little progress has been made toward filling. Committee will be filled and membership revisited once task is complete.

**Upcoming Board Member Vacancies – Bill Curran –** Phil Banks, Darrin Dodds, Greg Elmore, Marty Schraer, and Francois Tardif will rotate off WSSA board of directors in 2021.

**Future Meetings – Eric Gustafson –** Previously covered.

**New Business –** NIFA Fellow and EPA Liaison position descriptions are not well defined and in particular, the length of the terms is vague which currently states approximately three years. Some discussion centered around how performance is reviewed, lengths of term, potential stipend, and impact of some outside activities on the positions. Several folks indicated they were uncomfortable with the idea of stipends for these positions. It was also agreed that the current MOP 5.8 Conflict of Interests policy should be expanded beyond the Board of Directors to include other paid or volunteer Board or Committee members including the NIFA Fellow and EPA Liaison. It was generally agreed that a three-year term with a one year to overlap with new person was proper and the ability to serve two consecutive terms was appropriate. Bill Curran will draft/amend MOP language to adopt lengths of term, advisory committees, performance reviews, and inclusion in the Conflict of Interests policy, etc.

**Old Business –** None

**Motion to adjourn made by Phil Banks at 1:24 pm EST. Seconded by Dawn Refsell. Motion passed unanimously.**