

Society of Nematologists
Minutes of the 1st Executive Board Meeting
University of Vermont Davis Convention Center
Burlington, Vermont
12 July 2009

Present: Byron Adams, Eric Davis, Parwinder Grewal, Robin Huettel, Russell Ingham, Kris Lambert, James LaMondia, Susan Meyer, Brent Sipes, Patricia Timper, Stephen Thomas

Visitors: Richard Davis, Saad Hafez

1. Announcements

2. Call to Order: President Robin Huettel requested the meeting be called to order at 8:10 a.m.

A motion to call the meeting to order was offered by B. Sipes, seconded by E. Davis, and passed.

3. Agenda: - reports from Officers, Standing Committees, and Representatives to Affiliated Organizations can be viewed in their entirety at the Society of Nematologists website (www.nematologists.org). Information provided under items 4. through 8. below is supplementary to published reports.

4. Executive Board Reports:

- a. **President R. Huettel** reiterated thoughts from her report regarding the value to the Society of Nematologists gained through her participation in a meeting with the Alliance of American Agricultural Science Societies, and encouraged continued Society participation in the future.
- b. **President-Elect R. Ingham:** The President-Elect's report stands as written. He expressed thanks to Local Arrangements Chair D. Neher and Soil Ecology Society President S. Morris for making the planning activities regarding the upcoming joint meeting a pleasurable and productive experience.
- c. **Vice-President P. Grewal:** Vice-President Grewal has been working closely with Local Arrangements Chair Saad Hafez in planning the upcoming 2010 SON annual meeting in Boise, ID.
- d. **Secretary S. Thomas:** – report stands as written
- e. **Treasurer B. Sipes:** – report stands as written
- f. **Editor-in-Chief K. Lambert, *Journal of Nematology*:** E-i-C Lambert stated that his foremost goal is to get the publication of the *Journal of Nematology* back on schedule. He advised that with less than six months remaining in 2009, it is likely that the journal will remain one issue behind at the end of the year. Treasurer Sipes reported that the SON Business Office has been receiving frustrated inquiries from libraries which

maintain institutional subscriptions to the *Journal of Nematology* because publication has been running several issues in arrears. Past-President Davis reminded the Board that combining issues of the journal, as done by the previous Editor-in-Chief, must be avoided because such action violates SON's agreement with the U.S. Postal Service, which requires the publication of four issues per year. The Board discussed publishing the abstracts from the joint meeting of the Society of Nematologists/Soil Ecology Society as a single December 2009 issue to help facilitate catching up.

- g. Editor B. Adams, *Nematology Newsletter*:** Editor Adams reported that the layout editor who had assisted with publication of NNL during past years accepted a more lucrative position during 2008-2009. Considerable time was required to identify a new layout editor (Venkat Parkunan) to perform such activities, resulting in publication delays. During the past year Editor Adams developed and published the first *Nematology Newsletter* using interactive format in March 2009.
- h. Public Relations Director:** position vacant; no report.
- i. Past President E. Davis:** – report stands as written; Past President Davis announced that the two amendments to the SON Constitution that were developed during 2007-2008 were approved by the membership.
- j. Web Page Editor:** position vacant; no report.
- k. Executive Members:** There were no official meetings of SON Standing Committees at the 5th International Congress of Nematology. Therefore, no annual reports were requested from Executive Members J. LaMondia, S. Meyer or P. Timper who serve as liaisons to the Standing Committees.

5. Other Reports:

- a. Society of Nematology Archives:** – the report of Archivist P. Donald stands as written
- b. N.A. Cobb Foundation:** – the report of Chairman R. Giblin-Davis and Treasurer's report submitted by P. Donald stand as written.

6. Standing Committee Reports:

- a. Biological Control:** – report stands as written by Chair T. Forge
- b. Ecology:** – no report submitted
- c. Education:** – no report submitted
- d. Entomophilic Nematology:** – no report submitted
- e. Extension:** – report stands as written by Chair E. Riga

- f. Finance Advisory Committee:** – no report submitted
- g. Honors and Awards:** – report stands as written by Chair L. Duncan
- h. Industry:** – report stands as written by Chair T. Hewlett
- i. Long Range Planning:** – report stands as written by Chair E. Davis
- j. Meeting Site Selection:** – report stands as written by Chair P. Grewal; the 2010 meeting of SON will be held July 10-15 at the DoubleTree, Riverside in Boise, ID; the 2011 Golden Jubilee meeting will be held at the LaSells Stewart Center and the CH2M Hill Alumni Center on the Oregon State University Campus July 12-17, 2011 in Corvallis, OR – home of the first SON meeting.
- k. Membership:** – no report submitted
- l. Plant Resistance:** – report stands as written by Chair K. Lambert
- m. Regulatory:** – report stands as written by Chair E. Flack
- n. Systematic Resources:** – report stands as written by Chair S. Subbotin

7. Ad hoc Committee Reports:

- a. Students in Nematology:** – report stands as written by Chair M. Yoder

8. Affiliated Organizations' Reports:

- a. American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS):** – report stands as written by SON representative E. Masler
- b. Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST):** – report stands as written by SON representative J. Eisenback
- c. Coalition on Funding Agricultural Research Missions (CoFarm):** – report stands as written by SON representative D. Chitwood.
- d. International Federation of Nematology Societies (IFNS):** – report stands as written by SON representative R. Huettel, who announced that the call for proposed host societies and meeting locations for the next International Congress of Nematology are due by the end of July, 2009. Should SON wish to host the upcoming congress, a request must be submitted.
- e. National Science Collections Alliance (NSCA):** – report stands as written by SON representative L. Carta

9. Old Business:

a. Budget/Expenses 2009:

- Treasurer B. Sipes presented and discussed the 2009 SON budget. He reminded the Board that all additional duties assigned to the SON Business Office ultimately result in greater costs to the Society, because such added duties require additional time and effort on Cecilia's part. The Society incurred increased operational costs during the past year as a result of dues increases by all affiliated societies with whom SON participates (CAST, IFNA, etc.).
- Institution of a service charge to defray the cost of processing annual membership renewals, along with elimination of the fee associated with credit card payments, greatly increased the number of members electing to renew through the SON website using a credit card this past year.
- Treasurer Sipes and the Board discussed the need for future SON meetings to generate revenue for the Society to use both in general operation and in helping to fund speakers and other activities associated with conducting future meetings. President-Elect Ingham announced that the 2009 joint meeting between SON and the Soil Ecology Society is currently predicted to generate a positive revenue stream of \$3,000.00. Both President Huettel and President-Elect Ingham anticipate good attendance at the 2010 meeting in Boise, ID. Room rates of \$96.00 per night have been contracted at the DoubleTree Conference Hotel, which increases the likelihood that SON can meet the 75% occupancy rate for the block of rooms, therefore incurring no charge for use of meeting rooms.
- There was discussion about whether future SON banquet costs for members and students should be included in meeting registration fees. Bundling the banquet in registration fees eases the reimbursement process for many university personnel, most of whom cannot be reimbursed for separate banquet tickets, but presents problems for USDA/ARS personnel who must pay registration and per diem costs using separate credit cards. Higher registration fees that include banquet tickets may discourage some members from attending, while others prefer having a choice regarding the purchase of such tickets.
- Treasurer Sipes advised the Board that operational funding provided to the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Nematology* has remained at \$10,000 per year for quite some time. Editor-in-Chief Lambert stated that the current amount is sufficient as matters stand at this time.

b. Change in Executive Board Composition:

Past-President E. Davis reminded the Board that following the recent amendment of the SON constitution, the Executive Board remains comprised of 13 members, seven of whom are voting members, with the remainder serving in an advisory capacity. The consensus among Board members was that all 13 members should attend the 2nd Executive Board meeting, but attendance by non-voting members at the 1st EB meeting should be optional.

c. Proposed Constitutional Change to Allow Electronic Voting:

President Huettel discussed the two new proposed changes to the SON

constitution which were mailed to members along with ballots for election of officers in April, 2009. The first proposed amendment would add electronic voting to the options available for conducting Society elections. The second proposed amendment would reassign the responsibility for oversight of SON Standing Committee membership assignments from the President-Elect to the Vice-President. Both proposed amendments will be presented to the SON members in the 48th Business Meeting for an advisory vote.

d. Plans for 50th Anniversary Meeting, Corvallis, OR – 2011:

- A 50th anniversary publication is planned to commemorate the event, with T. Niblack volunteering to serve as editor for the project. The volume will be available both on-line, and as a hard-copy published as a special edition of the *Journal of Nematology*. President Huettel recommended that the page charges necessary to publish this special edition be factored into meeting registration fees. Such an approach is expected to be much more cost-effective than publishing a separate hard-back volume similar to the *Vistas on Nematology* that commemorated the 25th anniversary of SON.
- Some members have expressed concerns to the Board that every effort be put forth to insure that the 50th anniversary be given proper recognition. Vice-President Grewal volunteered to speak with concerned members regarding this issue.
- Past-President Davis and President-Elect Ingham suggest that SON consider approving funds to provide free registration for members who attended the first SON meeting.
- Obtaining a series of one-on-one interviews with SON members regarding the 50th anniversary was also discussed.
- Secretary Thomas suggested that T. Niblack speak with D. Schmitt regarding the costs incurred in publishing *The History of Nematology*, to establish the cost of publishing a 50th anniversary volume.

e. SON Web Page and Nematology Newsletter:

- *Nematology Newsletter* Editor Adams distributed copies of a Request for Proposals that he developed in Fall 2008 in response to last year's charge from the Board to help develop a bid for enhancement of the Society's website. The RFP was forwarded to E-i-C Lambert and former E-i-C Bird, prior to submission to various commercial website development companies. The initial submission in 2008 received highly variable responses, including no reply from the American Phytopathological Society, despite personal communication to President Huettel from Steve Nelson of www.SciSoc.org regarding interest in assuming SON website functions. During this initial process, Editor Adams learned that most websites representing societies similar in size to SON are operated by individual faculty on a volunteer basis. Editor Adams devoted a large amount of time talking to groups that use web design/maintenance companies, winnowing out the poor and/or unaffordable ones, before he refined and clarified SON's needs and resubmitted bid requests to seven commercial website development companies that have been in business for at least seven years. Some bids have been received, and most should be available by the 2nd EB meeting on July 15, 2009. He

envisions the new website being one where the NNL editor uploads *Nematology Newsletter* directly, without requiring activity by the Business Office, and where Standing Committee chairs and others can do likewise. Web maintenance fees typically cost approximately \$100 per month, once the website has been designed. President-Elect Ingham asked if the current SON website is fixable. Editor Adams does not believe that the present website can assume the new functions desired by the Board (on-line voting; document exchange; enhanced *Nematology Newsletter* functions; etc.). Treasurer Sipes commented that SON wants ready and easy access to update the site. He thinks that C. Schmitt and the SON Business Office can maintain a more responsive website, once one has been designed. Past-President Davis would like to see new feature articles and other content added to the website on a regular basis. The Board thanked Editor Adams for all his efforts in preparing the bid requests and researching matters related to development of a new website.

- President Huettel asked to what extent members read *Nematology Newsletter*. Editor Adams responded that the SON Business Office records approximately 400 additional hits on the website within a day or two of his announcement that a new edition has been posted. Board Member Timper pointed out that having a quarterly newsletter encourages the NNL editor and staff to rigorously pursue new submissions. Editor Adams sees the NNL editor as the person responsible for loading news stories and other related material on the SON website in the future.

10. New Business

a. SON Budget – 2010:

The budget for 2010 was reviewed and discussed as part of the 2009 budget consideration in Old Business. NNL Editor Adams asked to have the budget amended to include the cost of designing a new SON website. The request was tabled until the 2nd Executive Board meeting pending receipt of bids solicited from web design companies.

b. Meeting Update – 2010:

- Program Chair Grewal distributed a tentative program for the 2010 meeting in Boise, ID. The program would begin with Standing Committee meetings and an opening reception Saturday 10 July 2010, and conclude Thursday July 14. A day-long tour (cheese factory in the morning and raft trip in the afternoon) was planned for Tuesday July 13. The Board suggested that these activities be offered as a member-selected option the day before or the day after the meetings so those desiring to attend an optional activity can do so, but participation is not required as part of the meeting agenda.
- Board Member Timper proposed that the Best Student Paper Session be scheduled as a separate half-day session that does not run concurrently with other sessions. Such scheduling would facilitate judging and insure high attendance at these presentations. If more submissions are received than can be accommodated in the half-day session, the Honors & Awards Committee plans to pre-judge student presentations based on the quality of abstracts. Papers submitted by

students who do not qualify for the Best Student Paper Session will be included in the regular paper sessions.

- Program Chair Grewal is suggesting five symposia for the meeting, base on the average number presented at prior SON meetings. There was discussion about the differences among “symposia”, “workshops”, “colloquia”, and “discussion groups”. Program Chair Grewal requested clarification about the philosophy regarding symposium development: e.g. symposium topic developed by the Standing Committee and submitted to the Program Chair, versus a request from the Program Chair to a Standing Committee to develop a symposium on a particular topic. President-Elect Ingham suggested that if too many committees desire sponsored symposia in 2010, that some be requested to delay symposia until the 2011 meeting.
- President-Elect Ingham commented that graduate student members had expressed interests in seeing particular activities and topics included in the 2009 meeting in Burlington. President Huettel suggested that if graduate student involvement in the activities of the Ad-hoc Student Committee remains high for another two years, SON might consider converting this committee to a Standing Committee.
- The Board suggested to Program Chair Grewal that he consider scheduling Standing Committee meetings during lunches, rather than Saturday afternoon before the Opening Reception in an effort to increase committee attendance.
- Local Arrangements Chair S. Hafez distributed information regarding the Boise locale, and announced the DoubleTree Inn will be the host hotel. Room rates of \$96.00 per night have been contracted. The rate for sponsored breaks will be \$10.00 per attendee. His reasoning for including the day-long sponsored cheese factory or potato processing plant tour and raft trip on Tuesday during the meeting was to increase room nights of hotel occupancy needed to avoid meeting room rental charges. Board Member Timper suggested that tours be available before or after the meeting. The Board commended Local Arrangements Chair Hafez and thanked him for his efforts on the part of the Society of Nematologists.

c. Meeting Dedications and Obituaries:

President Huettel queried the Board as to whether policy clarification is needed in the Manual of Operations regarding where and when obituaries are published, and circumstances related to meeting dedications. Following an electronic search of the current Manual of Operations, NNL Editor Adams pointed out that at present obituaries for Honorary Members or Fellows are to be published in the *Journal of Nematology*. All other obituaries are published in the *Nematology Newsletter*. The Manual of Operations does not address the topic of dedication of annual meetings. Consensus was that meeting dedications should be at the discretion of the Executive Board. Secretary Thomas will add this clarification to the Manual of Operations.

d. Budget Requests for Symposia: - topic deferred until 2nd Executive Board meeting

e. Clarification Regarding Funding for Honorary Member Recipients and Spouses:

Questions arose during the past year as to whether travel and meeting registration costs for spouses of Honorary Member recipients should be supported by SON.

The Board considered the matter, and developed the following policy:

A motion was made by B. Sipes and seconded by R. Huettel that the SON Manual of Operations reflect that travel and per diem costs associated with attending an annual meeting will be paid by SON for the honoree only, and that registration and banquet costs will be covered by the Local Arrangements Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

f. Converting the Ad-hoc Student Committee to a Standing Committee:

President Huettel requested discussion regarding elevation of the Ad-hoc Student Committee to Standing Committee status. Treasurer Sipes commented that perhaps the SON Constitution should be amended to transfer the list of Standing Committees to the Manual of Operations, where changes to the roster could be made more expeditiously. President-Elect Ingham agreed to draft such an amendment during the coming year. Secretary Thomas suggested that committees in the Constitution be separated into those that are ‘subject-related’ (e.g. Ecology; Education; Extension) versus ‘operational committees’ (e.g. Finance Advisory; Honors and Awards; Local Arrangements), and that addition or deletion of subject-related committees be accomplished through a vote of the Executive Board followed by a vote of the membership at the next SON Business Meeting.

g. Videotaping SON Meetings:

- As Program Chair, President-Elect Ingham was approached by a company expressing interest in videotaping presentations at the Burlington annual meeting, and posting these presentations on a website for a fee. Past-President Davis inquired whether permission would need to be granted by speakers to allow their presentations to be posted on a website. The Board assumed permission would be needed. Presentations will not be videotaped at the upcoming meeting.
- There was discussion of whether portions of future meetings should be videotaped. Several members commented that the plenary session at the 50th Anniversary Meeting should be videotaped for posterity. Excerpts from these presentations could also be used in other formats to promote nematology.

h. SON Toll-free Phone Number:

SON Business Office manager C. Schmitt suggested that the Board consider sharing the cost of a toll-free telephone number with the Society of Invertebrate Parasitologists, another professional organization that she manages. Her calculations indicate that such a shared arrangement would reduce current monthly phone charges to the Society approximately 50%.

A motion was made by S. Thomas (second by R. Ingham) that SON Treasurer Sipes and SON Business Office manager C. Schmitt further investigate the likelihood that sharing the cost of a toll-free phone number will result in cost savings for SON. If such is found to be the case, the Business Office is authorized to proceed with the acquisition. The motion passed unanimously.

i. Letter from the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST):

- President Huettel and Treasurer Sipes informed the Board of a letter received from CAST advising SON that the Society currently has two members representing SON with CAST – one being J. Thies (former SON representative, who has been elevated to the CAST Board of Directors) and the other being J. Eisenback who now serves as SON representative.
- A second question posed by CAST asked if SON would be willing to provide support for bulk publication of CAST reports or has interest in jointly sponsoring a meeting. The Board took these items under consideration, and chose not to offer a response at this time.

j. Publication of Officer and Committee Reports on the SON Website:

Secretary Thomas advised the Board that with the suspension several years ago of publication of annual reports by officers, Standing Committee chairs, and liaisons to professional organizations in the *Nematology Newsletter*, copies of such reports exist only in the Archives and are no longer retrievable. While excerpted versions have been included in the minutes of the 1st Executive Board meeting, full reports are not available. He proposed that all such reports, beginning with the 2009 annual reports, be posted on the SON website for easy viewing and retrieval.

A motion was made by S. Thomas and seconded R. Ingham that annual officer, standing committee, and liaison reports from 2009 forward be saved in searchable .pdf format, and made available on the SON website. The motion passed.

k. Presidential Travel:

President Huettel advised the Board that she questions whether participation in the annual Coalition for Funding Agricultural Research Missions (CoFarm) meeting by SON Presidents justifies the associated expenses. In addition to travel costs, hotel rooms in Washington D.C. may cost \$300-\$400/night, in return for which the SON President is afforded the opportunity to speak with an aid for a representative from their home state. She suggests that other meetings may provide a better return for SON investment in presidential travel.

11. Adjournment: Treasurer Sipes moved and Past-President Davis seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Thomas
Secretary