

Minutes of the 2019 Divisional Business Meeting (Austin, Texas)

The business meeting of the Division of Comparative Physiology and Biochemistry (DCPB) was held on January 4th at the JW Marriott in Austin. Division Chair Kim Hammond started the meeting at 5:45pm, and introduced Kathy Dickson, program director for Physiological Mechanisms and Biomechanics from the NSF.

Kathy thanked folks who have reviewed and served on panels for NSF. NSF is always recruiting rotating program officers and will be recruiting permanent program officers in the near future. Jobs will be posted soon. She encouraged folks to talk to program officers at the booth in the exhibit hall. New solicitations will have no deadlines, no caps, for all proposals in BIO. Can submit any time, any day. Funding rates have been higher because reduced number of proposals coming in, same budget. Please apply!

New NSF funding tracks: Rules of Life – bigger rules of life, integrating biology and interdisciplinary science at NSF. Rules of Life is for projects that cross divisions within biology. If your research project crosses any two of the divisions and meets the Rules of Life description, consider applying. Program officers are happy to help guide you regarding which track you should use to apply. Ten Big Ideas – different solicitation. Microbiome – theory and mechanism. Need to cross over different directorates (not just divisions). Biology Integration Institutes – new program, centers to integrate biology; two tracks: full institute letter of intent was already due. But there is a planning track, and those are due in February. Workshop at meeting regarding new programs. There is also support for SICB symposia. Contact Kathy if interested in hosting a symposium. Helpful if you have already gotten the topic approved by SICB; Kathy can help mold for approval for funding.

Executive Committee arrives 5:55pm. Beth Brainerd, current president, had executive committee introduce themselves.

Kim introduced herself as the outgoing divisional chair, and introduced chair-elect Ken Welsh, program officer Kristi Montooth, secretary Marshall McCue (absent – new dad), secretary-elect Heather Liwanag, student/postdoc rep Andrea Remmell, person in charge of student paper award: Emily Cornelius. Elections for new chair-elect and new secretary will happen in the spring. We need nominations! Spring newsletter deadline is early this year. Now have a formal nominating committee for all the divisions (previously ad hoc). Chair of division (Ken) will be chair of nominating committee, and asked 2 people from society at large to be on nominating committee: Caroline Williams and Alex Wilson. Marshall McCue will stay on as part of nominating committee.

We want good gender and URM balance with everything going forward. This will be a focus in the coming months.

Last year we changed our best student paper procedure. Students now have to submit an abstract instead of just checking the box to be in the competition, and it has reduced the number of students submitting. The competition is fierce.

Ideas for symposia are welcome. Stimulating different types of topics. Executive committee wants this. Suggesting topics and handing off to someone else to run symposium? Papers are due in March. People have been good about first draft, but terrible about revisions, so symposia are late getting to the journal. Need to make those deadlines!

New codes of conduct. We all got cards with QR codes. We now have allies to help if someone needs it. The QR codes will lead you to methods of dealing with problems when they arise. Trying to get people to report if there is a problem, so SICB can deal with those issues.

Stephen Secor from PBZ: For 2019, PBZ had 141 new submissions (drop from 156 last year), plus 42 revisions this year. Acceptance rate was only 13% (big drop from 30%), but does not include revisions in progress. Generally good at desk rejections. Time to first decision is 34 days (drop from 41 days); time to final decision: 46 days (drop from 77 days). Impact factor: 2.13. The journal encourages SICB members to submit papers – not just research articles, but education and outreach, perspectives, short communications, comments on papers, and book reviews. This is a broader list than previously.

How are we financially? We have a little bit less than previous years (by about \$5000). Spent a lot on Bart reception last year. Important to celebrate in style. This year the extra \$1000 that used to come from the society for the Bart reception did not come. Or did we used to get that? Consensus is that we should lobby for that extra money because the whole society comes to that reception and we want to provide good food! Costs vary by city. Tampa was cheap, but Austin is not. There is going to be belt-tightening across the society. Divisional Chairs meeting discussed increasing fees, but that is not easy on students. We get about \$6000 from the Bart “endowment.” But the symposia, reception after, and travel for award winner, all add up. Sable Systems has provided the award check, which helps us immensely. Biggest issue is what the hotels are charging for the receptions. Should we prioritize our funding differently? Do we request donations for the Bart reception? If there is a perception that this is the de facto society-wide social, then we can justify asking the society as a whole to contribute.

Division members thanked Kim for her service.

The meeting ended by 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Liwanag, DCPB Secretary