

Montana Section ACS Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 15, 2108 | WebEx

Present via WebEx: Tyler Smith (Chair), Steve Rowley (Chair-Elect), Janice Alexander (Councilor), Robert Szilagyi (Treasurer), Nick Natale (Alternate Counselor), David Hitt (Webmaster), and Casey Massena (Secretary)

1. Minutes from the last fall meeting (October, 8 2017 | Fairmont Hot Springs Resort) were approved without objection.

2. Treasurer's report by Robert Szilagyi: see attached report

Summary: all annual reports were submitted without any complications. The 2018 allotment is \$ 6388. The checking account balance is currently \$ 10,000. As for savings, the account accumulates roughly \$ 10 every month in interest. The current savings balance is \$ 37,013.26. Travel stipends for the awardees from the 2018 spring meeting were not yet included in the financials. However, the July–December membership dues, in the amount of \$ 475, had been included in the spreadsheet. Tyler's reimbursement for the 2018 Leadership Institute had also been recorded. Robert had also successfully submitted appropriate tax forms (due May 15, 2018).

Discussion items: Tyler raised a few questions concerning the 2017 annual report balances, whether a few of the issues had been resolved. Robert and Janice were able to resolve all issues (to the cent). The ACS was satisfied, and the allotment of \$ 6300 was dispensed.

3. Councilor's report from Janice Alexander: see attached report

Summary: as stated in the report, the council selected Luis A. Echegoyen and Thomas R. Gilbert as candidates for 2019 President-Elect. As for our district, there will be no director elections this fall. Interestingly, the Council approved a petition that changes the requirement for Councilors on Society Committees from at least 2/3 majority to a majority and removed the requirement that a Chair or Vice-Chair must be a Councilor. Additionally, a petition that would allow voting members of the all ACS committees to select their own Chair rather than through Board approval failed. Member dues will be adjusted for standard inflation. In other news, this is the first year since before the Depression that the ACS met all of its financial goals. By and large, CAS and ACS Publications bring in the lion's share of ACS revenues (on the order of millions of dollars and ~85 % of total revenue). Unfortunately, 2018 marks the 6th year straight of declining membership. In 2012, there were 163,000 members. Currently, there are roughly 150,000 members with an 83 % retention rate. Surveys were somewhat inconclusive, but the decrease in membership is not on account of younger affiliate (undergraduates, graduates, and new to the workforce) attrition or lack of participation. Additionally, international partners who pay dues are mitigating overall losses. In an effort to increase scientific literacy in D.C., the current president

has focused on science advocacy and the integrity of the scientific method. See attached report for more.

Discussion items: segmentation of dwindling membership was not fully characterized. Better surveys and probes are being discussed by an appointed committee.

4. The Fall Social (October 12–14, 2018) is returning to Chico Hot Springs. Robert had already reserved rooms and conference areas. Where will we hold next year's Fall Social? We may already be too late to reserve space at Chico for next year. Robert proposed a few ideas to appeal to scientists from diverse backgrounds: (1) give the social an industrial theme and (2) highlight the achievements of the Montana Material Science Graduate program (UM, Montana Tech, and MSU) via a breakout session. To develop the Fall Social in these ways, Tyler suggested that we establish working committees. Nick added that we reach out to Inimmune as a potential academic/industrial participant. Engaging local startups, who tend to hire Montana graduates, would benefit everyone. To this end, Robert volunteered to reach out to his contacts in the Material Science Program to gauge their level of interest. David and Steve also offered to reach out to their contacts—a pyrotechnic company, Inimmune, and Wintermute were mentioned.
5. To meet goals more effectively, working committees were roughly delineated:

Nominations: Tyler, Janice, and Casey

Mandated by our bylaws, this committee would serve to inspire higher-level participation through recruiting and holding contested elections. Nick added that the Local Section can nominate fellows to serve on this committee. This committee could also nominate local chemists for awards.

Meeting Planning: Robert

See item 4 above.

Member Outreach: Steve, David, Nick, and Casey

This committee would expand outreach through social media and/or a newsletter, website maintenance, science cafes, Native American outreach, and soliciting feedback on the use of chemistry kits distributed by the National Chemistry Coordinator. Nick brought up that he has extensive experience with newsletters, which could potentially be replaced by social media. Janice stressed that the website needed attention. David volunteered to handle the website.

The motion to form these working committees was officially passed.

6. In the new bylaws, the Nominations Committee must submit nominees for election by October 15, 2018. The nominations can come through a variety of channels. Electronic balloting will be a new process to learn. Janice suggested we could establish a fillable form

on the website to facilitate solidifying our nomination list. At the very least a call for nominees on the website would be helpful. Issues with the "Contact us" link on the website need resolving, as well as admin privilege and site editing details. Using the MontanaSectionACS@gmail.com, which had been a source of mass confusion before the Spring meeting, was suggested.

Five positions are opening for 2019: 1) Chair-Elect (every year), 2) Treasurer (2-year term), 3) Counselor (3-year term), 4) Alternate Counselor (3-year term), and 5) Northwest Region Board Representative. The last election for the Counselor and Alternate Counselor was conducted in 2015 with the terms starting in 2016 (Janice and Nick are finishing up their terms of office). The Northwest Region Board Representative and National Chemistry Coordinator were proposed as formal elected positions, which Nick has been filling voluntarily. Nick will slowly be transitioning out of these positions. The Nominations and Meeting Planning Committees will devise a plan for the formalization of these functions.

The motions to establish a Northwest Region Board Representative as an official elected position and to give him/her travel support were passed. Nick abstained from voting on the latter item due to a conflict of interest. David did not vote on this latter item either, having to leave prior to the vote.

7. Membership outreach ideas were discussed at length. Given its ease of implementation and high potential to reach members over a large geographical area, establishing a social media presence was proposed. Using a dashboard and post scheduling could cut down on labor. Casey and Steve volunteered to help with establishing a social media presence. Guidelines for social media content need to be discussed by the Member Outreach Committee, but curating various information sources is a viable option. In addition, social media could be utilized to generate interest in upcoming meetings. Robert suggested the need for a current student affiliate list. Advisors and co-advisors from each institution could be good resources to this end. Related to this, data from the Dropbox ACS eRosters is available for download.

Casey proposed starting a local Science Café in Missoula that, if successful, could be implemented in other cities. A local brewery owner had already expressed interest in providing a venue, and Chris Palmer had volunteered to give a short talk on the chemistry of beer. Nick added that these types of events can be well-attended. Chuck Thompson and Nick himself could serve as future speakers on tequila and absinth, respectively. Outreach to the tribal colleges was also discussed. An intriguing idea involving Ranalda Tsosie serving as a lecturer via a distance learning mechanism was offered. Inspired Classroom in Missoula could be helpful with regard to tribal outreach. Steve volunteered to reach out to Inspired Classroom, while Tyler agreed to speak with Ranalda. Grants to fund these proposed efforts were also discussed, along with the sustainability clause included in them. Lastly, Nick requested that he receive more feedback on the science kits he has distributed for years. We will include this item in the next meeting.