



# American Chemical Society

## Division of Biological Chemistry

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### Minutes of the Fall 2003 Business Meeting of the Division of Biological Chemistry -- September 8, 2003

**Attended by:** Vern Schramm, John Richard, Peter Tipton, Frank Raushel, George Kenyon, Dale Poulter, Carol Fierke, Cynthia Burrows, Vernon Anderson, Richard Armstrong, Susan Miller, Tadhg Begley, Nicole Horenstein, Ruma Banerjee, and Steve Rokita.

(1) **Spring Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the Spring meeting of the Executive Committee at the New Orleans ACS meeting were read and approved.

(2) **Report of the Executive Committee presented by Vern Schramm:** The 2002 Reviewer's Form from the 2002 Technical Division Annual Report cited the Division's lack of an Operations Manual and recommended that the division develop this manual. The Division Chair reported that he will prepare a yearly schedule for the division's activities.

An increase in the division's outreach activities was recommended. The Chair suggested that this might include additional support for national meetings such as the Winter Enzyme Mechanisms Conference, the Enzymes Gordon Conference and the IUBMB meeting.

(3) **Report of the Secretary presented by John Richard:** The secretary also touched on the need to increase outreach programs, in particular the Division's participation in Regional meetings, and suggested that the division provide financial support for one-half or full-day sessions at selected Regional meetings. There was agreement that divisional support of at least \$1,500/regional conference would be appropriate. The secretary offered to contact Division members interested in organizing symposia at Regional meetings and he suggested that this responsibility might later be passed on to an expanded Program committee.

The Secretary encouraged nominations from committee members for our Division's awards.

The Secretary mentioned the need for updating our website.

The Secretary reviewed the procedures he is following in tallying the election ballots for this year. The Executive Committee agreed to waive the requirement that ballots be received in envelopes signed by division members for this year.

(4) **Report of the Treasurer presented by Peter Tipton:** The financial status of the division remains sound. There have been no changes in investment strategy or sources of income since the last Annual Report filed in March of 2003. There has been no significant change from last year in the balance between the division's total income and expenses.

(5) **Programs at ACS meetings:** 226th ACS National Meeting - Program Chair, Carol Fierke.

Every speaker at this year's ACS meeting has been promised the same dollar amount to cover expenses associated with their participation. The larger registration fee for speakers not currently ACS members leads to a smaller dollar amount to support the travel and accommodations of nonmember compared with ACS member speakers. This might be considered unfair to nonmember participants. There was support for a proposal that each speaker be promised reimbursement for registration, and that the remaining funds be divided equally to support the speaker's travel and accommodations. The final decision for next year was left to the discretion of the Program Chair for the 228th ACS meeting.

A total of \$30,000 is being provided this year to support a total of nine sessions. The Chair recommended that this level of support be increased to \$5,000/session and the Committee expressed support for this proposal in view of the Division's increase in income from a projected increase in member dues and the ACS contribution.

**228th ACS National Meeting** - Program Chair, Cynthia Burrows.

The tentative program for this meeting was reviewed. It includes three half-day award symposia, and half-day symposia on RNA interference, heme cofactor assembly, cellular signaling and small molecule-DNA interactions. The program Chair encouraged suggestions for themes for the two remaining one-half day symposia.

The difficulty in long-range planning for divisional programs developed by a Program Chair who serves only a one year term were discussed. The Chair informed the Committee that amendments to the division bylaws have been proposed to improve long-term planning. These amendments were discussed later in the meeting.

It was suggested that the Secretary send E-MAIL messages to members encouraging submission of abstracts and applications for travel awards for students and postdoctoral fellows to attend the ACS meeting. The Secretary agreed to send a few messages during the course of the year.

It was suggested that information about travel awards be posted on the website. It was recommended that the number of these awards be increased from 10 to 20 at a level of \$600/award, and that the requirement for senior poster authors to attend the conference be dropped. The senior author must continue to sponsor these award applications and indicate a willingness to supplement the award in order to fully compensate the travel expenses of their sponsored student or postdoc.

It was suggested that the >200 posters presented this year could not reasonably be viewed in a single session, and that a second session should be added. This was left at the discretion of the Program Chair for the 228th meeting.

**Pacificchem 2005:** The division needs to recruit applications for symposia at the Pacificchem conference scheduled for 2005. An informal subcommittee consisting of the Program Chairs for the 2003 (Carol Fierke), 2004 (Cynthia Burrows) and 2005 (Vernon Anderson) conference along with Dale Poulter was appointed to contact members who might be interested in organizing symposia for Pacificchem.

(6) **Council Issues and Division Funding:** The Chair informed the committee that the ACS contribution of members dues to the division is expected to double, and that this should allow an expansion of the Division's outreach activities.

(7) **Potential New Award in Biological Chemistry:** The donor interested in establishing a new award in Biological Chemistry has been contacted. The parameters for this award will be set in the donor's will, and the award will be established when the donor passes away. Lawyers have been contacted and good progress has been made in setting the requirements and parameters for this award. Dale Poulter suggested that the division make it a rule that no person should receive more than one divisional award over a five year span. The Chair will investigate how to implement this rule.

(8) **Membership Dues:** A motion was passed increasing the dues for the Division of Biological Chemistry members from \$6.00 to \$10.00/year.

(9) **Newsletter and Mailings:** It is possible to move to exclusive electronic distribution of the Newsletter and save the division \$8,000 - \$9,000/year in mailing costs. The question of whether the division should change to electronic mailing was discussed. A preference was expressed by several members for the printed copy and the general sentiment was that a printed copy of this newsletter is preferable to an E-MAIL attachment, which would often be deleted before being opened or read. In the absence of any support for a change in the method of distribution, the Chair announced that the division will continue with its current practice of mailing the newsletter.

(10) **Bylaws:** The Chair distributed a copy of the bylaws for the division which contained a number of changes in our current bylaws. Many of these were small deletions and changes in wording. Two significant changes were proposed in the organization of the Division's Standing Committees.

(i) Currently our Program Chairs are elected two years in advance of the ACS meeting, so that in any year a total of three Program Chairs are in place with responsibility for the current and two successive ACS meetings. These three Program Chairs will be folded into a program committee Chaired by the member elected to develop the program for the current ACS meeting.

(ii) Currently the three members of the Nominating Committee are elected to serve a one year term, and elections for this Committee are held each year. The revised bylaws increase the term length for the nominating committee from one to three years. The Committee size will remain constant at three members, with one new member being elected each year to serve a three year term. Members on the sitting Nominating Committee will be asked to increase their term to two or three years to ensure a Committee size of three members during the transition to the yearly election of Committee members to serve three year terms.

Vern Schramm explained that these changes will allow incoming members of the nominating and program committees to learn their responsibilities from sitting members and to ensure that there exists within these committees a reservoir of experience to help members to efficiently complete their assigned tasks. This will benefit long term planning within the division.

The amended bylaws were discussed in detail. Several proposals for small changes received the support of the Committee. These changes will be made by Vern Schramm, and the discussion of the amended bylaws will be continued during the Spring meeting.

Frank Raushel drew attention to the requirement in our bylaws that amendments be ratified by a vote of the Division members. It was decided that once these amendments receive the approval of the Executive Committee, they should be distributed to Division members in the next newsletter along with a ballot to vote on whether or not to approve these changes.

(11) **Website:** There was general agreement that much could be done to increase the value of the Division's website to our members. There was considerable discussion on how this should be accomplished.

It was recommended that the Secretary contact our members to request input upon what material they would like to see posted on the Division's website. Darrell Davis has the primary responsibility for maintaining this website. He will be contacted about the possibilities of our division upgrading the software for its website, and of allocating funds to obtain professional assistance in the design and maintenance of this site.

(12) **Other Business:** Vernon Anderson recommended that the division continue to pursue the issues raised by Dick Schowen in the summer newsletter, and strongly encourage the ACS to provide free and open access the Websites for ACS Journals. A motion passed unanimously that our Chair send a letter to ACS Journals expressing the strong support within our division for the sentiments expressed in Dick Schowen's open letter to our members.

George Kenyon informed the committee that a speaker has been identified to participate at an International Conference in the Cameroon.