

Soil Ecology Society General Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2015

The general meeting for all members was held at the Biennial meeting in Fort Collins, CO. President Matt Wallenstein called the meeting to order at 8:15 am, with approximately 60 members present. The following items were discussed:

- 1) The board proposes to postpone voting on elected board positions to occur post-meeting over an e-ballot. For the first time, we had an open call for nominations for positions, rather than through “cherry-picking” by a nominations committee as the Constitution has been interpreted to date. The President received numerous responses to the open call that were willing to serve but indifferent to which position they filled, so he proposes putting together a Nomination Committee to sort out the nominations and put together an e-ballot to be sent to the entire membership (beyond those in attendance). The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.
- 2) Communications Officer (Loren Byrne) gave an update on Communications, including the positive stats on Facebook presence, and the fact that Twitter will be increased with help of the student rep. Members should email items to the student rep (Amanda Daly) or tweet them to @SoilEcol.
- 3) The President proposed a new award for Best Paper to provide another opportunity to recognize an early-career scientist (as our existing Early Career Award is so competitive). The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.
- 4) The President conveyed the Board’s proposal to change the length of terms for certain Board members to enhance continuity. The proposal included moving the Secretary, Communications Officer, and three Members At-Large to four-year terms. (The Treasurer already being on a 4-year term, thus leaving only the Student Rep and President at 2 year terms.) To stagger the four-year terms to maintain continuity on the board, the Secretary, Communications Officer, and 1 Member-at-Large would be elected for a 4-year term, and two Members-at-Large would be elected to two year terms, to be followed by 4-year terms. The following points came up during discussion by the membership:
 - a. Concerns include the fact that there would be fewer opportunities for members if there are half as many elections each year, and that the longer commitment might make people less willing to do it.
 - b. Concern that with longer terms, there is a greater chance that someone’s situation changes and they can’t complete the term. Discussion in response is that it’s still an issue in 2-year terms, and like in the past, if someone can’t complete their terms, there’d be a special election.
 - c. Conclusion was to keep Members-At-Large at 2-years to maintain opportunities for members, and switch Secretary and Communications Officer to four years for continuity.
 - d. It was brought up that a Constitution change requires 30-day notice, so the President will send notice of the change and in 30 days we’ll have an e-ballot. This e-ballot will need to precede the elections e-ballot, so that they are aware of new terms.

- 5) Next meeting will be our 30-year anniversary. (It's been concluded that the 1987 meeting was a precursor to SES, making the 1989 meeting the first.) Please send old photos and meeting information to Mike and Loren for inclusion at the celebration.
- 6) Concern was brought up about lack of consistency in student travel grants. They've existed at every meeting (we think) since Argonne, and this year six students received Parkinson Travel Awards, but it's not always a consistent amount of money or number of awards. There's no endowment for those awards, so it's hard to guarantee sustainability. It was suggested that people could donate to the awards as they register (though it was available this year and not utilized by members).

No other items were brought forth, so the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 am.