Minutes of the 2013 DNB Business Meeting
Saturday, Jan 5, 2013, San Francisco, CA

Submitted by Lisa Mangiamele, DNB Secretary

Attending Members: Lisa Mangiamele, Jim Murray, Mark Willis, Jim Belanger, Michael Baltzley, Duane McPherson, Jim Newcomb, Barbara Musolf, Darcy Ernst, Christopher Petersen

Other attendees: Michelle Elekonich

Items of Business:

1) Michelle Elekonich (melekoni@nsf.gov)
   NSF Program Officer, Division of Integrative Organismal Systems, Behaviorals Systems Cluster

   Michelle updated us on the NSF budget. As a result of continuing Congressional deadlock over sequestration, the NSF does not currently have a budget for the upcoming year. In the absence of a federal budget, NSF estimates that they will get 80% of the previous year’s budget. This means money is tight and there will be no new programs.

   NSF is still looking forward to supporting SICB symposia, with the following caveats: (1) they must be forward-looking, no retrospectives and (2) they emphasize integrative research and communication among fields that don’t normally interact.

   One mechanism to support your symposia is to connect it to the Research Coordination Networks program. This program is a somewhat underused funding mechanism, designed to “advance a field or create new directions in research or education by supporting groups of investigators to communicate and coordinate their research, training and educational activities across disciplinary, organizational, geographic and international boundaries. RCN provides opportunities to foster new collaborations, including international partnerships, and address interdisciplinary topics. Innovative ideas for implementing novel networking strategies, collaborative technologies, and development of community standards for data and meta-data are especially encouraged. RCN awards are not meant to support existing networks; nor are they meant to support the activities of established collaborations.” Your proposal does not go through the pre-proposal stage, and it must be submitted to the appropriate Directorate. There is only one deadline in the summer. Call the appropriate program officer for more details (see this link for contacts: http://www.nsf.gov/bio/ef/rcn_sees_contacts_2013.htm)

   Michelle also announced a change in the policy for requesting REU supplements. You can no longer request a supplement for an existing/funded NSF grant. All REU funding must be built into initial request. You can include information about REU in your pre-proposal.
2) Marvalee Wake, DVM  
Past-President

Marilee announced the International Congress in Vertebrate Morphology taking place in Barcelona, Spain on July 8-12, 2013. Abstract deadline is March 1. Check website, if interested: http://www.icvm2013.com/ The ICVM is especially interested in integrating a neurobiology/neuroanatomy component and are looking forward to receiving contributed papers from our division.

3) Jim Murray  
DNB Chair

Jim introduced our new chair, Jim Belanger, who will be taking office after the meeting.

He announced the new election cycle: all terms of office will be increased to 3 years, phasing this in over the next few years. The goal is to only elect one new officer per year. Jim solicited interest in forming a nominating committee.

Jim introduced new student/postdoc representative, Christine Bedora, who graciously volunteered for the position.

4) There was some conversation about how to run the best student presentation competition. The issue raised was that some other divisions are using a new model in which they pre-screen applicants. Students have to write an expanded 1 page abstract, which includes a figure and places the work within the broad context of the field. Abstracts are judged and finalists are invited to give talks in a separate session at SICB, and a committee picks the winners.

The division membership saw several CONS: (1) a potential negative impact on students by separating them into a student-only session instead of placing their talk in a session that is relevant to their field; (2) puts too much emphasis on the abstract data; (3) rewards a different skill set (abstract writing vs. presentation skills); (4) judging by committee instead of volunteer ballot.

Only a single PRO: extended abstracts require more student effort

DNB membership present did not think we needed to change our model. We only had 20 student presentations this year, so judging is not onerous, and leaving the competition open to all students encourages participation and inclusiveness.

5) Jim Murray  
DNB Chair

We have a $578 discretionary budget. This year we used some to contribute to the DAB/DNB social. We have about $400 left – what do we do with it? Could use it for BSP competition? Do we want to offer a travel award?

6) Darcy Ernst  
Student/Postdoc Representative
Darcy let us know that the student/postdoc booth in the exhibit hall needs volunteer faculty mentors. This booth is new this year and is providing professional development to students and postdocs. For example, they offer CV editing services at the meeting. Most important function of the booth is for faculty members to be there to provide informal networking opportunities, advice about grad school, postdocs, applying to jobs, etc.

7) There was some conversation about the issue of WiFi at the annual meeting. The cost for the 2013 meeting was $20-25 additional on the registration fee. The executive committee is studying the issue of whether or not we need more WiFi access at the meeting. It might depend on whether the SICB meeting app goes forward (this was in it’s trial phase at this year’s meeting). Members are encouraged to express their views on whether or not they would like WiFi at the meetings.

8) Announcement about AD Instruments loaner program, a collaboration with the Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience. Program is a competition for a 9-12 month loan of any AD equipment. See FUN website for more details: http://www.funfaculty.org/drupal/Equipment_Loan

9) Announcement to urge DNB members to contribute to the society-wide Researcher Database and the Digital Library. Jim Belanger will be spearheading effort to recruit more members to participate, especially w.r.t. contributions of neurobiology teaching materials.

10) SICB officers visited the business meeting to deliver news on important society-wide items:
   a. Next meetings are in Austin, TX and then West Palm Beach, FL (this one has free WiFi)
   b. Largest SICB meeting ever: 250 more abstracts submitted than 2012 meeting in Charleston, SC
   c. Solicited members to complete the post-meeting survey designed to gather data about member experiences at the meeting
   d. Need more donations to support funds for students. You can submit an individual donation.
   e. WiFi issue: the hotels aren’t really in control of the price because they contract to an outside firm, so SICB can’t use this as a negotiation item. A minority of venues have free/included WiFi.

11) Remember that another meeting of interest is the Gordon Conference. These are usually small (~100 attendees), and there is an emphasis on networking and collaboration. Next one is on August 17-18, 2013 in Mount Snow Resort, Vermont. See website for details: http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2013&program=grs_neuret