DVM Business Meeting Minutes 2015. January 5, 2015, West Palm Beach, FL

Casey M. Holliday, Secretary, DVM

Thanks to the fifty people who attended this year’s business meeting! This year’s DVM Business meeting started with Sophie George from NSF sharing updates to NSF policies and programs. She reminded us that the 2015 budget isn’t finalized yet and it will likely be near 90% of last year’s budget. NSF supports SICB symposia and is soliciting for groups that are ‘forward-thinking.’ In future NSF proposals we should be expected to fold all budget items into the full proposal including REU lines.

Chair Alice Gibb reported that this year’s SICB meeting drew 2000 attendees with 1500 abstracts. Besides being the 3rd largest meeting so far, it also had one of the highest cancellation rates. We expect Portland, OR, in 2016 to be a big meeting. Program officer Rita Mehta reported that DVM have over 400 abstracts and 33 sessions. As a reminder, anyone wishing to be in the DVM sessions should use ‘Morphology’ as the 1st key word when submitting their abstract.

The meeting then turned to discussion about the Best Student Presentation Awards. The application, selection, and evaluation processes are all still evolving for both the Liem and Davis awards as we deal with increased applications. The DVM leadership is working to improve communication amongst the applicants and judges. The submission information and interface on the SICB webpage will be improved. Suggestions for better executing and filtering applicants for the Liem award included emailing pdfs of completed posters to the award committee 10 days prior to the meeting as a means to ensure the students were serious. The pdfs could then be distributed to the judges prior to the meeting to facilitate judging. This motion was carried and will be implemented in 2016. A debate about whether there should be a separate undergraduate award occurred. For the time being, undergraduates will continue to participate within the larger pool of applicants.

Next on the docket was raising money, awareness, exposure, and enthusiasm for the Division of Vertebrate Morphology. Callum Ross and Alice Gibb discussed how we need to reach $25,000 for an endowment. This endowment could then be used to better fund awards, regional meetings, maybe even a booze cruise. Proximally, the collection of DVM dues will begin as soon as possible. The motion was approved to minimally charge $10 for regular members and $5 for student and postdoc members. Of course, donations are always welcome.

Finally, Secretary Casey Holliday discussed the requirements and bylaw changes that will need to occur to better streamline the best student presentation awards and dues collection.

This meeting saw the end of Alice Gibb’s tenure as Chair. Alice has generously agreed to stay on as an unofficial member-at-large to help with fundraising. We also wish the fondest farewell to Rita Mehta who is finally stepping down from her position as program officer. Rita stayed on for extra time to help us better stagger and overlap the appointments of committee members. This year we welcome Callum Ross, the new Chair and Manny Azizi, the new Program Officer. Thanks!