

Secretary and Secretary-Elect Manual

Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology

Last updated September 2023, M. Johnson and M. Porter

A. General Information

The position of Secretary is generally responsible for the SICB Constitution and Bylaws (maintaining and amending them, as well as confirming compliance with them), elections, and newsletters. New Secretary-Elects will want to familiarize yourself with all the information under the <https://sicb.org/governance/> website – much of the Secretary’s work is recorded here. The Secretary-Elect’s duties are to assist the Secretary in the duties described in this document, and to serve as acting Secretary in the Secretary’s absence (Bylaws Article VI).

Terms of Office. A person elected to this position serves two years as Secretary-Elect and two years as Secretary. (SICB Constitution Article III. Section 1)

Email Addresses. Secretary – Secretary@sicb.org. Secretary-Elect – Secretary.Elect@sicb.org

B. Responsibilities of the SICB Secretary

SICB Constitution and Bylaws. The Secretary must be familiar with the SICB Constitution and Bylaws and must ensure that officers, committees, and divisions comply with the rules specified therein. The Secretary is responsible for reviewing proposals for amendments to the society bylaws, and for reviewing divisional bylaws and any proposed amendments to make sure they are compliant with the SICB Constitution and the SICB Bylaws. It is critical to our society’s goal of fair and transparent governance that our governing documents are consistent with our society’s policies and practices.

Elections. “Elections of Society-wide Officers, Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee, and Divisional Officers shall be held by appropriately secure electronic ballots. The Secretary shall make certain that ballots are made available to the entire membership of the Society and allow one month for their completion, the due date being stated on the ballot. The Secretary shall be responsible for overseeing the counting and recording of the votes and shall notify the candidates and the Executive Committee of the results of the election. The results of the election will be published in the Fall Newsletter of the Society prior to the Annual Meeting. In the event that the vote for any Society-wide candidate should result in a tie, the three Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall vote to resolve the tie.” (SICB Constitution Article III. Section 4)

Records of the Society. “The Secretary shall have the responsibility of seeing that complete records of the Society are kept, and that minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee and of the annual business meeting of the Society are recorded.” (SICB Bylaws Article V. Section 1)
The Secretary also maintains the lists of society and divisional awards.

List of Officers and Committee Members. “The Secretary shall have the responsibility for preparation of the list of officers and committees for publication for posting on the Society’s website.” (SICB Bylaws Article V. Section 1) In practice, this is accomplished by updating a

series of shared spreadsheets (via Google docs) and providing relevant information to the SICB webmaster to update the website when new officers take office.

Membership Committee. “The Secretary shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Membership Committee.” (SICB Bylaws Article V. Section 2)

Divisional Secretary Meeting. “The Secretary shall meet with all of the Divisional Secretaries at the Annual Meeting to coordinate Society and Divisional Newsletters and elections.” (SICB Bylaws Article V. Section 4).

C. Procedures and Timelines for Duties of the Secretary

Newsletters. The Secretary is responsible for the production and dissemination of the two annual newsletters, with the help of the divisional secretaries and the webmaster.

The Secretary will inform the Divisional Secretaries, the SICB Executive Committee, and the committee chairs of the deadlines for submission to the newsletters, with at least one month to prepare their materials for submission. In practice, we have given contributors to the society-wide newsletter a deadline one week later than the deadline for divisional newsletter submissions. The deadline for the production of the Fall Newsletter should take into consideration the timing of the fall on-site meeting of the Program Committee so program information can be included.

An example of deadlines is provided:

Spring Deadline for submissions	March 15
Postings ready for online preview	April 2
Deadline for corrections	April 9
Newsletter goes online:	April 16
Fall Deadline for submissions	October 10
Postings ready for online preview	October 25
Deadline for corrections	November 1
Newsletter goes online	November 8

Approximately one month before each submission deadline, the Secretary will announce to those contributing to the newsletter of the upcoming deadline, and should also remind everyone of the submission deadline one week before that deadline. For the spring newsletter, the Secretary will also communicate with candidates for society-wide office to collect their biography submissions.

The Divisional Secretaries are each responsible for preparation and submission of their division’s newsletter. Divisional Secretaries will also solicit and prepare the ballot information and biographies for election of officers within their divisions.

The President, Treasurer, and Program Officer are each responsible for submitting their own reports to the Secretary for inclusion in the newsletter. All committee chairs are welcome and strongly encouraged to prepare a written report of their committee activities for the newsletter.

All newsletter materials should be submitted using the Google Drive folders set up by the Secretary. Each submission will be edited by the Secretary, compiled in the online newsletter set up by the webmaster (we currently use WordPress to prepare SICB newsletters) and shared with the author for final approval. The Secretary should confirm that the newsletter style and formatting is generally consistent, using information in the [Newsletter Formatting Guide](#). The inclusion of photographs is encouraged!! Photos should be reasonably high in resolution, suitable for online viewing.

Details of the divisional newsletters are published in the Divisional Secretary Manual. The Secretary will read and proof the submissions by each division. This is especially important to ensure that information is accurate, especially deadlines.

The final newsletter will be posted on the SICB website, and shared with the membership via an email blast. The Secretary writes the text of this email blast, highlighting the particularly interesting components of the newsletter.

For the spring newsletter, the Secretary is responsible for including biographies of candidates for Society-wide offices and for details of any ballot measures including amendments to the SICB Constitution or Bylaws. The Secretary should also review any proposed divisional bylaws amendments for consistency with the SICB Bylaws. In doing so, it is also a good idea to check against other divisional bylaws for examples of policies and procedures. It is generally recommended to minimize procedural details in the Bylaws, to minimize the need for changes that require a vote. Proposed bylaws amendments must be posted on the SICB website for at least 30 days before an election, and the secretary sends an email blast announcing the proposed amendments to the divisional or society-wide membership when they are posted.

Elections. The Secretary is responsible for elections, which are usually run once per year in the spring via an online ballot (although special elections may be held at other times). Elections are held according to an election schedule that the Secretary maintains for both Society-wide and Divisional offices. This schedule must be in compliance with SICB and divisional bylaws.

1. Divisional Chairs are reminded to appoint nominating committees to elect divisional officers in the spring (SICB Calendar: 15 Sep). The annual meeting is the ideal time to recruit candidates. Thus, divisional nominating committees should be formed well in advance of the annual meeting.
2. The President appoints a Nominating Committee for election of Society-wide positions (SICB Calendar: 1 Oct).
3. Certification of Candidates. The SICB Nominating Committee must certify to the Secretary that each candidate is a member of the SICB and has declared willingness to run for office and to serve, if elected. The Divisional Secretary should similarly certify candidates for the respective divisional offices. The certification of candidates should be completed by Feb 1. (In practice, as the ballot is prepared, the Secretary should also

confirm that each candidate is a member of SICB in good standing, meaning that current dues have been paid.)

4. The chair of the SICB Nominating Committee will supply the Executive Officers with the names of the nominees at least one month before the submission deadline for the spring newsletter. The chairs of the divisional nominating committees will supply this information to their respective Divisional Secretaries.
5. Each candidate for office will prepare a candidate biography should be approximately 300 to 400 words (in fairness to all candidates, biography length should be held to strict limits) and should include the following information:
 - a. Name
 - b. Current position
 - c. Education
 - d. Professional experience
 - e. SICB activities
 - f. Other memberships
 - g. Research interests
 - h. Goals statement
6. The Secretary and the Divisional Secretaries will edit the biographies for publication in the spring newsletter.
7. The SICB webmaster will prepare the electronic ballot and provide the Secretary with the link to monitor the election results. The ballots must be open for at least one month, as specified in the SICB Bylaws.
8. The Secretary is responsible for personally notifying all the candidates (both Society-wide and divisional) of the election results (win or not win; actual numbers of votes are not disclosed). This should be done via email immediately after the results are known, and before results are posted or more broadly announced. The Secretary will also prepare an Election Report (including the percentage of members voting in each election), including the results of each officer election and all other ballot measures, to be distributed to the Executive Committee and posted on the SICB website. Results will also be published in the fall newsletter.

Annual Meeting Events

- In advance of the annual meeting, the Secretary gathers the annual reports from each society-wide officer, divisional chair, and committee chair, which are compiled as appendices in the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings.
- The Secretary must chair the meeting of Divisional Secretaries during the annual meeting. In early December ahead of the annual meeting, the Secretary should invite the SICB Secretary-Elect and all Divisional Secretaries and Divisional Secretaries-Elect to the meeting. The Secretary will prepare an agenda and lead a discussion of the newsletter deadlines and format, election procedures, divisional business meeting minutes, and any other relevant business.
 - Divisional secretaries are responsible for the minutes of their divisional members meetings and should be reminded of this responsibility at the secretary's meeting during the annual meeting. These minutes are to be sent to the Secretary for posting on the SICB website by the deadline for submission for the spring newsletter, with links to them in the divisional newsletters.

- The Secretary is a member of the Executive Committee and is thus expected to attend both meetings of the Executive Committee, and record the minutes of those meetings.
- The Secretary is expected to attend the Society-wide business meeting and may deliver brief comments (e.g., on results of member surveys, website updates, etc.). The Secretary is also responsible for the minutes of the business meeting (see below).
- The Secretary should check with the Management Company on the award plaques and certificates to be distributed at the business meeting to be sure they are all correct and ready to go.
- The Secretary is an *ex officio* member of the Membership Committee and should attend a meeting of this committee.

Attendance at the Annual Planning Meeting

As an Executive Officer of the SICB, the Secretary is expected to attend a two-day planning meeting each fall. This meeting coincides with a meeting of the Program Committee to plan the annual meeting and normally occurs in late September or early October. The Secretary works with the Executive Officers and BAI to set up the agenda for this meeting and arrange access to any supporting documents needed.