

# **Virginia Section of the American Chemical Society**

## **Executive Committee Meeting Agenda**

Virginia Commonwealth University

Room: 3309 Temple Building

**Saturday, 25th January 2020**

**Refreshments available at 8:30 AM**

**Meeting – 9:00 AM- 11:00 AM**

**Meeting attendees: Julian Bobb, Ashley Tubbs, Mike Hunnicutt, Jim Beck, Stephanie Mabry, Ken Chapman, Kathryn Deibler, Rob Davidson, Joe Pompano, Denise Walters, Samy El-Shall, Sarah Porter, Linette Watkins (via ZOOM), Janet Asper (via ZOOM), Kristine Smetana (via ZOOM), Ann Sullivan (via ZOOM), Charlene Crawley (via ZOOM), Tom DeVore (via ZOOM).**

### **I. Call to Order at 9:00 AM**

Samy called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

### **II. Approval of the Agenda**

Agenda was approved as posted.

### **III. Old Business**

Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2019 Executive Committee meeting.

Samy first took the opportunity to thank Joe P. for his service as chair last year. Joe then officially passed the gavel to Samy.

The minutes from the Sept. 2019 were approved as posted.

#### **IV. 2020 Budget Review & Discussion (Rob Davidson)**

Rob mentioned that we ended with a surplus, which is good news and bad news, only because we did not get a few things done that we wanted to get done. This surplus was after transferring money from the trust account. We only needed to transfer a little under \$10K, which is less than we planned on. Expenses were \$11K lower than budgeted because of various reasons (e.g., we got some local sponsors for community activities, chemistry olympiad was lower, no significant activities from minority affairs, education committee gave away no teacher grants, ).

Teacher grants are usually up to \$500, we usually give away 2-4 per year. **Kristine volunteered to chair the Education Committee** since the current chair has gone incommunicado. No one knew whether any teachers had applied for a grant or if they were just not answered. It was suggested that we put a notice in VAST's newsletter if possible. Ken said that he would make a contact with VAST for this purpose. Janet suggested that we could host a workshop to help teachers write the grants. Kristine mentioned that she has something along these lines in the community activities plans. A lengthy discussion followed about the best way to advertise and make teachers aware of this opportunity, and other opportunities offered by the section (i.e. Project SEED). Mike asked if we can ensure that the application is made available on the website, so that members can share with teachers in their network. The application is available but we need to update the contact information with Kristine's information. **Kathryn will take care of updating this information.** Joe P. suggested creating a gmail account for the chemical education. Samy asked Denise to schedule a meeting with the state-wide STEM coordinator to facilitate communication with high school science teachers. **Denise will find out who to contact with the state, and the VJAS program, and some other outlets. She will make some calls and get started on making these contacts.** Mike suggested that we should probe the state of chemistry education in the public schools (SOL no longer required).

Rob asked that people continue to use the expense reimbursement form. Email Rob to request if you need it. Rob also mentioned that we continue to get fraudulent requests for gift cards, so please do not reply to those!

Draft budget has been made available. Stephanie asked about the allotment from Nationals - this is set by National ACS and we have no control over it. Right now we are showing about a \$6000 deficit. We will vote on it at the end of the meeting.

## V. Officer's Reports

### a. Past Chair – Joe Pompano

Joe completed the annual report as required, and asked Nationals to give Mike, Julian, and Stacey access to the report. **They will add their information and the Councilors will approve the annual report by Feb. 15. Rob and Kristine will also add their sections of the report.**

Joe also asked us to start thinking about nominations for the Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary for next year 2021. Rob and Sarah complete their three year terms this year.

Jim asked about the ChemLuminary awards. The annual report is the main (or only) factor in consideration for the award. Joe underscored the importance of getting the annual report done on time for consideration for the ChemLuminary award.

### b. Chair - Samy El-Shall

Samy summarized all of the meetings from last year. He mentioned that we did very well on the impact of the meetings and having meetings located in various locations. He suggested that we should always try to have a meeting at SMV each year. Denise said that the SMV is so popular now that they are booking events up to two years ahead so if we want to use it, book early. Jim suggested to try and book the January 2021 now. **This will be Vanessa's responsibility to run this meeting (she is at the leadership conference this weekend so Denise will connect with her).**

### c. Chair Elect – LaChelle Waller

LaChelle's report summarized the section meetings for the year. Samy summarized her report and the upcoming meetings. November meeting will be Nov. 13 at JMU, speaker will be Chrissi Hughey from JMU who will be speaking on beer chemistry and brewing. October meeting date is not announced yet but will be announced as soon as possible.

Janet said that she has reached out to Germanna CC and a jet propulsion company in Culpeper about hosting meetings next year.

Tom reminded everyone about the May meeting - it is the Virginia Academy of Sciences (VAS) meeting at JMU. There will be a chemistry session and a

chemistry education session. He also put in a plug for judges for the VJAS in May. **Kathryn will update the website with this information and Jim will put in the next newsletter.**

d. Vice Chair – Vanessa Lopez

Vanessa is at the leadership conference this weekend.

e. Secretary - Sarah Porter

Sarah asked for updates to contact information and committee chairs and sent around a sign up sheet. Jim also asked for updates for his records.

f. Treasurer- Rob Davidson

Already discussed the budget, Rob did not have any further report. Charlene came in via ZOOM with a report from the Minority Affairs Committee. Charlene shared two activities (SMV field trip for a local school, and a career day for a local school with help from Dr. Mychal Smith at VCU). Charlene shared information about the field trip and the career day and Janet mentioned that we need to make sure this goes into the annual report. She is in the process of recruiting more students for NobCChe (previous executive committee has all graduated)

**She asked for a budget of \$1500** for creating another minority student summit, and submission of an NSF proposal to increase engagement and learning in STEM for at-risk youth. She has already started the NSF proposal.

Samy will ensure that Charlene's report gets forward to the members of the EC.

g. Councilors - Kristine Smetana, Ann M. Sullivan and Linette Watkins

Linette summarized her brief report. She mentioned the newly passed governing documents by ACS, this was a good thing. She discussed some National News, as reported in CEN. Regarding SERMACS: Exec committee meeting in Augusta, she mentioned the meetings for the next several years. Our section has decided to not worry about trying to host for a while (later in the decade).

Rob asked about who would be attending the National meeting in Philadelphia. Ann has not decided yet if she will go. Janet will be attending from Friday - Wednesday. Linette will attend from Saturday - Wednesday. Joe is going as well.

#### h. Trustees - Philip P. Burks, Stephanie Mabry and James N. Demas

Stephanie thanked Phil for his service over many years as a Trustee and welcomed Ken as the new Trustee. Her report highlights the balance of the account and the ~\$10K transfer. They will plan a formal report for the next EC meeting. The investment funds have grown since 2013. We generally rely on getting ~\$5K annually from these funds, aiming for a 20 year life time on the funds. We could manage our investments as an endowment fund, as an alternate plan. Do we want to use this as an income producing account, or do we want to draw down the principal? Joe P. suggested that we should not draw down the principal until we are ready to raise it back up again by hosting SERMACS. Stephanie said that she will try to recreate how the account has grown over the last 9 years (since SERMACS 2011). It looks currently like we will need to withdraw another \$10K for the upcoming year. Janet suggested that we should consider the value to the members on the money that we spend. She also suggested that our mission statement is not to sit on money, but to deliver value to our members and the community and advance chemistry. If we plan to host SERMACS about every 20 years, we can use that income to advance our mission and not worry about trying to grow our investments. Janet mentioned that much of our outreach and spending is in the Richmond area, so we should also consider increasing our impact across the section. A lengthy discussion followed about the best way to spread our impact and activities across the sections. Stephanie mentioned that we need to be confident in our ability to do SERMACS as an income source and feel secure in the financial security of the section. SERMACS as a money maker/cash cow is not guaranteed but it is one of the most lucrative regional meetings in the country. Jim recommended that we do not make any blanket policies right now, but to carefully consider all projects and how they impact the section before agreeing to the spending.

#### **VI. Selected Standing Committee Reports (~ 2 minutes each, please)**

##### a. Awards

i. Education- Larry White, Greg Grover

ii. Industrial and Service - Yezdi B. Pithawalla

Larry and Yezdi are not in attendance but did submit reports by email.

b. Chemical Education - Ryan Warren

No report submitted.

c. Community Activities - Kristine Smetana

Report submitted by email.

d. Entertainment - Kenneth Chapman

Ken summarized his report, which included attendance at meetings. Some meetings are poorly attended by members. Many retirees attend the meetings. The April meeting at UVa saw only a very small number of members. It is usually the same people attending all of the meetings. Rebecca (at UVA) has proposed doing away with the speaker at the UVA meeting because so many people leave for the speaker. Rebecca suggests making that meeting focused on younger students and professionals and the student posters and award winners. Mike suggested that the meetings can focus more on younger chemists and possibly students, to attract more members. **Joe P., Sarah, Rebecca, and Janet will work together on the UVa meeting.**

e. Project SEED - Mike Hunnicutt

Mike summarized his report. He thanked the EC and was appreciative of the service award. He thanked all of the people who worked on Project SEED. Significant events for the year: one new school (Longwood) added Project SEED. Total of 8 SEED students. Mike thanked Afton Chemical and Dupont for the summer tours. National SEED office is going to an online platform.

Goals for 2020: We are communicating with all chemistry departments in the section to increase visibility and encourage other sections to start a SEED program. Sarah, Mike, and Mychal are available to help any department that wishes to start the program. Our goal is to sustain current programs, and pick up one new school in 2021. We (Mike and Sarah) also plan to present at the BCCE in July 2020. Mike has met with the new superintendent of RPS to discuss support of the program from the district. Mike has run several PD programs for the chemistry teachers in RPS and they are working on a proposal for a workshop for all STEM teachers, and creating "chemistry in a box" kits for local teachers.

Mike thanked the section for financial support in 2019 and has Rob has already included a line item for \$6250 to support student stipends for the SEED students in the section. A charitable contribution to the section will help offset this cost.

Ken mentioned that Mike is very much admired by ACS staff for his outreach efforts. Rob suggested that we need to consider the long term implications of the financial obligation to the Section. Mike mentioned that the National office has an algorithm for how much local support they expect from programs, so we can estimate how much we would need to support more students.

**f. Younger Chemists Committee- Julian Bobb**

Julian summarized his report and introduced Ashley Tubbs (first year grad student at VCU) and said that he has recruited a number of other new members of the YCC. He discussed briefly the mentorship program. They hosted a luncheon for new mentors/mentees, he surveyed participants and learned that face-to-face meetings are a very important part of the program. The mentors are retired chemists, chemists from GSK, Afton, Altria, etc. They have 14 mentors and 15 mentees currently. He would like to see the mentorship program grow, and might need to think about making a separate committee if it continues to grow. Please let Julian know if you are interested in becoming a mentor. Most of the mentors are from Richmond, so distance can be an issue for students outside of the area.

YCC is also teaming up with WCC for more collaboration in the coming year. They have a tour of Evonik planned, a trivia night, and some other activities. They have \$1200 line item on the budget and they are also looking for funding from ACS.

Mike suggested reaching out to Dr. Waller for the career panel at VCU in December and working with WCC to get new members.

**VII. R. Gerald Bass Award for Exceptional Service**

Recommendation to nominate Ann Sullivan for the award. We propose that the nomination comes from Jim Beck and the award will be conferred at the March meeting.

Ann thanked the committee for the nomination.

**VIII. Chemistry Olympiad (New Leadership or small group of volunteers)**

Ann discussed that the Olympiad is an extremely important outreach activity that she has been running for 15 years. She has not been able to give student awards for the last two years. It is a “condensed” activity where the big time commitment is in March and April. Ann needs help, and can’t continue to run it by herself. She needs someone to host the national exam in April, and help with certificate printing and mailing. She is ready to pass it off to someone who has the passion to grow it back up.

Joe mentioned that Gary Lutz might be willing to take over after he retires. **Joe and Sarah said that they would help out and serve on a committee. Ann will go ahead and run it this year, and we will work to make the transition for next year.** The students take the exams over the month of March. The national exams happen in April.

### **IX. Section Website (Webmaster and Operating rules)**

We need a new webmaster. Kathryn has been working with Ann on the website. Everyone needs to check the website and let Kathryn know if there are things that should be taken off or added. Neither Kathryn nor Ann wishes to continue to be the webmaster. We need multiple people to do this. She asked for people who are willing to be trained on the website. Stephanie asked if we are trying to move to a group of webmasters rather than a single person. Ann suggested that we select one person to be responsible for various sections of the website rather than a single person. Kathryn is willing to fill in until someone else steps in - the events are the most time consuming part, so she asks for the information as soon as possible. Each committee chair should be given the ability to add their own events. Kathryn asked if committee chairs would take the website training so that they can maintain their own events updating. A lengthy discussion followed about the best way to coordinate the website updates. Kathryn will work on emailing all committee chairs and determine who should be trained.

### **X. Collaboration with the Science Museum (Denise Walters)**

- (1) Denise shared about ACS VA Section/Science Museum of Virginia (SMV) join goals.
- (2) Denise covered highlights (pictures) about the radical reactions refresh activities, and that they’ll have a sponsorship request of \$1,500.
- (3) Denise requested that we forward ideas to her regarding the strategic planning coming up by the SMV.
- (4) Let Denise know if you are interested in participating in the illumination gala.
- (5) She shared information about the volunteering opportunities available at SMV.
- (6) Denise mentioned adding financial goals to the VA ACS strategic plan, and that we need to (add new/remove old goals) to the VA ACS strategic planning.

Rob Davidson said that the Math and Science Center is still active.

**XI. New Initiative: Frontiers in Chemistry Series for High School Teachers (Samy El-Shall)**

Samy discussed a new initiative to have programs/workshops for public school science/chemistry teachers. The suggestion is to have a speaker share about new frontiers in chemistry and also to provide resources/materials for attendees. Michael Hunnicutt suggested getting a curriculum (approved by the school system) for teachers to get professional credits/development. Michael Hunnicutt suggested to Samy to start the program in the Richmond area and also maybe partner with other emerging/existing similar programs.

**XII. Other business**

Rob moved to approve the budget as it is. Budget approved.

**XII. Adjournment at 11:00 AM**

Samy adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

***Minutes recorded by Sarah Porter (Secretary's note: \*\*Thank you to Julian Bobb for recording the minutes at the end of the meeting as I had to leave early)***