Virginia Section of the American Chemical Society
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Virtual: Zoom
Saturday, February 3rd, 2024
Meeting Time: 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM ET

Attendance: Julian Bobb, Janet Asper, Jim Demas, Jorge Alvarado, Tom DeVore, Ken Chapman, Joe Crockett, Colleen Taylor, Rob Davidson, Ashley Tubbs, Charlene Crawley, Stephanie Mabry, Kristine Smetana, LaChelle Waller, Phil Burks, James Beck, Denise Walters, Joseph Pompano, Yezdi Pithawalla, and Jack Brown

I. Call to Order at 10:07 am

II. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was moved to approve the agenda, agenda approved without changes.

III. Approval of Minutes from previous June Executive Committee Meeting (hybrid)

Motion was moved to approve the June meeting minutes. Minutes approved.

IV. New Business

a. Annual Reports & ChemLuminary Award Nominations – Due February 15

Reports haven’t started yet. Need to have the report approved so that we can get our allotment. Julian will email Charlene the report template and the chemluminary award questions.

b. Strategic Planning Retreat Update – Joe Pompano

Rob: We haven’t followed up on it at this point. We came up with a new mission and vision statement. Rob will send out a note to the participants of the strategic planning retreat to have a meeting to touch base-Joe Crocket and Kristine would like to be added to the email list as well.

Joe P.: Nothing has been done with the objectives. Joe and Rob will put together a Zoom call.

Phil Burks said that he noticed that from the June Meeting that we don’t have a lot of active volunteers.

Joe P. said that he has full access to the website. Denise suggests finding ways to get new people engaged.
c. National Historic Chemical Landmark Dedication at UVA – Rob

Rob started working on the landmark 4 years ago. Had a hard time finalizing a date between the national ACS and UVA. Will have a steering committee meeting next week. I would like to have as many members of the executive committee to attend. It will be on March 1st, Friday at 2 pm in the afternoon. Lots of work has been going on behind the scenes. Hoping to have Larry White to attend since he did a lot of the initial work. Denise said a huge thank you to Joe and Rob for leading the efforts in getting this set-up. Denise can send it to the director of the science museum and if he’s not able to attend, Denise (board director) can attend to represent on behalf of the science museum. Rob said that they will have to work on parking.

d. Budget Review and Approval (save for the end)
Rob moved it to the end of the meeting

V. Officers’ Reports

a. Immediate Past Chair – Jack Brown
Thanked everyone for their support this past year. Ashley held a leadership workshop at VCU with Jack that went positively.
The challenge for a new graduate is to understand the safety culture in industry. He said he is a disciple of lab safety. Said that there’s been difficulty last year to get universities (VSU, VCU) to get people to champion on hosting meetings. We need to figure out how to engage folks from areas outside of Richmond. Jack will finish writing up his report. Rob encouraged Jack to finish his report for the Final Reports.
Yezdi said that he can provide someone from Altria to talk on this safety talk in October. They can say a few words. Look at it from an industry standpoint.
Jorge can send someone from Haleon also.

b. Chair – Joseph Crockett
Two things to work on this year. Communication between the colleges. Would like to see engagement by the different schools (faculty and students)
See the implementation of lab safety teams. Like to work on it with two-year schools, four-year schools and graduate program
Janet suggests having industry sponsors who can help to communicate the importance of lab safety.

c. Chair Elect – Ashley Tubbs
Sent out the chair-elect report. Have February-April meetings ironed out. Working on the September – November meetings. Thinking of ways to have non-traditional events to get more engagement.
Joe C would like to have more events such as YCC in JMU, UVA, UMW, etc.
Janet said that someone from the different locations would have to be willing to champion helping out the events.

d. Vice Chair – Jorge Alvarado
No report.

e. Secretary – Julian Bobb
Conducted elections last year and submitted the report to CC. Will work on the strategic planning shared folder.

f. Treasurer – Rob Davidson
Last year we ended up with a deficit of $9300 dollars. Program receipts were lower than anticipated and due to lower meeting attendance. Had reduced activities last year due to lack of committee chairs. No expense from project seed last year. Mychal smith had us pay for the closing food but it didn’t happen. It is an important part of the ACS. Money in the checkbook is 27,636.29 on 1/1/24. Money in the money market account is $10,728.88.
Rob mentioned that people should get the receipts to him as soon as possible so that we don’t have to pay for last year’s expenses in the new year. Vanessa Lopez has access to our checking account and credit card.
We continue to get fraudulent emails. Look out for those.
Jack said that it’s always good to send out a reminder.
Stephanie asked what’s the hold-up to get Vanessa off the account? All of the signers have to be there. The bank is Truist. Our account is not set up as a non-profit but has a business account. Rob can maybe close the business account and start a new business account. Will provide updates for the next executive committee meeting.

g. Councilors – Janet Asper, Kristine Smetana, or Linette Watkins
No report.
Kristine is a consultant for safety and liaison on SOCED. Rob said that there will be $750 in the budget for cover.

h. Trustees – Ken Chapman, James Demas, or Stephanie Mabry
   Rob can give Stephanie some time if he needs money transfer. They did an audit of the budget at the June meeting.

VI. Selected Standing Committee Reports (~ 3 minutes each, please)
   a. Awards:
      i. Education – open
         Don’t have an education committee. We will need to have a high school, middle school, and elementary school teacher of the year. We can get names for these awards.
      ii. Industrial and Service – Yezdi B. Pithawalla
         Sent out a report with activities from last year. Jeff Seeman will receive the distinguished research award. March 22 is the date for the award. The two award recipients will be the speakers. Need work on how we will handle the meal. Jack suggests that we can do a tour of the biotech facility. There’re interests in doing tours again. March 29th will work better for the meeting. Rob will communicate this date to Frank Gupton. Yedzi will reach out to the recipient this week to see if they are available on those dates.

   b. Chemical Education – Kristine Smetana
      Still need to submit a report. Had one grant that was funded. Kristine is having difficulty getting proposals for the grants. Janet can get some word out about the grant in her area.

   c. Chemistry Olympiad – Sarah E. Porter
      No report. Rob said that she is doing the Olympiad. She has been spending some money.

   d. Community Activities – Kristine Smetana
      Last event was the healing power of chemistry. Building good relationships with folks at the museum. Had a good number of volunteers and great activities. 48 tables of activities. Need to get more hand sanitizers next time. The next event: Getting a charge out of chemistry. They will have it outside for CCEW, inside if bad weather. The science museum is planning a really big event for April 13th. Don’t have small and medium shirts. Kristine will work on submitting a chemluminary award. Rob will add an extra $500 to the budget to help with the shirts.
      Denise said that all earth day activees at the SM will be included in the entry fee ($10)
      Sign-Up sheet: Denise can help to get volunteers
e. Hospitality – open (Rob as fill-in)

Didn’t get a good turnout for the two fall 2023 meetings. Ann and Rob are temporarily filling this role. We started to use Venmo to sign-up for events – worked well for the most part. Eventbrite didn’t work well for the VCU September Meeting.
If Ann and Rob can’t make it to the March Meeting, someone else can help out.

f. Government Affairs – open

No chair

g. Minority Affairs – Charlene Crawley and Colleen

Colleen said that at VSU, she was able to change curriculum to include black chemists. Charlene would like to couple what they do with student engagement. See her report for additional information.
Colleen said that for NOBCChE students’ members, the ACS membership is free
Charlene said that there were 75 participants at the Black Chemist Panel yesterday.
Charlene wants to get Community College students engaged early, including in the YCC. Want to get Community College students acclimated to the 4-year schools. Charlene is working on an NSF proposal to provide scholarships to support Community College students. Charlene requests a budget increase from $500 to $1500.
JMU has a new NOBCChE chapter. Tom DeVore will look into to see if their chapter is officially a NOBCChE chapter.

https://www.nobcche.org/gmu
https://www.nobcche.org/hampton1

h. Nominations – Jack Brown

Brandi Ford was recognized with the 2024 volunteer outreach of the year award.
Yezdi said that at the end of this meeting, we can consolidate a list of the open vacancies with description so that it can be shared to get new people to volunteer and include time commitment and what values they will get out of it.
Denise said that to include the scope of what the expectations are as well. Perhaps to use the list Yezdi was suggesting to share with universities and companies.
Ashley suggests including time commitments (1 hr. a week) and set-up a form that people can send out.
Janet: make the google form, include a QR CODE, and use it on a slide for events for people to sign up.
i. Project SEED – Mychal Smith
   One of the faculty, other than Mychal will be doing project SEEDS this summer. The faculty is Josh Seiber.

j. Publications – Jim Beck
   Jim finished up 31 years of working on the bulletin. Jim is working on the meeting notices to be updated on upcoming events. Can work with an interim editor once we get someone. Jim will also email out a list of upcoming events to our members (special emails). YCC has their own newsletter now. If we don’t have an editor in the foreseeable future, Jim can help work on sending out two newsletters (2 per year) during the year to update folks on upcoming and past events. Jim would like to see the bulletin continue. Jim will continue to send out meeting notices.
   Jim thanked everyone for providing materials for the last 31 years.

k. Safety – Joseph Crockett
   Look around where you’re at (industry/school) on who can be informed.

l. Strategic Planning – Joseph Pompano
   Talked about it. See previous notes above.

m. Student Affiliate Chapters – LaChelle Waller
   Had good students for the black chem panel. Want to get more students engaged. Pushing to get a database to be able to reach out to the different schools. Finding ways to engage high school students, share about SEED.
   Planning a mixer, to get student chapter leaders and students to connect.
   Planning to do a STEAM Day event again this year.
   Hosted the VCU Undergraduate symposium last December. Industry partners came out. Will do another one this year. Colleen encourages Lachelle to do hybrid events.
   VSU student chapter can use some money: $1000 and VCU: $1000
   Jack has a list of the universities due to the student awards (April meeting). Jack will provide the list to Ashley and Lachelle.

n. Senior Chemists Committee – no update
   No report

o. Younger Chemists Committee – Ashley Tubbs
   Won the chemluminary award for outstanding YCC. Hosted 9 events last year.
We did update the structure of the governance board. Trying to maximize the number of volunteers and provide a pipe line for matriculation
This year: leadership workshop and kickoff social
Will do hybrid, virtual in-person events
Hoping to setup a MailChimp
Budget for $2216
p. Webmaster – Joe Pompano
Arranged the page so that it can be easy to gather stuff. We can let him know if you have questions. Need to upload the June 2023 meeting reports. Colleen will be removed from Government Affairs. At the next meeting, we can define better what the government affairs committee is.
Denise suggests identifying the top positions and finding champions to get the ball round and worry about the other openings later.
Janet suggests that we can provide a family friendly environment at the meetings. Kids can have an area to play/hang-out. Maybe include a notice about it on event promotions.

VII. Science Museum of Virginia Collaborations – Denise Walters
See Denise’s report

VIII. Recruitment for open committee chairs – time permitting

Phil Burks: For committees: 1) review the mission of the local section; 2) decide which committees are most critical to the mission; 3) continue as recommended to recruit small group to initiate action

IX. Budget Discussions and Approval (at least 10 mins)

The ACS Council is changing up how they do Travel.
Has $4000 for the landmark dedication and $2000 from ACS national for the reception. Looking at a $14000 deficit for the year-have money to cover it from our checking account. Rob recommends approving the budget as proposed.
https://www.acs.org/officer-toolkit/grants-and-awards.html
Jorge and Yedzi suggest applying for ACS Is grants and industry sponsorship, respectively.
Motion moved to approve the budget; budget approved.
X. **Adjournment**

Jerry Bass Award: It is selected by the executive meeting and not the nomination awards. Award is given to someone who received the distinguished service award. Jim Beck nominated Kristine for the Award. The Jerry Bass Award is for exceptional service. Motion was moved to nominate Kristine for the award. Motions approved.

Charlene suggests that for the Jerry Bass Award, longevity is a requirement.

Denise said that it is due to a combination of longevity and value added.

Yedzi said that Samy wants to know if someone from the section can nominate him for ACS Fellow. Samy can provide a lot of the information needed.

Joe Crockett encouraged Yedzi to encourage Samy to reach out to him about the nomination.

A Motion was moved to adjourn the meeting. 1:05 pm. Motions approved.