

**Minutes of the ASA Environment and Technology Council Meeting
August 16, 2003, Atlanta.**

Present: Phil Brown, John Bellamy Foster, Lori Hunter, Susan Roschke, Tammy Lewis, Maggie Alario, Ken Gould, Bob Brulle, Stella Capek, Steve Zavestoski.

The Chair-elect, Phil Brown, called the meeting to order at 2:00PM. Since Chair Loren Lutzenhiser could not be present, Phil Brown took over as Chair in that absence. The Chair thanked Susan Roschke, Rik Scarce, and J. Timmons Roberts for their service to the section, and noted the need to fill the positions that they are leaving. The Chair also noted the need for a higher volume of paper submissions for section sessions, as almost all submissions were accepted for presentation at this year's annual meetings

Secretary-Treasurer, Ken Gould reported on the Section's budget. He reported estimated annual expenditures of \$2,850, from projected revenues totaling \$2,948 resulting in a \$98 surplus. The Treasurer noted that revenues are dependent on membership numbers that determine dues income as well as ASA allocations to the section. The Section awarded \$200.00 to the winner of the Olsen Student Paper. The Secretary/Treasurer also noted a higher volume of nominations for the Distinguished Contribution Award this year.

The Chair read an e-mail from the Dave Sonnenfeld reporting for the nominations committee, and noting a positive response from, and appreciation for, those nominated for section offices. Chair-elect is Stella Capek and the new Secretary/Treasurer is Bob Brulle. New Council members are Steve Zavestoki and Dana Fisher. New Student Council Representative is Marcia Hill Gossard.

Susan Roschke, newsletter editor, noted that we need to find a new editor to replace her. There was some discussion as to whether Lori Hunter had just volunteered to fill this position. The Secretary/Treasurer noted that a smaller and less frequent publication would reduce costs, allowing the section to operate at a smaller membership level rather than artificially inflating its membership levels each year. Bob Brulle indicated that moving to a PDF-only version of the newsletter would slash costs further. Susan Roschke offered that ASA might cut the section budget to reflect savings accrued in moving from a hard copy to on-line publication. Maggie Alario noted that she had positive experience with an electronic newsletter in another organization. Bob Brulle agreed to check with ASA on any funding reductions that might be associated with a transition to a PDF-only newsletter.

The Secretary/Treasurer noted that the 2003 Distinguished Contribution Award would be presented to Craig Humphrey. The Chair indicated that in the future the award would be initially handled by a committee rather than the Council as a whole, with the committee Chaired by the Secretary/Treasurer and comprised of two other members of Council, one of whom will be Tammy Lewis. The award will be voted on by the Council as a whole.

In the absence of the entire Olsen Award Committee, the Chair announced that the winner of the 2003 Olsen Award was Kari Norgaard of University of Oregon. Some discussion of how to produce the certificate that accompanies the award at the last minute followed.

The Chair noted that the Boguslaw Award had fallen through the cracks this year, and suggested that in the future, a Council member should Chair the committee responsible for that award.

The Council discussed creating a single awards committee, but decided that it would be too much work for one person to oversee.

The Chair noted that Steve Kroll-Smith was willing to serve as the new Chair of the Olsen Award committee. Maggie Alario and Karen O'Neill comprise the rest of the Olsen Award Committee. The Chair further noted the need for one more Council member to serve on the Distinguished Contribution Award committee.

Steve Zavestoski, Chair of the Membership committee, indicated that section membership currently stands at 351, with 39 not renewed from last year. 103 former section members are no longer ASA members. Steve estimates membership at 370-375 after late renewals, and noted that 26 non-section members are presenting at environmental sessions in Atlanta. Steve offered to pursue those non-members vigorously. He also suggested looking at traditional section publication outlets for appropriate potential members, as well as the usual offers of free membership to graduate students.

Tammy Lewis questioned the efficacy of pursuing the goal of growth in section membership, suggesting that a smaller section might produce a more committed and higher quality group of scholars. Ken Gould agreed with this notion, offering that growth is not always good. Lori Hunter disagreed, suggesting that a larger and more inclusive section would be more influential within ASA and provide greater opportunities for graduate students and others. She also indicated that quality has not been a problem in section sessions. Susan Roschke countered that roundtables would always be available for large numbers, as they can be expanded. Bob Brulle offered that a bigger section would provide greater visibility for the field and that that would be good for our students. He also indicated that a bigger section would have more influence within ASA. Ken Gould countered that quality at section sessions had been poor, as noted repeatedly by graduate students entering the field as well as high profile scholars actively recruited by section members. Unsuccessfully. The Chair proposed that quality issue could be addressed through invited sessions and topically focused sessions with fewer open submission sessions, and noted that the Council was clearly split on the issue of size and quality.

The Chair informed the Council that a new ASA section on communications technology was in formation, and sought approval for the use of the term "technology" by the new section. The Council agreed that others were free to use the term.

The Chair indicated that a new section listserv manager was needed. Ken Gould suggested that Andrew Van Alstyne, a grad student at Michigan, might be willing to serve in this capacity. The Chair also noted that Robert Gardner, a grad student at Colorado, would take over from Rik Scarce as section Webmaster.

The Council discussed topics for next year's sessions in San Francisco. The Chair indicated that Riley Dunlap was proposing a session on environmentalism and anti-environmentalism. Ken Gould suggested a session on labor and environment. Lori Hunter offered that such a session would be a good way to attract folks from other sections. John Foster suggested a session capitalizing on interest in the 2004 elections such as electoral politics and the environment.

Maggie Alario suggested a session related to nuclear proliferation and/or transnational environmental issues in general. The Chair noted that a special session on environmental justice and health movements was being planned with the participation of Lois Gibbs and Bob Bullard. Bob Brulle suggested that we find foundation funding to support Lois Gibbs' airfare and the cost of a reception for her and other participants. Ken Gould suggested that the section conserve scarce resources by utilizing this as the section's annual reception. The Chair suggested approaching publishers and local universities for sponsorship.

The Chair mentioned that Tom Dietz would like the section to provide input on EPA and NSF requests to NRC/NAS for a study on "Social and Behavioral Science Research Priorities for Environmental Decision Making". Tom suggested that Gene Rosa take the lead on this and the Council agreed.

The Chair noted that Dave Sonnenfeld needs to be replaced on the nominations committee, which we will ask David Naguib Pellow to Chair.

The Chair then addressed the proposal for restructuring the section offices and responsibilities. The Council concluded that all section office terms should be two years in length except for that of Secretary/Treasurer to remain a three-year term so as to provide continuity in the transition from Chair-Elect to Chair. The Council made some minor changes to the restructuring proposal including folding the liaison position into the membership committee Chair's responsibilities. The Membership Committee would also be responsible for publishing a new brochure with more details about the section, including past Chairs and award winners. The Council discussed the appropriate location of the Olsen and Outstanding Publication Awards responsibilities. Bob Brulle suggested placing those tasks in the Policy and Research Committee, which is what the Council agreed on.

The Council discussed the efficacy of retaining an at-large Council member slot. Stella Capek indicated that an at large member was needed, especially to assume responsibilities that might arise outside of the delegated tasks included in the new section-restructuring proposal. The Council agreed to retain an at-large member slot.

The Chair indicated that the procedure for adopting the new structure was to place the proposal on a special ballot. The special ballot will cost the section approximately \$300 according to Michael Murphy at ASA. The Secretary/Treasurer noted that funding for the special ballot would be available if the section received external funding for next year's section reception as discussed earlier. The Council agreed that the restructuring proposal ballot process should be announced at the Section's Business Meeting in Atlanta.

The meeting concluded with a number of individual announcements.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenneth A. Gould,
Secretary-Treasurer