

Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Microbiological Society Inc.

[Held at the Victoria University of Wellington Pipitea Campus, 29. November 2007]

Meeting opened: 13:10

President: Phil Bremer
Vice President: Adrian Cookson
Secretary: Ralph Jack
Treasurer: Robin Simmonds

47 members indicated their attendance.

Apologies:

Iain Lamont, Anne Holmes, Mike Pearson, Clive Ronson, Greg Cook

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the 51st Annual General Meeting were published in NZ Biosciences and the Society Website in advance of the meeting.

Motion: That the published minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the previous AGM.

Phil Bremer, Gillian Lewis

Carried (unanimous)

Treasurers Report:

Robin Simmonds presented the audited statement of accounts.

Motion: that the treasurers' report and audited statement of accounts be accepted.

Phil Bremer, Geoff Tompkins

Carried (unanimous)

Newsletter Editors Report:

Phil Bremer presented this report on behalf of Greg Cook who was unable to attend. IN his report, Greg suggested it would be useful if all students winning a prize at the conference were required to contribute an article based on their work for NZ Bioscience.

SIG Reports:

Education: report tabled

Food and Public Health: Norberto indicated that there would be considerable involvement in the food microbiology sessions at the 2008 annual meeting together with the New Zealand Association

of Food Protection. Norberto also indicated he has joined the Public Health Association as an NZMS representative and was interested in collating the views of members on these activities. He also pointed out that the Public Health Association is an advisor to the Ministry of Health.

The secretary was asked if it was possible to provide the names of SIG members to convenors for contact purposes and indicated that this was possible.

John Tagg reiterated a plea for SIG to maintain interactions with the Australian Society for Microbiology.

John Young questioned the need for SIG at all. Gillian Lewis questioned whether changes to SIG would require constitutional change. Phil Bremer suggested that even inactive SIG are not doing any harm and that they could be left as is. However, Simon Swift suggested that they do indeed do harm, as they are not providing focus and leadership. Geoff Tompkins suggested that it was disappointing for students to find empty/inactive SIG. He also suggested that new faculty make good convenors, as they have enthusiasm and need to generate contacts. Lynne McIntyre pointed out that there was planning in place to ensure SIG participation in the Christchurch meeting, with time set aside for SIG meetings. Phil assured the membership that he would seek further feedback from the membership and the issue would be raised at the next AGM.

Report on 2008/2009 Meetings:

Lynne McIntyre reported that planning was well underway for the 2008 meeting in Christchurch and that there was an event manager (Rosemary Hancock) and website in place. She requested feedback with respect to themes *etc.* and the help of SIG convenors in selecting guest speakers.

Phil also added some comments regarding the 2009 meeting (COMBio, also in Christchurch which would take place from 06.-10. December 2009. He pointed out that details had yet to be worked out, for example how many sessions, speakers *etc.* Gillian Lewis raised the question of whether we would have any significant financial risk in the conference, but was otherwise enthusiastic about the joint meeting and suggested that it was a good thing to occasionally support larger combined meetings of this type. Hugh Morgan pointed out that it was difficult to give feedback on the venture when the membership had no details. Adrian Cookson reiterated the need for the society to be protected financially if it was to be involved in COMBio 2009. Robin Simmonds pointed out that the Society must underwrite its annual meeting by deed of constitution. Phil indicated that he was awaiting further information on the financial implications and was in contact with David Palmer of NZSBMB regarding this issue. Justin O'Sullivan pointed out that this was a great opportunity as it was an international conference, right here in NZ and would be great for students.

Election of Officers:

All existing members of the executive were re-elected un-opposed.

General Business:

Phil Bremer pointed out that Iain Lamont has agreed to be the NZMS representative to the IUMS.

Phil also pointed out that the American Society for Microbiology Ambassador for Australia/New Zealand/Oceania was Julian Rood and that Iain Lamont was the country (NZ) liaison and assistant to Julian.

Chris Sissons pointed out that Sue Turner and Simon Swift do the same for Microbial Ecology, but Sue pointed out that she is the Ambassador for NZ, not the Society.

Adrian Cookson queried whether we should be offering Iain support for his activities, but Phil indicated that this had not been requested.

Gillian Lewis suggested that if it were necessary, support for Iain would be sensible as he would be an excellent conduit of communication with the international societies.

Phil pointed out that Iain Lamont had also prepared a submission to the revised AS/NZ standards on work in microbiological laboratories.

Motion: that the treasurer receives an annual honorarium for their efforts, initially set at \$1250.

John Young, David Ackerley

Carried (Unanimous, Robin Simmonds abstained)

Chris Sissons questioned the accumulation of funds by the Society and wondered if that could cause problems with the tax department. Robin clarified stating that there was no problem as we do not make profit.

John Young made the suggestion that annual meetings should include more keynote speakers with longer time to present and that it would be useful to have less talks and more posters overall. These should include students and post-docs and he pointed out the need to exercise care and caution in selecting chairs for sessions. Adrian Cookson countered that 10 minutes is already a long enough time for a precise presentation and he did not feel he could have filled in 45 minutes instead. Chris Sissons pointed out that it was already difficult to accommodate all of the students wishing to present at the current meeting and that the student presentation breakdown for posters and orals was approximately 50/50. Steve Flint pointed out that there is no particular template for conference organisers and it is entirely up to them how to organise their meeting. Hugh Morgan commented that he felt 15 minutes was adequate and pointed out that universities already support students who are talking, but that there is less support for posters. Chris Sissons remarked that this meeting had trialled 2 minute poster presentations as a new innovation.

Meeting closed: 14:30

Ralph W. Jack
Secretary
01. October, 2008