

August 10, 2019

## 2019 MSA Council Meeting Minutes

### The Graduate Hotel Minneapolis

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#### Call to Order, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

The 2019 MSA Council meeting was called to order at 9:15 am on Saturday, August 10, by President Sharon Cantrell. Attending were President Cantrell, President-Elect Anne Pringle, Vice President Marc Cubeta, Treasurer Chris Schardl, Executive Vice President Marin Brewer, Councilors Sara Branco, Jason Stajich, Nhu Nguyen, Don Natvig and Alisha Quandt. Unable to attend were Past President Tom Volk, Past Past President Georgiana May and Councilors Conrad Schoch, Brandon Matheny, and Robby Roberson. Invited guests included Finance Committee Chair and Past President Jean Lodge, Program Chair Tony Glenn, Electronic Communications Chair and Webmaster Todd Osmundson, incoming Councilors Kathryn Bushley, Julia Kerrigan and Greg Bonito, incoming Treasurer Jessie Glaeser, and incoming Vice President Betsy Arnold. Also attending were Rebecca Shay and Kristi Gdanetz-MacCready from the MSA Student Section and Susan Rees and Bill Stoeffler of The Rees Group. Executive Vice President Brewer had distributed electronic copies of the Council meeting packet by email on Saturday, July 27, 2019. The Council meeting packet included the meeting agenda, the 2019 annual reports, minutes of the 2019 Executive Council meeting held by teleconference on February 9, 2019, minutes of the Council meeting held on July 16, 2018 in San Juan, PR, the 2018-2019 Official MSA Roster, the revised MSA Constitution and Bylaws, a motion by the North American Mycoflora Project for \$50,000 in funding by MSA and a revised Finance Committee Investment Policy Statement.

**Motion:** Executive Vice President Brewer referred to the 2018 MSA Council Meeting minutes in the Council packet and asked if there were any corrections. A motion was made to approve the 2018 Council meeting minutes. *Motion approved by unanimous vote.*

#### Officers' Reports

- a. **President's Report:** President Cantrell thanked the volunteers of the MSA and acknowledged the Council for their participation in the society. She then summarized highlights of the President's annual report. Her main effort as President was to select and transition to a new association management company. She led Executive Council in requesting proposals from three companies, reviewing the proposals, meeting with the different management companies, and making the decision to change management companies to The Rees Group. The transition from Allen Press to The Rees Group took place between mid-January and March 2019. Cantrell introduced and welcomed Susan Rees and Bill Stoeffler of The Rees Group (TRG). Cantrell announced that we have a new website that is responsive to all devices and that members can now participate in autorenewal of their MSA memberships.

**b. President-Elect's Report:** President-Elect Pringle summarized her annual report and echoed President Cantrell's statement that the transition to TRG has been great for MSA. Pringle reported that our contacts at TRG are very responsive and they get things done for us when asked. She stated that the changes in membership renewal options will greatly improve the membership process. Pringle mentioned that we need to reconsider the MSA committee structure and roles of councilors since there are so many committees to fill every year and the councilors have very limited roles. She mentioned that we have done an amazing job raising funds for student awards but may need to restructure general endowment or other funding based on Plan S, since it would result in decreased revenue from *Mycologia*. Pringle reported that MSA Awards Coordinator Andrea Porras-Alfaro, with assistance from TRG, created a Google form for awardees to use for submitting reports. Pringle stated that we need to work with TRG to streamline more activities in this way. She then reported that *Inoculum* is back to regularly published 3 issues per year. She stated that Kaylee Walters at TRG is now compiling the content for *Inoculum*. Pringle reported that the 2019 meeting abstracts will be published in *Inoculum*. She will continue as Interim Editor for *Inoculum* for another year or so, but we will need to find a new editor at that time. Pringle mentioned that we need more content from members for *Inoculum*.

**ACTION ITEM:** The MSA Student Section will encourage students to contribute content to *Inoculum*.

Pringle reported that the Editorial Advisory Board needs two additional members. Their role will be to make recommendations about the publisher, Plan S and other issues related to *Mycologia*.

**c. Vice President's Report:** Vice President Cubeta summarized his report stating that he participated in three activities, which were the 2019 election, working on the MSA code of conduct, and coordinating the 2021 joint meeting with the Botanical Society of America (BSA). He announced the results of the election and thanked people for standing for election and accepting positions. He then thanked the newly elected officers and councilors who could attend the council meeting. Cubeta mentioned that the new officers and councilors will assume responsibilities at end of the 2019 annual meeting. He stated that Stoeffler and Walters at TRG were instrumental in coordinating the election. Cubeta then announced that the joint meeting with BSA in 2021 was approved by MSA Council and is moving forward. He thanked everyone for their input and reported that the meeting will be at the Boise Center in Boise, ID. Cubeta announced that Merlin White is the local arrangements chair and Heather Hallen-Adams is program chair. Next, he stated that for \$500 MSA can join the Societies Consortium for STEMM, which is a group of over 100 scientific societies providing a voice for advancing ethical behavior. He mentioned that our Diversity and Inclusion Committee could contribute to these interactions with the consortium if we join.

**d. Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Schardl summarized his financial report of the MSA. He stated that the report would usually go through June of the current year, but there is no current information due to the transition and delays in TRG receiving financial information from Allen Press. Therefore, this report is based on December 2018 numbers. Schardl reported that total assets were approximately 1.76 million. There were a number of expenses including travel funding of \$50,000

for IMC11 attendees from developing countries to attend the meeting. He reported that MSA restricted assets are \$810 K, permanently restricted assets are \$463 K, and temporarily restricted assets are \$434 K. Schardl stated that we have the funds available to provide for the recurring awards that we list. He reported that we have done very well with donations. He stated that the IMC meeting was facilitated by MSA and there is a discrepancy between Sharon Cantrell's (MSA President and local organizer for IMC11) and Allen Press's reports. Schardl mentioned that this could be due to sponsorships that went through Cantrell's university. Stoeffler confirmed that TRG will investigate deposits from the sponsors. Cantrell stated that she would like to change the way IMA profits from IMC meetings since the local society does not benefit from any gains, but they do have to accept losses. She reported that the field trips and workshops generated a lot of money for IMC11 in Puerto Rico. She stated that we cannot afford to give everyone who speaks at the meeting waivers. Cantrell stated that we are entitled to a full report from Allen Press on the finances of the meeting and the activities of MSA. It has been very difficult to get financial information from AP over the years, so it is great that TRG is now in charge of expenses and accounting.

- e. **Executive Vice President's Report:** Executive Vice President Brewer briefly summarized her report for the year. She mentioned that she and President-Elect Pringle would need an extension for MOP revisions since many sections would need to be updated due to the transition to TRG. Brewer next requested that Council consider a motion to blanket approve all discounted memberships for members from developing countries as defined by WHO. Currently, she has to poll council for approval every time there is a request for discounted membership.

**Motion:** A motion was made for automatic approval by council for all discounted membership requests by members or applicants from developing countries as defined by WHO. *Motion approved by unanimous vote.*

## **Publications Reports**

- a. ***Mycologia*:** On behalf of Managing Editor Brian Shaw, Chris Schardl provided news that the journal is doing very well. Schardl reported that impact factor for *Mycologia* had reached 2.86. He reported the statistics for the 2018 calendar year: rejection rates (57.9%) have remained nearly constant across the past few years; 222 submissions were received by authors from 40 countries; there were 507 unique reviewers from 43 countries; and the average time to first decision from submission is 56 days. It was discussed that we may be able to get this time down by asking reviewers for quicker turn around. There was some additional discussion on how this could be further decreased by reminding Associate Editors and reviewers of upcoming deadlines. Schardl mentioned that they are trying to get more reviews, which would be submitted through the Review Editor, Keith Seifert. Schardl recognized and thanked Executive Editor, Keith Seifert, and Associate Editors who are rotating off this year. Schardl then mentioned Plan S, which is a movement signed on by some funding agencies that will require that the research they support be published in open access journals. If this plan gains traction it will change the model for *Mycologia*, which will have to become

open access. Currently, the editor Taylor and Francis has no page charges. Plan S would make page charges very expensive with an estimated average of \$3000 per manuscript.

- b. *Inoculum*:** President-Elect and Interim Editor Pringle reported that *Inoculum* was back online with regularly published issues of 3 per year. She stated that Kaylee Walters at TRG is now compiling the content for *Inoculum*. Pringle reported that the 2019 meeting abstracts will be published in *Inoculum*. She will continue as Interim Editor for *Inoculum* for the short-term, but stressed that we will need to find an editor soon.

### **Annual Meetings**

- a. Annual MSA meeting 2019, Minneapolis, MN.** Program Chair Tony Glenn reported that there is an excellent program planned, including workshops that are in progress, numerous posters and contributed oral presentations, and 6 symposia. He worked with Georgiana May, the local arrangements chair, and the University of Minnesota planning team to organize the meeting. Glenn thanked Chris Lapine at Allen Press for his assistance with the Program Book, which is available online and in print. He then thanked Jean Lodge for her help organizing the poster session.
- b. Annual MSA meeting 2020, Gainesville, FL.** President Cantrell reported that the meeting will be July 20-24 at the Hilton near the University of Florida campus. Matt Smith is the local arrangements chair. The meeting will be sponsored in part by the University of Florida Department of Plant Pathology. Dorms cannot be reserved until fall, but they will be made available for the meeting. There was some confusion about the days/dates of the general meeting, the foray, and the Council meeting since the current dates are Monday to Friday, rather than the usual Sunday to Wednesday dates of the general meeting with the foray on Sunday and Council meeting on Saturday.

**ACTION ITEM: Pringle will check in with Matt Smith on dates.**

- c. Annual MSA meeting 2021, Boise, ID.** Vice President Cubeta reported on his efforts in planning the meeting in his Vice President's report. Additionally, he mentioned that the meeting is scheduled for July 17-21. He recognized concerns about joint meetings, such as less input by MSA into the program and at times a lack of synergism, but stressed that BSA has been a good society for us to work with to plan a joint meeting.

### **Committee Reports**

- a. Finance Committee.** Committee Chair Jean Lodge reported that we did well in investments. She stated that in 2019 we made \$178,000 and more than made up for 2018 losses. Combined over those two years we are up approximately \$100,000. This is good especially since the market is so volatile. She expects that the market will continue to fluctuate over the next year.
- b. MSA Student Section:** Student Section Chair Gdanetz-MacCready reported that the Student Section elections were held and representatives for most committees were filled. This is the first year they had contested elections in the Student Section. She reported that the social media presence of the

Student Section is growing. They spent a lot of time revamping their website, which included moving student spotlights to a central location. Gdanetz-MacCready reported that they are working on collecting outreach materials. The Student Section organized a career-focused symposium for the 2019 meeting that will take place Tuesday.

- c. Electronic Communications.** Committee Chair and Webmaster Todd Osmundson reported that the MSA website has improved substantially. We continue to post job openings on the website, which is a great benefit to members and the scientific community. He mentioned that the FaceBook and Twitter accounts were slow this year. Osmundson then announced that there is a lot more we can do to generate interest in the society. Suggestions from Council included adding recently-published articles to Twitter, and tweeting *Inoculum* when it comes out and also adding it to FaceBook. Rees and Stoeffler of TRG mentioned that they can help us with our social media presence. They mentioned that some societies have editorial boards for social media. Further discussion centered on how we can do more interactive education and outreach, including webinars and videos and involve the student section and amateurs in these efforts.

**ACTION ITEM:** Anne Pringle, Todd Osmundson, Kaylee Walters, Bill Stoeffler, Jason Stajich, and Student Section Communications Chair Tonia Kurbessoian will meet to brainstorm ideas for organizing and improving MSA's social media presence.

## NEW BUSINESS

- a. Sexual harassment policy.** President Cantrell reported that we need a clear policy on harassment outlining the consequences for harassers. Currently, we have a very brief statement in our bylaws. She would like to form a committee to put together a formal policy and procedures for the spring ballot. It was suggested that we can use policies from other societies as models. At the very least, MSA is now being proactive and for this meeting we do have a code of conduct. Stoeffler stated that TRG has extensive experience with their other societies in the formulation and legality of these policies and procedures and can help us with ours.

**ACTION ITEM:** An adhoc committee will work on a harassment policy for MSA. The committee will initially be Sharon Cantrell, Anne Pringle, Marc Cubeta, and representation from the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and Bill Stoeffler will sit in on the meetings.

Vice President Cubeta recommended MSA join the Societies Consortium on STEMM since they are a group of over 100 scientific societies providing a voice for advancing ethical behavior.

**Motion:** A motion was made that MSA should join the Societies Consortium on STEMM and pay the \$500 fee. *Motion approved unanimously.*

**ACTION ITEM:** Marc will contact the Societies Consortium on STEMM so that MSA can join.

- b. International Commission on Yeasts.** President-Elect Pringle reported that the commission would like to nominate Chris Hittinger to replace the position vacated by Cletus Kurtzman. Hittinger needs

a letter from a professional society stating he is qualified for this position. Pringle requests approval from Council to write the letter on behalf of MSA.

**Motion:** A motion was made for MSA to write to a letter of support for Chris Hittinger to serve on the International Commission on Yeasts. *Motion approved unanimously.*

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle will let the International Commission on Yeasts know MSA will write a letter of support.

- c. **Alexopoulos award.** President-Elect Pringle mentioned that a member interested in applying for this award inquired if extensions to the “less than 10 years post-PhD” requirement could be made to account for parental or medical leave. Pringle reported that many other scientific societies have flexibility for family and medical leave extensions written into the requirements for their early career awards. After some discussion by council we decided to add “(extended by any family or medical leave)” since it seemed to be the simplest, most inclusive language. The Distinctions Committee would have flexibility in deciding on how to assess this in a case by case basis. The following change to the bylaws was recommended for a vote by membership:

"The Alexopoulos Prize is given to a junior member of the Society within 10 years of their terminal degree (extended by any family or medical leave) based on outstanding contributions to mycology early in their career."

**Motion:** A motion was made to put the suggested change to the bylaws on the fall ballot for a vote by membership. *Motion approved unanimously.*

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle and Brewer will draft the language and include this change to the Alexopoulos Award on the fall ballot.

Sara Branco mentioned that the requirement of a nominator for this award is a potential barrier to inclusivity. Discussion centered on how it takes a substantial amount of time to prepare the nomination packet, so potential applicants may not want to burden someone with this task and will, thus, choose not to apply. Moreover, the nominator has to be an MSA member, so asking a Department Head, who may be in a different field, is not a viable option for many potential applicants. Branco suggested we allow self-nominations to increase the pool and diversity of applicants promoting inclusivity for this early career award.

**Motion:** A motion was made to allow self-nominations for the Alexopoulos Award. *Motion approved unanimously.*

**ACTION ITEM:** Brewer will update the MOP to include self-nominations for the Alexopoulos Award.

Executive VP Brewer reported that the MSA Distinctions Committee suggested a change to the MOP based on confusion with some of the language pertaining to requirements for the Alexopoulos

Award. This is summarized in the report from the MSA Distinctions Committee. Council agreed that candidates should continue to be eligible within the 10-year period even after consideration for 3 years after the initial nomination.

**Motion:** A motion was made to approve changing the MOP for the Alexopoulos Award to clarify that re-nomination after 3 years past the initial nomination of the candidate is allowable within the 10-year period. *Motion approved unanimously.*

**ACTION ITEM:** Brewer will edit the MOP for the Alexopoulos Award to make it clear that as long as they are eligible the candidate is considered for 3-years after nomination, after which if the candidate is still eligible, they will need to be re-nominated for consideration.

**Assessing diversity in awards.** Brewer reported that there has been considerable discussion via email with members of various awards committees and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee about how to follow the MOP in considering diversity when selecting awardees. It is difficult for committees to assess this based on the information provided in the application materials. It was discussed that checking boxes for gender, race, nationality, etc., tend to make many applicants uncomfortable, especially when they do not fit any of the boxes. A diversity statement is too much to ask of an applicant for these awards. It was suggested that the applicants add a very brief statement on how they contribute to diversity in MSA to the applications. Stoeffler mentioned that we have a clear diversity statement, so we can ask applicants to explain how they align with the statement. It was also mentioned that the awardees can only be as diverse as the pool of applicants, so we discussed ways to increase the pool of applicants.

**ACTION ITEM:** Brewer will contact the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and awards committee chairs who participated in previous discussions for language to include in the awards applications.

- d. **NAMP proposal.** Jean Lodge spoke on behalf of the North American Mycoflora Project (NAMP) to request \$50,000 from MSA so they could sequence additional fungi. They are requesting gap funding to keep the project going and interest up while they submit citizen science grant proposals. The requested funds would be used to cover sequencing costs and some operational funds, such as bookkeeping, shipping expenses, and costs for preparing samples for sequencing. Discussion centered on how we need to conduct a full MSA budget analysis first before we can let NAMP know if we have the funds. There was some concern that if we fund this project it could open up a flood of funding requests like this. It was suggested that if MSA does have the funds available for this project we should request a detailed proposal on how the funds will be used and how the success of the project will be determined.

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle will contact NAMP to let them know that we need to conduct an MSA budget analysis to determine if we have the funds. Council will decide the next steps after that is complete.

**e. Changing councilor titles and sunseting specific expertise committees.** Executive VP Brewer mentioned that council had previously agreed in 2018 that the topical areas of the councilors should be revised to: Systematics/Evolution, Ecology/Conservation, Genetics/Cell biology, and Symbiosis/Pathology. She announced that if we want the new councilor titles on the 2020 election ballot in the spring, we will need to have membership vote to approve the names on a fall ballot. President-Elect Pringle suggested that we add sunseting of the specific expertise committees to the spring 2020 ballot. It was suggested that rather than committees we could create networks focused on specific topics that members could join in order to interact with others, hold discussions, and plan symposia. She mentioned that the councilors could oversee or chair the networks and report to council on their main activities.

**ACTION ITEM:** Brewer and Pringle will work on the ballots to change the councilor names in the fall and sunset the specific expertise committees in the spring.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 PM by President Cantrell.