

February 8, 2020  
**2020 MSA Executive Council Meeting Minutes**

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**Call to Order and Approval of Minutes**

The 2020 MSA Executive Council meeting by video conference (Zoom) was called to order at 9:00 AM CST on Saturday, February 8, by President Anne Pringle. Attending were President Anne Pringle, Past President Sharon Cantrell, President-Elect Marc Cubeta, Vice President Betsy Arnold, Treasurer Jessie Glaeser, and Executive Vice President Marin Brewer. Invited guests included, Managing Editor Brian Shaw and Finance Committee Chair Jean Lodge. Executive Vice President Brewer had distributed electronic copies of the midyear Executive Council meeting packet by email on Saturday, February 1, 2020. The midyear executive council meeting packet included the meeting agenda, 2020 midyear reports, minutes of the 2019 Executive Council meeting held by teleconference, the 2019-2020 Official MSA Roster and copies of the MSA Constitution and Bylaws. The Appendix included the 2019 MSA annual investment report.

Executive Vice President Brewer referred to the 2019 MSA Executive Council Meeting minutes in the Council packet and asked if there were any corrections.

*Motion to approve the 2019 minutes was made and unanimously approved.*

**Officers' Reports**

**President's Report:** President Pringle thanked members of the MSA committees and officers for their efforts. She mentioned that the transition to The Rees Group (TRG) has greatly improved management of the society, but we still need to do more to improve. MSA is still reinventing the wheel with many things, including meeting planning. We need clear procedures for committees, representatives and officers. Some of these activities can be passed off to TRG to relieve committees and officers. She stated that the level of science at MSA is high and we are attracting international stars. Pringle wants to set priorities for Executive Council, including addressing the budget and accounting issues, which she will leave mostly for Jessie, while she focuses on restructuring committees. At this point Pringle asked Managing Editor Brian Shaw to give his report so that he could leave the meeting.

**Editor's Report:** Managing Editor Brian Shaw reported that the transition to Taylor & Francis was going well. He stated that *Mycologia* is in great shape. Thanks to Taylor & Francis and their professionalization, we are now in a much better place. Shaw reported that we have had ontime printing for 1.5 years now due to the hard work of the editors and Taylor & Francis. Shaw reported that the Impact Factor has gone up again largely due to Taylor & Francis and, of course, the quality of science. The impact factor for *Mycologia* in 2019 was 2.762, which is the highest in the history of the journal. There were 283 manuscripts submitted in 2019, which was a slight decrease from 2018. Shaw reported for 2019 that the corresponding authors were from 51 unique countries and there were 438 reviewers from 51 countries. The rejection rate was about 68% and this was on par with

previous years. Shaw stated that first decision has decreased to 40 days thanks to the editors, especially the Executive Editors. He reported that Chris Schardl ended his Executive Editor tenure in 2019, but will remain on the board as the Review Editor. Keith Seifert ended his term as Review Editor. Shaw reported that Dan Lindner rotated off as Associate Editor. Rosa Moriño Perez was named the new Executive Editor and Alfredo Justo was named as new Associate Editor. Shaw stated that there were no updates on Plan S from Taylor & Francis.

**President's Report (continued):**

Pringle reported that we now have new membership options, including autorenewal and multi-year renewal. She would like the MOP edited and updated so that the charges for each committee are clear. She stated that she has been working with TRG on accounting issues, but will leave most of that for the Treasurer's report. The issues are related to how Allen Press added or dispersed funds from different pools of money; it is not really clear. However, MSA is in great financial shape. For the past few years we have been funding all awards from our operating account rather than the dividends of our endowment. Pringle mentioned that we should be spending our money since we are a non-profit organization. She reported that the MSA website is definitely better than it was, but it could be even better; for example, the British Mycological Society website has numerous resources. We still do not have a budget, which is something she was hoping to set during her term, but that may be something next president does. Pringle stated *Inoculum* has turned back into a great success. There were so many articles submitted for the last issue that some had to be saved for the June issue. Chris Schardl is now helping with *Inoculum* since Don Natvig has stepped away. Pringle noted that we still need to have more social media presence.

Pringle reported that she has been busy with diversity initiatives, including the MSA diversity statement, a Code of Conduct for the annual meeting and a response protocol for code violations. She reported that we have an outside consultant for training of MycoAllies for the annual meeting, who will be trained in bystander intervention and know who to talk with to report harassment or code of conduct violation incidents.

Pringle reported that she has not yet received any feedback to her letter in *Inoculum* about changing committee structures. The language for these changes to the Bylaws are being worked out and will be voted on as part of the spring ballot. She has also been working with Matt Smith and Lisa Grubisha on the annual meeting in Gainesville, including getting sponsorship of the meeting by companies, and adding sponsorship levels on the meeting webpage.

**Past President's Report:** Cantrell stated that in addition to a Code of Conduct for meetings, we also need a Code of Conduct for the Society. Her vision is that members would agree to the code when they join the society similar to what is required by the American Society of Microbiology. She mentioned that we then need to establish a procedure for when the code is broken that includes whistle blower protection. Cantrell reported that she will work with her committee established at the annual meeting in Minnesota on putting together a code of conduct and response procedure.

**ACTION ITEM:** Cantrell will work on a Code of Conduct for the entire society with her committee.

**Executive Vice President's Report:** Executive Vice President Brewer summarized her activities for the year and items in her midyear report including nine email polls conducted since the last annual meeting. Most of her efforts have focused on updating the MSA roster, contacting each committee to let them know their responsibilities and to introduce the current members, and thanking past committee members and officers. She reported that she also worked with President Pringle on the fall ballot to change the areas of expertise of the councilors and to allow family and medical leave to be excluded from the 10 years since PhD timeframe of qualifying for the Alexopoulos Award. Brewer reported that she requested and compiled the midyear committee and officer reports, organized the midyear meeting agenda and assembled and sent out the Executive Council midyear meeting packet. Brewer inquired about the arrangements and specific dates and times of the 2020 Business and Council meetings in Gainesville.

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle will reach out to Matt Smith and Lisa Grubisha about the 2020 council meeting and business meeting arrangements.

Brewer reported that Meredith Blackwell, Archivist, requested that digital materials and artifacts be sent to the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation for preservation (home site: <https://www.huntbotanical.org/>; Examples of Fungal Materials: <https://www.huntbotanical.org/admin/uploads/hibd-fungi-checklist.pdf>; Contact: J. Dustin Williams, Digital Assets Administrator/Archivist & Senior Research Scientist [jdustin@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:jdustin@andrew.cmu.edu); Mailing address: Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, 5000 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890)

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle will reach out to Blackwell to determine if archives have moved from New York Botanical Garden to the Hunt Institute. She will ask Blackwell to write an article for *Inoculum* making members aware of archiving and where to send materials to archive.

**President-Elect's Report:** President-Elect Cubeta presented his midyear report. He has been actively working with Kaylee Walters of TRG and Awards Coordinator Andrea Porras-Alfaro to develop and select newly designed award plaque to present awardees. The cost is similar to the previous plaques at \$65 per piece for each of 7 awards. Cubeta suggested that we hold a competition for a new, updated MSA logo. He reported he has been communicating with Johanne Storgan of the Botanical Society of America (BSA) about the joint 2021 MSA-BSA meeting in Boise, ID. Cubeta reported that he has connected the MSA Diversity and Inclusion Committee with the Societies Consortium on Sexual Harassment in STEMM for a larger voice and greater resources. He mentioned that he agrees with Cantrell that we need a Code of Conduct for the society. Cubeta mentioned that the MSA Education Committee is very active; they submitted a Weston Award nomination and are assembling educational materials and resources for the website. He has communicated with Treasurer Glaeser and the MSA Student Section about their financial needs. Cubeta would like to

organize a face-to-face meeting of Executive Council, the MSA Finance Chair and TRG in Madison, WI, for June 1-2, 2020. The cost would be around \$2150 for Cubeta, Arnold, Cantrell, Brewer, and Lodge to travel to Madison (Glaeser and Pringle are local).

*Motion to approve travel expenses for an in-person meeting of Executive Council and TRG for May 31-June 2, 2020 in Madison, WI, was made and unanimously approved.*

Cubeta mentioned that 2020 is the International Year of Plant Health, an initiative by the United Nations. He is working with organizers and the American Phytopathological Society to get Cathie Aime to give keynote speech at a planned event in Washington, DC. Additionally, he is actively involved in reviewing grants to provide students with funds to attend the event.

**Finance Report:** Jean Lodge, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported that the committee is reduced right now to herself and Charles Bacon. A new chair and one or two other members would be fine for the committee to function. Lodge reported that MSA did very well this year with investments with a \$265,000 increase from last year. The investment account was at \$1.7 million on December 31, 2019. There have been no deposits or withdrawals from the endowment, which is typical for the past 10 years or so. We need to explore this accounting and budgeting with The Rees Group. Lodge expects the market to continue to be volatile, especially with the new coronavirus. She noted if awards and travel fall within about 2-6% that should be good. Lodge stated that timing is important for moving money out of the endowment, and we need to let the account manager, David Middleton, know about 3 months in advance to time it well. She reported that she is glad we are terminating the US Bank account for operating funds; however, we need to watch balances over \$100k due to FDIC limits.

Pringle thanked Lodge for stepping in as Chair. She stated that she was glad to see that part of our portfolio is in green stocks. Pringle agreed that we need to more properly account for specific endowment fund donations and spending. We should add someone from TRG as an *ex officio* member of both the Finance and Endowment Committees to help with continuity.

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle will ask TRG about adding Bill Stoeffler or Erica as *ex officio* members of the Finance and Endowment committees.

Cubeta thinks we should look closely at the profits we are making to keep our non-profit status. He also thanked Lodge for serving on the committee and providing suggestions on a successor as chair.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Glaeser reported that the MSA is in great financial shape. There was a major transition from Allen Press to TRG, so she has spent the past 6 months learning about the accounting and reports. We currently have two checking accounts, but we are moving everything from US Bank into Park Bank. Glaeser reported that donations were a little less this year. The amount was similar, but the number of donors was different. She thinks it may be due to the way the webpage is structured; donations do not come up

automatically, so you have to go out of your way to make a donation. Glaeser will work with Mary Berbee, Endowment Chair, and TRG to change this on website. She reported that we were a bit short overall for the Minnesota meeting, but the auction raised about \$11,000. Glaeser has been working on finances for the student section. Previously, the student section was keeping their own financials, but now we are putting them in with part of our finances and accounting adjustments need to be made. She reported that TRG has ideas about simplifying our accounting. We can discuss these ideas in more detail during the Executive Council meeting with TRG in June in Madison.

**ACTION ITEM:** Glaeser and Berbee will work with TRG to adjust the membership renewal process in a way to encourage donations even with multiyear and auto renewal.

**Vice President's Report:** Vice President Arnold thanked everyone for their participation and support. She noted that nominations for the spring ballot were a primary emphasis of her term. She reported the call for nominations was slightly delayed this year due to waiting for the vote outcome on renaming of the councilor positions. There were about 93 nominations with 10 to 20 nominations per position. Arnold reported that she saw some attempts for increasing diversity in the nominations. The nominations submitted to TRG or directly to Arnold were tallied and the names of candidates receiving the most votes were sent to the Nominations Committee Chair, Jim Anderson. The Nominations Committee will decide on their slate of candidates by the end of February, then Arnold will contact nominees to see if they are willing to stand for the positions.

Arnold reported that the other major emphasis of her term has been selecting a location for the 2022 MSA meeting. She is looking at locations mostly in the US Southwest while considering diversity and acceptance of diversity, regional balance, a good foray site, student housing, a local footprint for travel, nearby local organizers, and childcare support. Places that have emerged include Tucson and Flagstaff. Tucson is close to high elevation locations for the foray and is much cheaper in the summer. Next would be Albuquerque or Santa Fe, but Santa Fe is expensive. She is also looking into Oregon State in Corvallis. She noted that Jul 31–Aug 4 or Aug 6–11 are available when considering dates for other society meetings that may conflict for MSA members.

**ACTION ITEM:** Arnold will look into APS meeting conflicts and start looking at locations for the 2022 meeting.

## **New Business**

Many of the agenda items came up during earlier discussions when officers or representatives were presenting their reports.

**Award funding:** All awards can be funded, including 18 Mentor Travel Awards and all research awards. We received a request for travel awards to the Latin American Mycological Society in Chile in December 2020. These types of travel awards have been made in the past as MSA International Awards. MSA Council needs to decide what makes a

meeting qualify for international travel award. This will be discussed at the Council Meeting in Gainesville in July.

**Meeting in June in Madison with TRG and Executive Council:** This was discussed and approved earlier in the meeting. The meeting will focus primarily on MSA accounting and budgeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** Cubeta and Pringle will develop an agenda for the Executive Council and TRG meeting in Madison in June.

**MSA logo and branding:** Cubeta reported that he would like to have a competition for a new MSA logo. We would need to include specifications in the call, such as size, colors, file format type.

**ACTION ITEM:** Cubeta will add discussing the specifications for the new MSA logo to the TRG meeting agenda.

**NAMP proposal:** We need to table the NAMP proposal until the budget is in order. Council would need to plan out a mechanism for potentially funding this and any other proposal since this could open up submission of many proposal directly to MSA.

**MOP revisions:** The MSA Manual of Operations is due for a major revision. Brewer and Pringle have discussed with TRG the best way to do this. Kaylee Walters at TRG has constructed a spreadsheet and Google docs with the MOP divided into sections with a list of the relevant editors for each section. Sections will be sent by TRG to the appropriate officers, committee chairs or society representatives for revision, which would all be reviewed by Brewer. We would like to begin working on the revisions in June.

**ACTION ITEM:** Brewer will reach out to Walters at TRG in June to begin MOP revisions.

**Sunsetting specific expertise committees and inactive society representatives:** This has been discussed and approved by Council. We just need a vote of membership for approval.

**ACTION ITEM:** Pringle and Brewer will prepare the language for the spring ballot for these Bylaw changes that include removing the specific expertise committees and inactive society representatives.

President Pringle adjourned the Executive Council meeting at 12:00 PM CST.