

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 01/16/2021

Start: 10:00 AM

Location: Held digitally using Zoom Meeting

Zoom link: *REDACTED*

Attendees: Duy Le, Chris Chouinard, Denisia Popolan-Vaida, Darlene Slattery, Van Quach, Laura Sessions, Michel Johnson, Pavithra Pathirathna

Minutes:

- Approval of edited Nov 2020 Minutes - approved unanimously
- Update from Councilor (Darlene)
 - Different membership categories
 - Finance people haven't approved the budget yet; however, it is expected that the membership cost will go down
 - Industrial members – less expensive as they really don't need to have access to SciFinder because they have it through work
 - Membership has been going down every year for 10 years – So an extensive study to determine at what price point can ACS drop to and still provide the benefits and get more members (less money coming in, but more members paying)
 - Categories for students are changing, and graduate students will find it cheaper to be an ACS member.

Michel:

- Does ACS have insights on what is driving the reduction of the number of members? Is this only a price issue? Or are there more other trends? Fewer internationals joining ACS?

Darlene:

- Internationals are the fastest-growing category. Mostly it is cost and few industrial members; companies no longer pay their dues, paying to attend meetings, too many industries don't see the values in ACS, so the industrial category is steadily going down.
- The membership affairs committee carried out several studies to look for ways to bring members.
- A program to cut the cost

- Getting people to join when they sign up for attending ACS meeting (it is cheaper when you are a member than a non-member); offering lower prices to join
- Update from Treasurer (Van)
 - The annual report was sent out to everyone and uploaded to ACS.
 - Year-end balance - \$35,192.89 with one outstanding check
 - Darlene: Mentioned that she doesn't see anything that needs to be changed before approving. She raised a question about donations/contributions (\$400) and explained the Avogadro award's history and why it was set at \$602.23.
 - Van and Chris: Explained more about this donation; this amount is from last year since the event was canceled in the previous year; one other section agreed to contribute and would send us a check this year; we should use this money this year before asking more
- Update from Mary Re. USNCO
 - Duy (email from Mary): This year, we have 58 students (last year 49), most of the things are happening virtually (in April) - If a student goes to the third round, we can discuss later how we support that student (no promise was made this year about providing fund for travel)
- Potential activities for this year. *

Earth Day -

- Denisia: Suggested moving these events virtually; tailoring activities based on the members' age.
- Darlene: Earth Day has always celebrated in conjunction with the Earth celebration in Orlando Lake Eola, never done an Earth-day activity separate from earth day celebration in Orlando.
- Chris: Provided a brief update: A former member in that area organized this event in 2018 and maybe before that too; had a booth, demonstrations, giveaways; they had a lot of resources trying to do a virtual event, but with pandemic occurred in March nothing came out; suggested we can do something for this year.
- Michel: Suggested having a lead in each activity; recruit a person involved/interested in climate change or the environment; should prepare for the pandemic situation.
- Duy: will get in touch with the person in charge (David Horwitz) and update.

National chemistry week -

- Chris: Provided an update about the 2018 event; an undergrad from FIT organized and coordinated the entire event, held in Orlando Science center, all day long event, anyone at the science center could participate, all kinds of little science experiments, ~20 different volunteers, and was a very successful event.
- Also explained about Student Chapter involvement; UCF and FIT in conjunction wrote a proposal to us inviting an external speaker from a university with a top gear towards the undergraduate studies; local section offered a little bit of money to give an honorarium; the plan had been during covid and after covid to have a speaker come in every semester and rotate between two campuses.
- Denisia: Volunteered to be the in-charge of the national week; suggested getting help with student chapters; have more industrial members involved in such activities, giving seminars to student chapters, etc
- Duy: Suggested submitting an IPG proposal by July (if needed) and pointed out that even if we get selected for the award, time may not be enough to start activities since the money comes in later October.
- Darlene: Suggested that the money should not be the primary stumbling block at this point; instead, we should proceed further with the money we have.

Seminar series -

- Chris: Mentioned that a few seminars that were sponsored by the section were held virtually in 2020; explained briefly about the seminar held at Valencia in 2019 was not well attended
 - Michel: Suggested that if one of the institutions is holding a seminar and sharing it over the Zoom, it is available for all schools that become part of the seminar series; raised a question on will there be value to bring a speaker on how to teach and learn chemistry effectively online?
 - Laura: Suggested that having a raffle for seminars may help to attract more students; explained that because events are not occurring regularly, people lose the attention to attend these events, so it is better to have a schedule to have these events on a more regular basis
 - Darlene: suggested a potential speaker from UCF whose topic was “Learning From Lasers: Uncovering Pompeii With Chemical Laser Analysis”
 - Laura and Chris: Elaborated on Summer reception - more than 45 participants, food and light topic is a good mix
 - Duy: One per semester, better to couple with some other event, especially to get the attendance; (*REDACTED* is a good candidate)
- Awards (if any) to be given to County/State Science fairs *
 - Darlene: Mentioned that the Brevard county has three separate fairs - suspects this year will be none; we cover seven counties, so minimum ~10 fairs; better to go with Avagadro award at the state level (since we have to spend significantly more money on awards)
 - Duy: Seminole county does science fair virtually
 - Van: Mentioned that he reached out to the director last year when the event was canceled; however, no response was received; usually, the notices are

sent out in December for the next year, but no information received this year; the missing check is from South Florida; typically, donations are coming in the Fall, for the event always happens in March

- Website and email for the section *
 - Michel: Mentioned that he sent an email in Dec, and the email concludes that the association is ready to go and make the purchase; two top names are not going to be available but can have anyone from the available four
 - Duy: Elaborated on Group Hub and FaceBook; Group Hub gives a direct connection to ACS member, but it is not trivial, not easy to navigate, heavily dependent on ACS, especially for the maintenance and updates, funding for Group Hub from ACS may change, so it is uncertain, better to have another solution; suggested to have a website on our own since we may need one for SERMACS and most of the local sections and student chapters are having their websites; proposed a simple website that comes together with emails; \$36 for the first year then \$68/year.
 - Darlene: Supported the idea of having own website.
 - Denisia: Mentioned that it is hard to find the page, and if the goal is for us to increase the membership, it will be better to have a web page easily accessible.
 - Laura: Explained that they met some internal personal work on local sections' websites, and it is possible to add some functionalities to make it more usable.
 - Michel: Had thoughts on having a separate website may dissociate us from ACS, should think about the opportunity cost, especially if Duy is going to handle the new website, having a nice web page will not bring us more members, but the content; some changes were made with the existing website and with that finding documents will be a little easier; should be mindful of having a professional-looking website to represent national ACS.
 - Darlene : Once she started talking about ACS website, I started experiencing internet issues and I couldn't follow the rest of the discussion on website!
 - Darlene moved to a vote on making local section website, [some one] seconded it. Pass unanimously. Duy will start the process of designing a simple starting website.
- Approving Budget *
 - Darlene - approved it
 - Michelle- Second it
 - All favor accepting the budget
- Annual report due 02/15. Target to finish on Jan 31
 - Chirs: Requested to add him or send it to him and mentioned that he used a template that Joel had put together

- Duy: Confirmed Danisia was added to the annual report; appointed Laura as the alternate councilor

- Appointing Committee chairs (form due on Jan 31)
 - Awards- Darlene
 - Public Relations: Michel
 - Webmaster: Laura
 - National Chemistry Week - Denisia
 - SERMACS 2025 - Chris
 - Chemistry Olympiad - Mary
 - Nominations: Denisia
- Newsletters: Chair will do draft that will be then edited by executive committee.

- SERMACS 2025 – Didn't discuss

- Additional discussion (if any) led by Michel
 - Implementing a strategy to bring more people in providing value to the membership, especially for industrial chemists, to see why it is worthwhile to be a part of the local section.
 - Writing something in local enterprise and local chemists and so on, people linger on to that.
- **!! 2nd project - I missed that part due to internet issues**
 - NSF proposal- As a national strategy to triple the number of underrepresented people in Science
 - Responded to the email from D.K. Weerasinghe, should remind the members about the monthly meetings.
 - Denisia: Proposed to highlight our local industrial member's achievements once a month to increase their engagement in the future

- Miscellany
 - Van: State Science Fair - Happens virtually this year in March, will email the director on getting the Avogadro award set up
 - Darlene: Will look into more details
 - Duy: Extending meeting time for one and half hours?

- Next meeting: 10AM on 02/20/2021 (and Every third Saturday of each Month)