

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 27, 2022
NOTES**

Q2 Newsletter Content (Policy Theme)

The first item of discussion for this meeting was the newsletter content for the second quarter. The deadline is March 21st for this issue. Ruth reported that the Science Policy Committee had a list of items that could be included in the second quarter newsletter on policy to include the following:

= Interviews with a policy specialist who works with the government (perhaps the White House)

It was noted someone has already been approached for this but wishes to remain anonymous and there was some discussion as to whether this would be acceptable and how it would be handled and it was generally agreed that not using a name would be okay as long as there are a couple of sentences explaining why.

= A profile on plant scientists engaged in policy implementation

= Perspectives on the function of the Science Policy Committee

This would likely be written by Tessa and would basically explain what the science policy is, and does, and how it interfaces with our contracted lobbying firm, Lewis Burke Assoc.

= A day in the life of a lobbyist or advocate

This may be written by one of the staff at Lewis Burke

= A policy trivia section

= Some kind of "call to action"

= Something on NAS Award winners

= "Where Are They Now"

It was noted that this may not be ready for this time and there was some discussion on how to find names of people who may be interested in sharing about their situations.

= Luminaries

It was also noted that no one has been found yet for this.

= Unsung Heroes

This is another area that is not ready for this issue and there was some lively discussion on how this section could look. It was suggested that the subjects could be tangential to plant science and could be a series vignettes (with headshots) rather than a whole article about one person.

It was decided to email membership and have an ad in the newsletter to look for people who may be interested. Shoshana will put this out and see what response we get.

Ambassador Proposals

The second item on the agenda concerned the new proposals of the Ambassadors for changes to (1) their budget and (2) the terms of the leadership positions and (3) the creation of an Ambassador Symposium.

(1) Changes to the budget: Asia Hightower spoke at length about the budget stating that the final amount of their budget will not be different, but how the money is being used would be changed. In particular, they want to decrease the funding for the outreach and education portion of their budget from \$4,000 to \$1,500 as those dollars have not been spent in the past and that money could instead be set aside for a specific program like the Seed Grant Program where Ambassadors would apply for funding for a specific project that they want to implement outside of the ASPB program and around the community. Instead of just giving \$100 for a project, the idea is to increase that amount if necessary and make sure that we are funding at least two projects per year. Additionally, it was noted that the money would be better spent getting Ambassadors to a meeting and, in particular, helping to fund travel for international students. This way, we would also get more people to the conference each year.

The new budget would allow us to bring on 20 more Ambassadors.

With regard to the concern that "outreach and education" would take a backseat to other things, Asia acknowledged that this will remain a particular goal of the Ambassador program and noted that it has always been important to the program and will always be a part of their budget.

(2) Changes to the Position Terms: The Ambassadors would like to change their position terms to better ensure there is institutional memory and to keep programs from being started and stopped in the next year. The new terms will be staggered. The proposed changes are as follows:

Current Positions and Terms:

- * Chair: 1 year, then 1 year as outgoing chair
- * Vice Chair: a year, then 1 yr chair, 1 yr Outgoing chair
- * Secretary: 1 year

Proposed Changes:

- *Chair: 2 years (elected)
- *Vice Chair: 2 years
- *Secretary: 2 years

Additionally, there is a proposal for a new position titled "External Communications Rep." The duties of this person will be to ensure that quarterly reports are done. They will work with journals, etc. to get out what the Ambassadors are doing and would make sure they have connections or a contact at every institution they can find -- industry or university.

(3) There is a proposal to create an Ambassador Symposium with the changes to the budget. They would have 5-6 Ambassadors talk about their science the annual meeting to give them a chance to showcase who they are and why they're important to ASPB.

This Symposia is proposed for the 2023 meeting and they will work with the Program Committee on the logistics of this.

After discussion of these three proposals, it was moved by Judy Bresslan that they each be accepted. Each motion was seconded, and all were approved unanimously.

Update on MemCom PB2022 Workshop

The next item on the agenda was the Membership Committee's proposed workshop for Plant Biology 2022. It was noted that the rough description of the workshop has been approved by the Program Committee and that the next step will be working on getting panelists.

Update on the Membership Virtual Get Together

The last item on the agenda concerned the virtual get togethers for membership. Shoshana reported that there was one in December (with 9 attendees) but not one in January. She would like to continue doing them monthly.

There was some discussion about adding a "topic" breakout room to the get together for those who wish to leave the social group to discuss a particular topic of interest. Shoshana asked everyone to send her any topic ideas they have.

These notes prepared by: Linda Palmer