



American Society of Plant Biologists

Publications Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2026 | 10:00 am EST | via Zoom

Attendees

Reuben Peters (Chair), Ivan Baxter, Shannon Barry, Hong Qiao, Maria Eugenia Zanetti
Crispin Taylor (CEO), Sarah Black (VP, Content & Communications)

1. Welcome and Committee Update

The Chair called the meeting to order. The committee acknowledged the conclusion of Pengfei Bai's term. Ivan Baxter was welcomed as a new committee member. Leadership will confirm next steps regarding committee composition.

2. Update: Plant Physiology Editor-in-Chief Appointment

An update was provided on the appointment of the next Editor-in-Chief of *Plant Physiology*. The draft MOU has been reviewed by the ASPB Board and is pending final approval with the incumbent following institutional review.

3. Editorial Board Appointment Process

Process Review

The committee discussed the need for a more structured and transparent editorial board appointment process. Key concerns included unclear expectations, informal nomination practices, and insufficient clarity regarding workload, particularly for junior faculty.

Agreed Changes

The committee approved implementation of a quarterly review process for prospective editorial board candidates:

- EICs will submit candidates on a quarterly basis for committee review prior to outreach.
- A standardized submission form will be developed (including DEI considerations and EIC rationale).
- Board composition and diversity data will accompany all committee vote requests.
- Updated appointment paperwork will include defined responsibilities and an expectation of 3–6 months' notice prior to stepping down.

- The quarterly cadence will replace the current ad hoc email-based system.

4. Editorial Autonomy and Retention of Publishable Articles

The committee reviewed the journals' high rejection rates (~70%) and discussed strategies to retain strong manuscripts within the ASPB journal family.

Discussion Highlights

- Many rejected papers are scientifically sound but misaligned with scope.
- Transfers from *The Plant Cell* to *Plant Physiology* remain underutilized.
- Cultural perceptions between journals may affect author behavior.

Potential Solutions Discussed

- Streamlined transfer mechanisms between journals.
- Author-consented sharing of peer reviews.
- Earlier involvement of *Plant Physiology* editors in cases likely to be declined by *The Plant Cell*.
- Any transfer mechanism must avoid the perception of guaranteed acceptance.

Follow-Up

Staff will explore feasible transfer models and provide data on manuscript transfer trends for further committee review.

5. Plant Physiology Centennial

Details will be shared at a future meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned following completion of the agenda at 11 am Eastern.