American Society of Plant Biologists
Publications Committee
Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2026 | 10:00 am EST | via Zoom

Attendees
Reuben Peters (Chair), Ivan Baxter, Shannon Barry, Meng Chen, Hong Qiao,
Crispin Taylor (CEO), Sarah Black (VP, Content & Communications)

1. Welcome and Committee Update
The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Introductions were made, including acknowledgment of new and continuing committee members.

2. Update: Plant Physiology Editor-in-Chief Transition
An update was provided on the transition of the incoming Editor-in-Chief of *Plant Physiology*. The incoming Editor-in-Chief has been onboarded within the manuscript management system and is working with the current Editor-in-Chief to transition responsibilities.

It was noted that the incoming Editor-in-Chief will participate in the upcoming in-person *Plant Physiology* Editorial Board meeting and Plant Biology meeting in Ottawa and will engage with editorial staff and leadership to support a smooth transition.

3. Editorial Board Appointment Process
Process Review
The committee discussed the current editorial board appointment process, noting that the existing ad hoc, email-based system lacks sufficient context, transparency, and opportunity for discussion. Concerns were raised regarding:

- Limited visibility into candidate qualifications
- Lack of structured review and oversight
- Challenges for early-career nominees due to unclear expectations

The committee reaffirmed its responsibility, per ASPB bylaws, to review and approve editorial board appointments.

Agreed Actions
The committee agreed to transition to a more structured appointment process, including:

- Implementation of a quarterly review cycle for editorial board candidates

- Requirement for Editors-in-Chief to submit candidate slates in advance of committee review
- Development of a standardized nomination form, including rationale and diversity considerations
- Inclusion of editorial board composition data (e.g., geography, gender) with all review materials
- Encouragement of multiple nominations per cycle to allow for comparative discussion
- Establishment of clearer expectations for editor responsibilities and term transitions

Quarterly reviews will become the standard process, with exceptions permitted only in urgent circumstances.

The committee then discussed the need for improved oversight of editorial board composition and turnover trends.

Key points included:
- Recognition that editorial board turnover can be significant and, in some cases, unpredictable
- The importance of proactive planning given typical term lengths
- Interest in implementing an annual "state of the board" review to help the EiCs plan for their recruitment strategies for the upcoming year

The committee requested that staff provide current data on:
- Editorial board turnover rates
- Board composition, including geographic and demographic representation

This information will inform further discussion at the upcoming in-person meeting in Ottawa.

4. Editor Compensation Modernization

Current Model

The committee reviewed the existing flat honorarium model, which provides fixed payments regardless of workload and does not compensate guest editors.

Proposed Model

A proposed workload-based compensation framework was presented, in which:
- Compensation is tied to the number of manuscripts handled
- Editorial roles are weighted using a points-based system
- Payments are calculated per workload unit, with a minimum threshold for eligibility

Discussion Highlights

The committee discussed several considerations for refining the model, including:
- Incorporating a base payment to ensure equitable recognition
- Avoiding incentives that could unintentionally encourage undesirable editorial behavior
- Considering additional contributions, such as participation in editorial discussions
- Evaluating thresholds, caps, and sliding scales to ensure fairness and budget alignment
- Ensuring alignment across journals, including consultation with *Plant Direct* leadership

The committee agreed that a hybrid compensation model (base + workload-based) warrants further development.

Next Steps
Staff will revise the proposed model to incorporate committee feedback and circulate an updated version for further review and discussion prior to the next meeting.

6. Next Steps and Action Items

- Circulate details for the in-person Publications Committee meeting at Plant Biology in Ottawa
- Revise and redistribute the editor compensation model incorporating committee feedback
- Provide data on editorial board composition and turnover trends
- Schedule recurring check-in meetings between committee leadership and staff
- Organize discussion with Editors-in-Chief regarding appointment processes and expectations
- Consult with relevant stakeholders (including *Plant Direct*) regarding compensation alignment

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