



COUNCIL

American Society of Plant Biologists

Summary of Committee meeting held on
Friday, July 16, 2021; 11:00 am – 1:00 pm EDT

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Present

☒	Callis, Judy	Chair, Immediate Past President
☒	Axtell, Mike	Mid-Atlantic Section Rep
☒	Burch-Smith, Tessa	Chair, Science Policy Committee
☒	Chapman, Kent	Treasurer; chair, BoT
☒	Chapple, Clint	Elected member, by ballot
☒	Dharmasiri, Nihal	Southern Section Rep
☒	Foyer, Christine	Elected member, by ballot; ASPBForward steering committee member
☒	Friedman, Erin	Chair, Education Committee
☒	Geitmann, Anja	Chair, International Committee, joined 11:30 AM
☒	Lee-Parsons, Carolyn	Northeastern Section Rep
☒	Masalia, Rishi	ECPS Section Rep
☒	McCann, Maureen	President; ASPBForward steering committee member
☒	Parrott, Wayne	Secretary, and Chair, Program Committee
☒	Theg, Steve	Chair, Publications Committee
☒	Thornton, Leeann	PUI Section Rep
☒	Vega-Sanchez, Miguel	Chair, Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)
☒	Welti, Ruth	Chair, Membership Committee
☒	Taylor, Crispin	CEO (ex officio; non-voting)

REGRETS

☐	Brusslan, Judy	Western Section Rep
☐	Dehesh, Katie	President-elect
☐	Farre, Eva	Chair WIPB
☐	Heaton, Emily	Environmental and Ecological Plant Physiology Section Rep
☐	MacIntosh, Gustavo	Midwest Section Rep; Council-elected member, BoD
☐	McIntyre, Katy	Chair, Ambassador Alliance; ASPBForward working group member
☐	Rellán Álvarez, Rubén	México Section Rep
☐	Trujillo, Josh	Early Career Representative

STAFF/GUESTS:

- ☒ Stacey Harmer, Secretary-elect
- ☒ Elena Monte, newly elected member (term formally begins 10/1/21)
- ☒ Patricia Leon, incoming chair International Committee (term formally begins 10/1/21)
- ☒ Clara Woodall (CFO)

- ☒ Jean Rosenberg (director of meetings and marketing)
- ☒ Sylvia Lee (executive and governance affairs administrator)
- ☒ Shoshana Kronfeld (senior manager, membership)
- ☒ Diane McCauley member, (publications assistant)

MEETING SUMMARY

1. **Opening: Judy Callis opened the meeting at 11:07 EST.** Crispin requested permission to record; approved by unanimous consent.
2. **Welcomes:** Incoming Secretary-elect, Stacey Harmer; incoming chair of the International Committee, Patricia Leon; and incoming Board of Directors/Council member, Elena Monte were introduced. Staff members attending the meeting were also introduced: Clara Woodall, Jean Rosenberg, Sylvia Lee, Shoshana Kronfeld, and Diane McCauley.
3. **Approval of the agenda:** Judy C. requested approval of the agenda. Motion to approve agenda was made by Miguel, seconded by Tessa, and approved by unanimous consent. Members were invited to contribute additional topics in the “New Business” section. No items were proposed.
4. **Approval of minutes from May 13, 2021 Meeting:** Not required; these minutes were approved by email vote prior to this meeting. A summary of this meeting can be found here: <https://aspb.org/membership/aspb-members/committees/#council-meeting-summaries-activities>
5. **Election of Council member to expanded Nominations Committee.** Judy introduced this item. ASPB membership has voted to approve proposed changes to the ASPB Constitution ([Article VII](#), Election of Officers; [Article VIII](#), Standing Committees) that expand the Nominations Committee to include representatives from EDIC, the Early Career Plant Science Section, and Council. As a result, Council must elect one of its members to the Nominations Committee by a process that Council approves.

Judy proposed that the same process (previously approved- see <https://aspb.org/membership/aspb-members/committees/#bod-faq> for election of a Council member to the Nominations Committee. After a brief discussion, Leeann moved to accept this proposal and Miguel seconded. Formal vote was unanimous. We agreed that current members of BoD are not eligible (except the President and President-elect, who are designated Nominations Committee members). This election will occur at the first Council meeting of the new governance year. The new procedure is posted: <https://aspb.org/membership/aspb-members/committees/#nominating-faq>
6. **Proposed expansion of Nominations Committee responsibilities.** Judy introduced this item. The current role of the nominations committee is limited to identifying candidates for elected positions on Council and BoD. Judy proposed that the Nominations Committee have an expanded remit to advise the president-elect on nominations to all standing committees. After discussion, there was general agreement to accept this proposal. Judy will communicate this information to the incoming president-elect, Gustavo McIntosh, as he was unable to attend this Council meeting.

On the topic of committee service, Judy proposed that we provide an opportunity for members to apply for committee service. Another society, ASBMB, offers an online application form and holds a call for applications with a specific deadline. In the spirit of increasing inclusivity and diversity, adoption of this feature by ASPB will provide members an opportunity to make their interests known to leadership. This application could include interest in Editorial Boards as well. The proposal was positively received, and Judy will work with Shoshana to incorporate this online form into the ASPB web system. It should be available all the time, but also highlighted when members renew.

7. **Announcement: ASPBForward listening sessions planned for Plant Biology 2021.** Judy presented this item. She announced that ASPBForward Working Group members will be holding multiple listening sessions at the annual meeting where attendees are invited to discuss/suggest/comment on specific topics. Council members are invited to attend.
8. **Discussion Item: Plant Biology 2023 in Savannah, GA.** Crispin introduced this item. ASPB's BoD voted recently to reaffirm the Society's commitment to convene Plant Biology 2023 in Savannah, GA, and Maureen has written a President's Letter for the July/August issue of the *ASPB News* [<https://aspb.org/publications/aspb-news/#toggle-id-1>] to share the decision and its rationale with the membership. Maureen invited Council to evaluate whether sufficient information regarding the decision is provided to membership in this article. Additional information can be added in a blog or via other venues. Council appreciated the difficulty of the decision, and the sentiment was in support of the decision. No changes to the letter were proposed.
9. **Announcement: Working group on the future of Plant Biology conferences.** Wayne introduced this item with input from Jean. In the near future, the Program Committee will be forming an ad hoc working group to reimagine the structure, timelines, and footprints of future Plant Biology conferences. The goal is to have decisions made in sufficient time to impact the 2022 meeting.
10. **Discussion item: Section meeting recaps and future plans.** Judy introduced this item. The intention is to learn about how section meetings fared during the pandemic, so Council requested information from sections. While most sections decided NOT to hold meetings, two sections held virtual spring meetings, and the Mexico section is scheduled to hold its meeting in November 2021, jointly with the Mexican Biochemical Society. We heard about the experiences of the Southern and the Mid-Atlantic sections from Nihal and Mike, respectively. Both of these meetings were considered to be very successful, with excellent participation. Both sections plan to hold fully in-person meetings in 2022, citing the current costs of the online technologies required to hold hybrid meetings. This is especially true of smaller meetings (e.g., section meetings) but also applies to the annual Plant Biology meeting.

Leeann updated us on the activities of the PUI section, reminding us that there is often only one ASPB member at a PUI institution, so staying connected with other PUI members is very important. Virtual meetings were beneficial for this group because members are dispersed, and several have been held by the Section. These include:

annual business meeting August 2020 and planned for August 2021, monthly PUI networking sessions, and monthly PUI steering committee meetings. Through the networking meetings, members conducted mentoring sessions, and these meetings built connections among Section members. The monthly steering committee meetings facilitated applying for and receiving funds to support section activities. Leeann offered to discuss their successful year to those interested in using Zoom to create a community.

11. Discussion item: Membership Committee proposal to reconfigure *ASPB News*. Ruth Welti, Membership Committee chair, presented this item. The membership committee developed a proposal to reconfigure the *ASPB News*. The proposal included changing to quarterly issues, with each issue focused on a theme but having defined sections. There would be QR codes directing readers to *Plantae* for discussions, short articles (<1pg) that highlight members, as well as policy, member-submitted, and agricultural sustainability articles. Each newsletter would include the President's letter. Council discussed these changes and viewed them favorably.

12. Thank you to those rotating off Council. Judy thanked those individuals rotating off for their service and invited them to make brief remarks: Anja Geitmann, Carolyn Lee-Parsons, Rishi Masala, Katy McIntyre and Leeann Thornton.

Crispin thanked additional BoD members who are also rotating off the Council, i.e., Judy, Christine and Wayne.

13. Any Other Business. There was no other business.

14. Action Items:

1. Judy: prepare document on Election of Council member to Nominations Committee.
2. Judy: meet with Shoshana to develop online application committee service page.
3. Wayne, Stacey, Jean: convene task force to envision future annual meetings.
4. Council: volunteer when asked to serve on a task force regarding meetings.
5. Council: communicate to Maureen, future Council chair, any new issues that Council should address in the next governance year.
6. Council: respond to Maureen if you have or wish to see additional information/rationale regarding the Savannah decision.
7. Ruth and staff: Develop a planning group to get the changes to *ASPB News* initiated.
8. Council: if possible, attend an ASPBForward listening session at the ASPB annual meeting.

15. Adjournment at 12:59 EST. Moved by Anja, seconded by Rishi, approved by unanimous consent.