



Minutes for the ASPB Council Meeting taken by Judy Brusslan COUNCIL of the American Society of Plant Biologists

Meeting, Friday, July 17, 2026; 9:00 am – 3:00 pm EDT (breakfast at 8:00)

Room 204, Rogers Centre, Ottawa

And via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/3012960900>

COUNCIL MEMBERS and PROXIES (present):

☒	Ma, Hong	Past President and Chair
☒	Chapman, Kent	President
☒	Burch-Smith, Tessa	President-elect
☒	Chelama, Sreekala	Treasurer; chair, BoT
☒	Brusslan, Judy	Secretary; chair, Program Committee
☒	Leon, Patricia	Elected member of BoD (by member ballot)
☒	Wyatt, Sarah	Elected member of BoD (by member ballot)
☒	Kilaru, Aruna	Elected member of BoD (by Council); chair, MemCom
☒	Noutsos, Christos	Chair, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
☐	Jander, Georg	Chair, Science Policy Committee
☒	Peters, Reuben	Chair, Publications Committee
☒	Roston, Rebecca	Chair, Women in Plant Biology Committee
☒	Torii, Keiko	Chair, International Committee
☒	Friedman, Erin	Chair, Education Committee
☒	Alfonso Pinerios, Miguel	Northeastern Section Rep
☐	Bürger, Marco	Western Section Rep
☒	Leisner, Courtney	Mid-Atlantic Section Rep
☒	Mickelbart, Mike	Midwest Section Rep
☒	Doherty, Colleen	Southern Section Rep
☒	Tejera, Mauricio	EEPP Section Proxy Rep
☒	Simpson, June	México Section Rep
☒	Barta, Csengele	Primarily Undergraduate Institutions Section Proxy Rep
☒	Scroggs, Taylor	Early Career Plant Scientist Section Rep
☒	Edwards, Seth	Early Career Representative
☐	Dash, Linkan	Early Career Representative
☒	Arling, Maren	Ambassador Alliance Chair
☒	Taylor, Crispin	CEO (ex officio; non-voting)

STAFF/GUESTS:

☐	Muday, Gloria	Incoming president-elect
☒	Palavinelu, Ravi	Incoming secretary-elect
☒	Bos, Dana	Principal, Bernuth & Williamson, arrived after break.
☐	Woodall, Clara	CFO/CHRO
☒	Malaguerra, Laura	VP for Membership and Meetings
☒	Black, Sarah	VP for Content and Communications, arrived after lunch
☒	Dang, Ashok	VP for Business Development
☒	Lee, Sylvia	Executive and Governance Affairs Administrator

Quorum at 9:00 AM 23/26 Council members present

ASPB Council Meeting – Summary (July 17, 2026)

Brief updates

- **Translation tool:** ASPB is trialing Wordly (AI captioning/translation in 40 languages) at Plant Biology 2026 and will seek attendee feedback on broader use.
- **Strategic plan:** To be shared the following week, with a 2-week comment period. Strengthening Sections and international society collaboration can move forward now; the operational plan will wait for the 360 Assessment.
- **OMB rulemaking:** Uncertainty remains, and journals will be affected. Council favored keeping the annual Plant Biology meeting (so it can be included in annual grant budgets) and exploring international venues such as Mexico or Singapore.
- **Pioneers:** Members are asked to nominate new Pioneers and support fundraising for their recognition.
- **International exchange:** Due to recent activities aimed at prosecuting foreign plant scientists working in US labs, ASPB staff have been working on a statement reaffirming the vital importance of international scholarly exchange. The Science Policy team drafted a “how-to” tool regarding APHIS rules and regulations around the importation/interstate transport of biological materials. Visa guidance would help but would be resource-intensive.
- **360 Assessment (Bernuth & Williamson):** Under way, with a subset of the Board, the CEO, and staff meeting biweekly.
- **Elections:** Gloria Muday (president-elect) and Ravi Palanivelu (secretary-elect) start October 1; Liwen Jiang is a Corresponding Member. All Constitution changes passed. Turnout was 12–15%.

Bylaws: The Council approved the proposed changes (20 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions), with a friendly amendment to keep first names in Award names. Leeann Thornton will be asked to chair the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.

Working group reports

- **Business Development:** Top priorities are Industry Engagement, Training & Education, and International Expansion. For the proposed AI/computational training course, Council asked about developer compensation, competition from Cold Spring Harbor

courses, cost for early-career scientists, and keeping content current. Future proposals should include projected revenue, target audience, and content plans.

- **Plant Biology:** The annual meeting remains the priority, and no 2028 location is set. Options will go to the Board on July 21. Savings ideas include hotel conference centers and more exhibitor space. This year's joint meeting with the Canadian Society of Plant Biologists drew 1,200 attendees.

Member survey (B&W Consultants): There were about 700 responses (363 current members), within the typical range. Value varies by career stage, with a mid-career dip. The annual meeting, webinars, and travel awards rate highly, while everyday tasks like finding information rate low. Tolerance for dues increases drops off after about 5%. There is general support for technical and AI training. Group activities will feed into the 360 Assessment.

Committee and section reports: Highlights include orphan crop workshops (Templeton-funded) and possible meetings in China or Singapore, Plant Science Saturday on July 18 in Ottawa, Ambassador training materials, and PUI/WIPB events.

Regional Sections: Ideas include meeting twice a year, better communication among sections, and partnering with other events. Expanded meetings would need more ASPB support beyond \$3,500, while keeping a student-friendly atmosphere.

Board and Nominations elections: Courtney Leisner joins the Board and Aruna Kilaru joins the Nominations Committee, both beginning October 1.

Farewells: Rebecca Roston, Hong Ma, Seth Edwards, and Marco Burger are rotating off Council.

Action items

- Meet with Consultants Bernuth and Williamson to review the survey slides.
- Send ideas for strengthening Section meetings to Judy Brusslan or Laura Malaguerra.
- Send onboarding information and training ideas for leadership roles to Tessa.

Adjourned at 3:24 PM.

Optional items for further discussion: Organizational memberships, SIGs, and the October Council meeting were listed without notes. The main topic was onboarding for new committee chairs, members, and Council members: training sessions are planned, and leaders should share their role descriptions, critical dates, and changes under way. A portal for meeting minutes has hit technical hurdles, and a Slack channel for sharing files was suggested, pending questions about security and long-term storage.