
Minutes of the 45th Canadian Society of Biochemistry, Molecular and Cellular Biology Annual General Meeting

Max Bell Auditorium, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, Saturday, March 23, 2002, 4.00 p.m.

Chair: Dr. Leon Browder, President CSBMCB

726. Approval of Agenda,

The agenda was approved as circulated on a motion from Dr. R. Baker which was seconded by Dr. Frances Sharom. **CARRIED**

727. Approval of Minutes of the 44th AGM (Published in the 2001 BULLETIN)

The minutes of the 44th AGM were approved upon the Chair receiving a motion from Dr. J. Davie which in turn was seconded by Dr. Palmer. **CARRIED**

728. Business Arising from the Minutes.

Dr. Browder opted to meld any outstanding matters into the Reports which were to follow.

729. Presidents Report.

a) State of the Society

1). 2001 Alliston Meeting

Dr. Browder reported that the Society's first independent meeting was both a scientific and financial success. The meeting was oversubscribed with 235 registrants and a net profit of approximately \$28,000 was realized. Dr. Peter Davies is to be commended for his fund-raising efforts with more than \$60,000 being collected from various agencies and corporations. The concept of a theme programme proved to be very successful and this pattern will be followed in subsequent Society Meetings. A number of important lessons were garnered from organizing our first scientific meeting. It is imperative to put together a very high level scientific programme. The Society should not be involved in dealing with hotel reg-

istrations and payment, this should be done directly by the registrants or should be handled through a professional agency hired by the Society. Lastly, there should be enough lead time to ensure proper organization with adequate staff in place.

2). Banff Meeting

The attendance at this year's meeting "Membrane Proteins in Health and Disease" will finalize out at 190 registrants, attracting speakers and attendees from England, Germany, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Spain, Switzerland, United States and Canada. The two satellite meetings, "Bicarbonate Transporter" and "Nucleoside Transporters" which were held Wednesday evening and Thursday morning, were well attended and scientifically stimulating, drawing on the leaders in both fields. The meeting should net the Society a small profit. Dr. Joe Casey and his Organizing Committee have done an excellent job in putting this meeting together with every thing running effectively without problems.

3). Membership recruitment

Dr. Palmer presented a graph outlining membership enrolment trends since 1994. A high point of was achieved in 1996 with approximately 450 Regular paid-up members however, these numbers since then have declined by approximately 25%. It is hoped with the new image and programmes that are being put in place, the Society will increase its numbers. A number of different recruitment projects are being formulated to encourage new membership especially from the ranks of junior university appointments.

4). Contract with CFBS

Dr. Browder stated that the Society is now in the second year of a contract that was signed with CFBS to financially support a national lobbying effort in Ottawa. This support amounts to \$40 per member. CFBS mounts a strategic lobbying programme which is difficult to gage regarding the impact it has had on increasing funding of basic research in Canada. The Society contributes one tenth of the Federation's operating budget and the question raised is whether the Society is getting its moneys worth in relation to its own specific lobbying agenda. Dr. Andrews has been charged to restate the Society's specific interests in participating in CFBS's lobbying programme. Pending the establishment of new relationship with CFBS, which will satisfies the science policy aims of the Society, it has been decided to put on hold the renewal of our contract with CFBS for 2003.

5). Electronic Membership Data Base

Dr. Sharom reported that Dr. Uwe Oehler, University of Guelph, has been contracted to set up an electronic data base for the Society. A beta version has been put in place and after a shakedown period, a final form should be up and running by the first of July. It will be possible for members to access the data base for Directory information, update their personal files, and pay their membership fees. This data base will make life much easier for the Society's Treasurer.

6). Society's Web Page and new Server site

Dr. Sharom has updated the Society's Web Page and will be responsible for its maintenance. As the computer server used by the Society is resident in his Department at Dalhousie University, Dr. Palmer indicated that he cannot guarantee its use after he steps down from the Chair. As a result, Dr Andrews is investigating the possibility of purchasing a dedicated server in partnership with a second party from McMaster University at a cost to the Society of approximately \$3,000 with a maintenance cost of \$1,500 per year.

b) Future Direction of CSBMCB

1). 2003 IUBMB Toronto Congress

The Society will host the 19th International congress of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in Toronto, July 20-24, 2003. The Society's appointed members of the 2003 Congress Planning Committee have been meeting on a regular scheduled basis for the past three years and are now well advanced in developing the Congress programme and arrangements. Eleven Plenary Lectures, 64 Symposia, large poster sessions and several workshops have been planned. In addition 13 Satellite meetings have been arranged at different Canadian venues along with a pre-Congress 3 day Young Scientist Programme which will bring 120 young investigators to Toronto from all parts of the world. It is the Society's intent to have a student poster competition, capped off with a reception for Canadian registrants, the afternoon prior to the opening Session of the Congress similar to the programme the Society organized at the joint ASBMB/PABMB/CSBMCB meeting held in San Francisco in 1999. Regular paid up members of the Society who will register for the Congress will receive a \$75 rebate, however, the mechanism for this has not as yet been finalized. The Society plans to offer 25 student and postdoctoral travel awards to our members to encourage Congress attendance.

2). 2004 and 2005 Society Meetings

The 2004 AGM meeting is planned to be held in February or March at the same venue used for the 2001 Winternational meeting, Château Mont Saint-Anne near Quebec City. The theme of this meeting will be "Signalling from the Membrane to the Nucleus". According to our meeting schedule, the 2005 meeting is slated to be held in Banff and a tentative booking has been made for March 15-18, however a proposal was received from Dr. Sean Brosnan, Memorial University of Newfoundland, to hold a joint meeting with the British Biochemical Society in St. John's Newfoundland on the topic of Metabolism in the Genomic's Era. Dr. Browder stated that the Society needs more infor-

mation and further discussions with Dr. Brosnan will commence shortly to explore this possibility.

3). Joint meeting with the Genetics Society of Canada and the Canadian Physiological Society.

Dr. Browder reported that he has been contacted by Dr. Shiva Singh, President of the GSC to investigate the possibility of holding joint scientific meetings and this could be considered for 2004 if a suitable topic amenable to both Organizations could be found. Dr. Browder and Dr. Andrews will explore this possibility and failing this, they will propose a joint meeting with CPS for 2004. In another vain, it has been suggested by the Secretary of GSC that our two Societies should consider combining some of our administrative operations to save money, e.g., dues collections, database maintenance, publishing a combined newsletter journal, etc. Dr. Browder indicated that further discussions on this matter will take place.

c) Support of Student Activities

Dr. Browder commented that Dr. Litchfield has received a number of requests for financial aid from several university student groups. It is the policy of the Society to encourage student research days and colloquia and have set up a yearly budget to support these activities with individual \$500 grants. He asked Society members to make this policy known to their student bodies so they can compete for these funds.

730. Past President's Report.

Dr. Sharom reported that she is in the process of putting a slate together for this year's Board election which will be held in May.

731. Vice-President's Report.

a) Society Server to host CSBMCB Web Page

Dr. Andrews suggested that the Society either buy a server or enter into a lease agreement to procure one. He presented details of a specific server and proposed that the Society share it with a central facility at McMaster University. An equitable arrangement is currently being worked out. He is also currently exploring additional services and methods for making secure payments on our CSBMCB web site.

b) Society Newsletter

Dr. Andrews described a plan for a newsletter that the Society could use to recruit members and for lobbying efforts. This idea using a template that could also be used by other societies in partnership to promote an effective Lobby. The Executive agreed to an expenditure of approximately \$2,000 to initiate this project and then to come back in stages with further proposals for consideration. The first step is to be a layout of a four page single sheet newsletter. The Executive strongly proposes that CFBS should help with this lobby effort by funnelling back some of our money that the Society contributes to support lobbying in order to help underwrite this programme. Most importantly, we want access to their contact lists.

c) Research Grant Overhead

Dr. Andrews reported that he prepared with the help of the Executive, a statement paper "Research Grant Overhead - A Strategy for Implementation" outlining the Society's position on the Federal Government's proposed financial support of overhead cost for research. This paper was sent to key members of the Cabinet and Members of Parliament over Dr. Browders signature (Appendix A).

732. Treasurer's Report.

a) 2001 and 2002 Budgets

Dr. Palmer circulated the Financial statement for 2001 (Appendix B). The total receipts for 2001 amounted to \$269,460.56 with expenditures of \$214,198.08 netting a balance for fiscal 2001 of \$55,262.48, however, there was a \$20,426.91 obligation carried forward for 2002. He also circulated a separate financial statement for the Alliston Meeting. The total income for this meeting was \$211,739.02 which included \$78,979.02 in sponsor donations with expenses amounting to \$183,760.09. Dr. Palmer moved that his 2001 statement be accepted and this was seconded by Dr. Sharom. **CARRIED**

b) Special Fund

Dr. Palmer reported that the Special Fund as of March 22 stood at \$377,423.71 and for the first time in nine years there was no need to withdraw money from this fund for Society needs.

c) Membership Dues

Membership dues for 2002 and 2003 will remain at \$100 of which \$40 will be transferred to CFBS in 2002 for the science policy programme. Dr. Palmer stated that the credit card payment option has proven to be very popular, 55% of the membership have elected to pay their fees by this means.

733. Secretary's Report.

a) BULLETIN

Dr. Tustanoff commented that Dr. Tinker, Editor of the BULLETIN, has done a superb job in putting out the latest issue of the journal. During his tenure as Editor, this publication has been turned into a very professional looking publication and has vastly been improved in contents and layout. Dr. Tinker recently contacted Dr. Browder and suggested that since the Society was contemplating joining forces with GSC to issue a combined joint society publication, it was time the Society thought about replacing him. He felt he did not have the scientific background to adequately serve both disciplines. After much discussion the Executive decided reluctantly to accept Dr. Tinker's resignation and praised him for this work as Editor for the past three years. Dr. Sharom and Dr. Reithmeier volunteered to take over the Editorship on a temporary basis for the next year.

b) Update IUBMB Congress

As the two Society award Lectureships for 2003, the CSBMCB's Merck Frosst Prize and the Roche Diagnostics Award for Biomolecular and Cellular Research, will be presented as part of the IUBMB Congress plenary lecture programme, the Society has been asked by the IUBMB Planning Committee to submit the names of our designated award lecturers by June 1st, 2002 in order to comply with advertizing and publication deadlines that face the Congress. Even though nominations for the 2002 awards were closed only on January 1st, 2002, it will be necessary to have all submissions for the 2003 competition in by May 1st, 2002. The 2002 nominations for the Merck Frosst Prize will be considered as submitted for the 2003 competition and no further documentation will be required.

c) Society Awards

- 1) 2002 CSBMCB's Merck Frosst Prize and The Jeanne Manery Fisher Memorial Lectureship. There were nine nomination received for the 2002 MF Prize and five for the JMF Lectureship. The winner of the 2002 MF Prize is Dr. Jeffery Wrana, Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto and Dr. Mona Nemer, Institut de recherches de Montréal, is the recipient of th JMF Memorial Lectureship. Dr. Wrana presented his lecture, "The Smad signal transduction pathway" Friday morning and Dr. Nemer her lecture "Transcriptional regulation of cardiac growth" this morning.
- 2) Graduate student and PDF Travel Awards. There were 22 travel awards granted to assist graduate and PD Fellows to attend the Banff Meeting: 10 - \$750 Merck Frosst Graduate Student Travel Grants, 3 - \$750 Perkin Elmer Travel Awards for PDFs, 5 CSBMCB Trainee Travel Awards (2 x \$750, 1 x \$500 and 2 x \$250), 2 - \$250 BD Biosciences Travel Awards and 2 - \$250 PENCE Alberta Travel Awards.

d) Dr. Peter Dolphin Memorial Programme

Dr. Peter Dolphin who served the Society as Treasurer and President, passed away unexpectedly a year ago. Peter was largely responsible for the Society obtaining the 2003 IUBMB meeting for Canada. He was appointed the Secretary General of The Pan American Association for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Treasurer of the IUBMB. To commemorate his contributions to our Society and Biochemistry in general, the Society contributed \$1,000 to the Dr. Peter Dolphin Memorial Fund set up at Dalhousie University in his memory. In addition the Society has organized two memorial symposia in his honour and memory, the Peter Dolphin Symposium: Structural Biology, at this year's Banff Meeting and the Peter Dolphin Memorial Lipoprotein Symposium at the 2003 IUBMB Congress in Toronto.

e) Digital Camera

The Executive authorized Dr. Tustanoff to purchase a digital camera for Society use. A4 mega Canon PowerShot G2 was purchased with a 256 flash card.

f) 2001 Winternational Meeting Mont
Sainte-Anne Quebec

The 2001 Winternational Meeting organized by Dr. J. Bergeron, Dr. D. Williams and Dr. J. Aitchison was a very successful meeting both from its superb science, organization and financial success. Dr. Palmer has received a cheque for approximately \$19,000 from the profits of this meeting.

g) Directory of Canadian Chairs of
Biochemistry

Dr. Tustanoff stated that he has received numerous requests for listing and addresses of the university Department of Biochemistry Chairs. As there was no updated listing, he made a concerted effort to compile such a list which he subsequently circulated to all Department heads. The Executive endorsed this undertaking and suggested that it should be expanded to included departments of molecular and cellular biology.

734. Other Reports.

Biochemistry and Cell Biology.

Dr. J. Davie Editor of Biochemistry and Cell Biology reported that the journal now has attained the highest impact rating of all the NRC publications. Great efforts have been made to speed up publication times. Accepted papers are now being made available on the Web within four to six weeks, but the publication of the printed journal versions is still too slow.

735. New Business.

There was no new business.

**736. Approval of Signing Officers
for 2002-2003.**

It was moved by Dr. J. Casey and seconded by Dr. R. Baker that Dr. Andrews, Dr. Palmer and Dr. Tustanoff should be the Society's signing officers for 2002-2003. CARRIED

737. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm on a motion from Dr. Palmer which was seconded by Dr. Sharom. CARRIED

APPENDIX A

On behalf of the Canadian Society of Biochemistry, Molecular & Cellular Biology, I wish to commend the Government of Canada for recognizing the needs of Canadian universities for support of the infrastructure required to conduct federally-funded research activity at universities and research hospitals. The \$200,000,000 announced by the Minister of Finance in December was a good start and has enabled universities to begin the process of restoring overburdened physical plants and modernizing outmoded facilities. However, this is a first step in what must be an ongoing process if Canada is to realize the Government's stated goal of joining the first tier of developed countries in investment in research and development.

In response to the pledge of the Government of Canada to work with the research community on ways to provide ongoing support for indirect research costs that is predictable, affordable and incremental to existing support, our Society has developed a proposal that meets the goals of provincial and federal governments and the needs of the research community. I have attached our proposal as Appendix B, which we have sent to Alberta MPs and relevant ministers of the Federal Government. If you believe this proposal has merit, please circulate it more widely with the proviso that it be attributed to the Society.

Sincerely,

Leon W. Browder, President CSBMCB

Research Grant Overhead - A Strategy for Implementation

Prepared by The Canadian Society of Biochemistry, Molecular & Cellular Biology

APPENDIX B

Overhead payments for research are essential for universities and institutes to continue to value and support Tri-council funded research. However, it is essential that overhead payments be in addition to current and promised funding of the granting councils.

The aims of overhead payments are to contribute some of the funds required to provide and maintain the infrastructure required by grantees. The universities have argued persuasively that overhead payments are essential, and consensus is building that an appropriate level of support is approximately 25% of Tri-council funding. The government and the grantees have a shared interest in overhead funds being used in the most effective manner to support excellent peer-reviewed research.

We suggest that the government build on the success of recent programs like the CFI in implementing overhead funding. In this model, universities would apply every 3-5 years for overhead funding, including an Implementation Plan for utilization of requested funds and a Progress Report detailing the utilization of previously awarded overhead funds. Each institution would submit a single application for overhead funding to each of CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC with the maximum amount of funds set at 25% of the peer-reviewed funding provided from that government agency. We also strongly advise against a requirement for provincial matching funds. To include such a requirement would penalize provinces that lack the necessary resources.

This funding model would accomplish the following goals:

1) **Accountability.** Universities would be accountable to both researchers and government to demonstrate that overhead funds are being used

to support government funded research. Overhead funds would be awarded based on peer-reviewed evaluation of both the excellence of the current research program (the overhead cap is set by current funding levels) and planned improvements to infrastructure that would benefit researchers with Tri-council funding.

2) **Autonomy.** Because overhead could only be obtained through a successful grant application and because the extent of funding (to the 25% maximum) would be determined every 3-5 years, overhead payments would not become part of the university or institute base-budget. It is essential to prevent overhead payments from becoming part of base-budgets so as to discourage provincial governments from reducing their contributions to university funding by all or some fraction of the overhead payments.

3) **Transparency.** The planned and actual use of overhead dollars would become part of the public record. Grant applications subsequent to the initial round should incorporate the past records of universities use of overhead dollars as part of future funding decisions.

By providing overhead grants that are subject to peer-review, government has the opportunity to provide a more appropriate level of support for its grantees .and also create an environment within universities in which an excellent research program is valued, rather than perceived as a drain on university resources. It will also reverse the current trend to over-value contract research that is revenue neutral or revenue generating for universities. However, to be successful, overhead grants must support excellent research. **Therefore it is essential that funds provided as overhead must not reduce the government's commitment to increased funding for CIHR or prevent expansion of the CIHR model to NSERC and SSHRC.**