

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY  
AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY INC**

**Annual General Meeting No. 57 (2013) Minutes**

The 57<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Inc. was held from 1735 hours on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013 in the Perth Convention Centre.

**1. Apologies.**

No apologies were received.

**2. Confirmation of the minutes of Annual General Meeting No. 56.**

Acceptance of the minutes of Annual General Meeting No. 56 was proposed by Peter Gunning, seconded by Marie Bogoyevitch and accepted as a true account of the meeting.

**3. Results of Council Elections.**

The President informed the meeting that single nominations had been received for all positions on Council for 2014. The Council membership is as follows for 2014:

<b>President</b>	Peter Gunning
<b>Past President</b>	Frances Shannon
<b>President-Elect</b>	Michael Ryan
<b>Secretary</b>	Paul Attwood
<b>Treasurer</b>	Terrence Piva
<b>Editor</b>	Chu Kong Liew
<b>Secretary for Sust. Members</b>	Sally Jay
<b>FAOBMB Representative</b>	Denis Crane

**Representatives for:**

<b>ACT</b>	Jennifer Clancy (Marco Casarotto retiring)
<b>NSW</b>	Judith Weidenhofer
<b>Qld</b>	Ross Smith
<b>SA</b>	Briony Forbes
<b>Tas</b>	Adele Holloway (David Gell retiring)
<b>Vic</b>	Diana Stojanovski (Sheena McGowan retiring)
<b>WA</b>	Bernard Callus

**4. President's Report.**

The President presented the report (to be published in the *Australian Biochemist*, December 2013).

*ComBio*: It is expected that attendance at ComBio2013 will be in the order of 675 and the meeting thanked the organising committee of ComBio2013 for all of their hard work, with special thanks to the Chair, George Yeoh, the Program Chairs, Charles Bond and Alexandra Filipovska, the Treasurer Bernard Callus and the Secretary Martha Ludwig.

The organisation of ComBio2014 is well underway, the Convenor is Edna Hardeman, Deputy Convenor is Ulrike Mathesius and the Program Co-Chairs are Jacqui Matthews (University of Sydney) and Thomas Preiss (ANU) and the Treasurer is Terry Piva.

*Membership:* It was noted that the membership of the Society is fairly stable around 1050 members and is on track in 2013/2014 to achieve this number again. The award of Gold Membership status to 50+ year members Edith Lees, Denis Shaw, Cyril Craven, Ken Scott was noted. The following members were nominated by Council to receive Honorary Membership of the Society: Liz Denis, Ian Dawes and Phillip Nagley. Phillip Nagley and Ian Dawes were requested to leave the meeting, Liz Denis was not present. The President made a brief statement of each candidate's scientific achievements and service to the Society before calling on the meeting to vote on their election. All three nominees were unanimously endorsed by the meeting. The President congratulated all three on their election to Honorary Member Status, which was also acclaimed by the meeting.

*Conference support:* Approximately \$30,000 would be committed to support conferences in 2013 and the conferences that had received support or were being considered were presented to the meeting. The President also indicated that Council and Executive would be examining this aspect of Society's activities in light of the Finances of the Society (see next item). Phillip Nagley enquired as to the effect of the new funding procedure (adopted in 2013) on the cost of conference support. The Secretary commented that since there had not been a complete annual cycle of funding, the data on this were incomplete.

*Budget:* The financial position of the Society remains strong as the Treasurer will report BUT the Society's capital base has been eroded by approx \$200,000 in the last 3 years. Council is considering measures to address these annual financial losses:

- Decrease support for external conferences (see above)
- Move funds to gain better interest
- Reduce costs associated with the Australian Biochemist (A slightly thinner paper will be used to print the Australian Biochemist that will reduce direct costs and postage costs)
- CPI increase in membership fees (the meeting will be asked to accept the proposed membership fee increases)

*Communications:* The President reported that Chu Kong Liew, Judith Weidenhofer and Sheena McGowan organised the survey of members. Some of the major findings of the survey were as follows:

- Australian Biochemist is popular with all members
- There is no enthusiasm for Facebook, Twitter etc
- There is strong support to improve the web site
- We have to better meet the needs of early career members

Chu Kong Liew, Judith Weidenhofer and Sheena McGowan have been tasked with presenting a proposal to the next Executive meeting for the updating of the Society's web site.

*Gender equity:* This is now successfully embedded in all aspects of ComBio. Care needs to be taken in ensuring that this is an intrinsic part of all aspects of the Society.

*Education:* Council has approved putting to the AGM in 2014 a change to the Constitution in which Council will also have an Education Representative. This proposal will be circulated shortly to members. Education is now embedded into ComBio.

*Awards:* The awards continue to attract high quality nominations, but low overall numbers of nominations. An advertising campaign has been initiated.

*Thanks:* The President thanked members of ASBMB Executive and Council, Sally and Chris Jay in the National Office and Liana Freidman and the Editorial Committee. Organisers of Special Interest Groups and the many others who have worked hard for the Society were also thanked.

*Changes to Council: Leaving* – Frances Shannon (Past President), Marco Casarotto (ACT Representative), David Gell (Tas State Representative), Sheena McGowan (Vic State Representative) the President thanked these members of Council for their many years of service.

*New Members* – Michael Ryan (President-Elect), Jennifer Clancy (ACT Representative), Adele Holloway (Tas State Representative), Diana Stojanovsky (Vic State Representative), the President welcomed the new members.

Acceptance of the President's report was proposed by Charlie Bond and seconded by Jacqui Matthews. The meeting accepted the report.

#### 5. **Treasurer's Report.**

The Treasurer, Terry Piva, presented his report to be published in the *Australian Biochemist*, December 2013. The report highlighted the continuing financial strength of the Society despite losses over the last 3 years. A summary of the report is as follows:

The overall financial position of the Society continues to be strong and the balance sheet indicates we have total assets of \$769,531 and a total equity of \$597,227.

The 2012-2013 financial year showed an operating loss of \$88,567, compared with a loss of \$102,297 in the previous financial year. This is the fifth successive year we have recorded an operating loss.

The operating loss reflects a range of factors. These include:

- Reduced COMBIO income
- Reduced sustaining membership income
- Reduced advertising income
- Reduced interest on bank deposits
- Conference support of other societies

The costs incurred in producing the *Australian Biochemist* remain essentially unchanged, and Council expenses were similar to last year.

In view of the net loss incurred this year we need to be cautious in coming years.

Our bookkeeper, Ian Price, and auditor, Brian Hiley, provide excellent service to the Society and I recommend that we continue to use their services.

This is my first report and I would like to thank my predecessor Greg Anderson for his assistance in answering my questions throughout the year.

Acceptance of the report was moved by Ian Dawes, seconded by Peter Gunning and passed by the meeting.

**6. Fees for 2014.**

In order to increase the income to the Society the Treasurer proposed that membership fees increase for 2014/2015 by the CPI (2.5%). The Membership fees for the 12 months 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 would be: Ordinary Member \$121; Retired Member \$52; Student Member \$39; Member with Overseas Status \$57, and Sustaining Member \$368.

Acceptance of the fees schedule was moved by Paul Attwood, seconded by Greg Anderson and accepted by the meeting.

**7. Notification of Changes to the By-Laws of the Constitution.**

No changes to the by-laws of the constitution were proposed.

**8. Funding for ASBMB-sponsored symposium speakers at ComBio.**

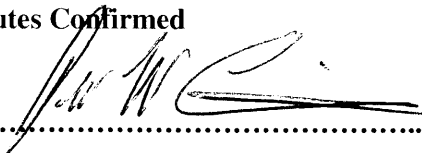
The Secretary reported that ASBMB continues to sponsor 6 additional symposium speakers (\$2000 each).


**9. Any Other Business.**

George Yeoh proposed a vote of thanks to the Program Chairs of ComBio2013, Charles Bond and Alexandra Filipovska, the meeting unanimously endorsed this and also thanked all of the members of the Local Organising Committee.

**Meeting closed 18.23 hours**

**Minutes Confirmed**

  
..... P GUNNING (President)

  
..... P ATTWOOD (Secretary)