

TCS Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, February 4th 2008

Attendance: TCS President Kristen Fletcher, TCS Past President Paul Ticco, TCS President-Elect Jeff Benoit, TCS Secretary Helene Scalliet, TCS Treasurer Jeff Smith, Executive Director Judy Tucker, TCS Board Members Rick Burroughs, Rick DeVoe, Laurie Jodice, Susan White, TCS Ex-Officio Board Member Christine Patrick, Angela Gustavson and Jack Wiggin.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Lisa Schiavinato and Rick DeVoe were elected as directors to the Board of Directors. Their term started January 1st, 2008.

Angela Gustavson and Jack Wiggin were elected as ex-officio board members to the Board of Directors – that means their duties will be very similar to that of directors, but they do not have the ability to vote with the rest of the directors. Their term started last week.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE TWO PREVIOUS BOD MEETINGS

MOTION was made and seconded to accept the minutes. Everyone voted in favor of approving the minutes of the two previous BOD meetings (Sept 6 and Dec 7 2007), so the motion passed.

REPORT OF E-VOTES

- Financial Transactions
The motion to adopt the following financial resolutions passed. The vote authorizes the President, Treasurer and Executive Director to conduct transactions on the T.Rowe Price investment account; and it also authorizes the President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Executive Director to conduct transactions on the BB&T bank checking account.
- Ex-Officio Board Members
The motion to approve Angela Gustavson and Jack Wiggin as Ex-Officio Members of the TCS Board of Directors was approved.

NO ACTION

REVIEW DIRECTORS' ROLES AND PRIORITIES

The first meeting of the year is a good time to review the duties for each director, please see handout for a detailed description. The highlights are:

- Participating in at least 3 out of 4 board meetings;
- Actively serving on at least 1 committee;
- Participating in fundraising efforts (short term TCS21 and long term for TCS in general);
- Recruiting new members;
- Evaluating job performance of executive director (last year at the BOD retreat, we gave our executive director new areas of focus – we need to review them in Spring);
- Serve for advocate for TCS with other organizations – especially in winter and spring before TCS21;
- Writing or soliciting someone to write one article a year for the Bulletin.

ACTION: The Board of Directors will look at their duties descriptions as well as those for the other executive committee members and bring questions to the president or to the next BOD meeting. One note was made that the list of duties for the president was very long and that the president should ask other members of the BOD to help her out whenever necessary.

The two main priorities that emerged from last year's Board retreat were: nurturing professionals and empowering interdisciplinary coastal professionals, scientists, and decision makers to promote and affect improved management of the coasts and oceans.

What does that mean for each director? That means creating opportunities for our members to outreach in communities. The rest of the document gives background on other items that the Board considered priorities as a result of the Board retreat. One of them was to consider offering the journal subscription for free for members – we did accomplish offering journal to all members, which was one of the next steps after the retreat. As projects and opportunities come in, we should try to see if they fit in this list of priorities for TCS that the Board developed during the 2007 retreat.

REVIEW COMMITTEES' MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES

Some directors are on multiple committees, but all directors should commit to at least one committee. As different projects come up, members and/or directors will know who to contact depending on topic. Some members are on committees – the committee chairs should try and get some members (outside of the BOD) on their committee because it gives those members exposure to leadership and helps to get the manpower to accomplish some projects.

ACTION: Committee chairs should reach out to a member and invite him/her to the committee, as appropriate.

The website is a place where people look to get involved. Right now the website is not up-to-date on committee information, so we are losing the opportunity to attract members that way.

ACTION: Committees should write up or updated an existing work plan and send it to the Communications committee chair to have it posted on the website. At the very least, summary notes from latest meeting should be uploaded on the website in order to keep the general membership apprised of the committees work.

Since last year, the executive director has been keeping track with committee progress. She will attend conference calls, keep track on deadlines, etc... Let her know if there's something she can help with.

UPDATE OF THE BOARD MANUAL

We did not have a full manual before, just a collection of documents (by-laws, policies...). We want this in one document and available to everyone. We've adopted a series of new policies and procedures in the last year and want to make it available in an accessible format.

Should it be a list of documents in one place on the website or one comprehensive document (like a pdf)?

ACTION: A subset of the BOD will continue working on this. More information will be presented to the BOD at the next meeting.

MEMBERSHIP 2007 REPORT

TCS experienced a decrease of about 100 members in 2007, despite some board members bringing in some new members. The largest method of recruitment is the student chapters; the second method is online (although we do not know how folks were directed to the website).

Multi-year memberships aren't widely used; so we are not going to make them available at a discount rate anymore.

A question was raised about how we handle those dropped memberships. The executive director gives a list on members who did not renew to Membership committee. The Membership committee contacts those persons they're comfortable contacting to encourage them to renew. Usually the lapsed members just forgot and they plan to renew, or they are government contractors or students and they moved on (not contactable) or their budget numbers are still out and not sure if they can loop back into TCS, which is easier to do via conference registration.

ACTION: The membership committee is working on one-pager for board members to start using to pull people back into TCS or recruiting new members. The paper will be shared with the BOD at a later date.

The Chapters committee chair reported on some discussions she had with student chapter officers about the rise in membership dues. They were not opposed but they were concerned that no matter the price, they are having trouble convincing people that it's worthwhile to join national TCS. It would be nice to create benefits for students – for example, allowing students to make contact with other members through a database (for job hunting). The BOD needs to find out what kind of benefits would be useful for students from the student chapters.

ACTION: The Chapters committee chair will work with the student chapters to create a detailed description of what the student chapters think those student benefits should be. There will be a report for the next board call.

REVIEW OF 2008 BUDGET

The newly elected treasurer has been reviewing the budget with the past treasurer. The 5-year outlook for TCS was passed around for discussion. On conference years we have moderate revenue but on non-conference year we have a net loss – we'd like to break out of that cycle. In 2007, we were \$18,000 under budget, but the main reason was that we had budgeted conference expenses for 07 that didn't occur yet but will occur in 08. The investment income is about 4 times the budget amount and dues were underestimated as well, so we might need to alter the budget to reflect that. For example, the budget allows for \$6000 in revenues from membership dues, but in fact they brought in \$10,800 this year.

A question was raised about availability of funds for TCS to sponsor other conferences, regional seminars, etc... This might be a good way to kick start the regional approach to TCS. Do we have budget for speakers or travel? All these ideas would fall under the events programs category. We only have \$250 for 2008 and already spent it. If we need to allocate funds to that, we should think about it now. For example, there have been pending requests for this kind of activity and if it's not included in budget and not creatively funded, perhaps we can get a TCS board member to attend without extra funds.

ACTION: The BOD should discuss, in the future, the amount of funds necessary to fund TCS involvement in other conferences or seminars.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Chapters

The Chapter committee chair is completing some guidance documents for TCS website for other chapters to refer to later. For example, chapters mentioned it would be useful to have a guidance document on how to set up a bank account, or how to run an effective fundraiser or career panel. They also would like ideas for standard but productive events. They want to and can teach each other a lot – need forum for that. When they are isolated they think they are not doing well but by communicating they realize they are.

What about job opportunities for chapter members – not all chapter members are members of TCS (officers are). There has to be an incentive for students to join TCS. The Chapter committee chair is planning to hold at least one student event at TCS21 – for example a volleyball event and maybe a more career-oriented event like a resume or interview workshop. Chapters are of course always interested in opportunities for travel funds to conference.

ACTION: Follow up with Chapter committee chair on interest for a new chapter at University of South Carolina.

- Communications

Our web editor is caught up in web technology and she has been doing great. The BOD was asked to comment on the Bulletin, but no comments were made. We are still working to get the contract from University of Massachusetts for web editing renewed, the deadline is February 28th.

NO ACTION

- Development

Right now the Development committee has been mainly focused on raising funds for the conference, requesting sponsorship from a number of agencies organizations especially NOAA. We haven't set a deadline for conference funding, but we sent out urgent call to board members in case their organizations or some other one they know can get involved with conference – direct funding or in-kind donation. Also board members should try to increase attendance at the conference.

The TCS21 closing plenary is focused on leadership development – panel of speakers. Idea: reach out to foundation to come see that plenary in an effort to position TCS as a leadership development organization. If you have ideas let members of the Development committee know.

The president reminded the board members to email someone in the Development committee before reaching out to someone just to make sure there is no double-up; we are trying not to overburden people with requests.

ACTION: The executive director will send the document outlining benefits of sponsoring TCS so that board members can use it to approach potential donors.

ACTION: The executive director will send out the document listing all the potential donors that were already contacted so that we don't "double up" on them.

- Education

Right now the Education committee is focused on trying to get student travel and awards for conference. Usually we don't have much clarity on what we can offer in advance. Student awards are something that board members can participate in by attending student presentations. All student presentations that want to be considered

for an award need to be “judged” by a panel attending that particular presentation. We need volunteers from the Board (and other members can do that too) to judge the student presentations.

. We have committed \$5000 for student travel, and the Chapter committee chair is putting together deadlines for student requests. Sea Grant Association usually gives an award too.

ACTION: Contact the chair of the Education committee if you are interested in judging the student presentations during TCS21. Regular members can participate too, it is a nice way for them to get exposed to TCS leadership.

ACTION: The list of students who signed up for awards will be sent to the chair of the Education committee to help plan for the number of judges needed at TCS21.

- Membership

- Membership Benefits

The membership benefits are evolving over time as membership base evolves. The committee made a recommendation to the BOD to upload the membership database on members-only website to allow members to contact one another in strong networking opportunities. This would be optional, a member would decide during membership renewal.

MOTION was made to upload a directory of current members for networking on the member-only part of the website. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee made a recommendation to the BOD to keep the email job listing but also start posting them on website. Someone would have to do that every week, it would be simple (not searchable) and similar to the email.

Pros: This would make job openings available to everyone, which would attract traffic on the website (and hopefully increase membership in the long run). Similar services are offered publicly, so we should to the same. Perhaps after we raise membership to the point where we have less fluctuation between conference and non-conference years, we could decide to put it on the members-only website.

The committee made a recommendation to the BOD to continue posting the Bulletin on the public part of the website (rather than members-only). That is how it is currently available.

Pros: This is a great recruiting tool; it should be advertised widely to increase recruitment. Having it for members only may not be enough of an incentive to join anyway.

Cons: Why would people join if the majority of member benefits are available to the general public? Shouldn't the Bulletin be an incentive to join?

One solution may be to show the current issue only or just past ones as an incentive to join. The Bulletin is probably not as sought-after as the job listing, but Bulletin is TCS-exclusive.

ACTION: Membership Committee will discuss the fact that Board feels the need to explore making Bulletin private instead of public. It will report back to the Board.

- New Membership Categories

The creation of new membership categories requires some by-laws changes. The committee made a recommendation to include two new categories – new professional in the field and retired. A document outlining some reasonable legibility requirements made with adjustment to membership form was passed around. The discount will no incur a loss on TCS over time, and it would be nice if there was still a small profit margin for TCS. Dues of \$40/year seem reasonable since it costs \$35/year per member for TCS to process new members.

Both categories would have same benefit as others except for Journal access. There is no more proposed lifetime membership category, it does not make business sense since we don't know if TCS would end up incurring costs in the future. We may increase the number of honorary memberships for service in the field.

ACTION: The membership committee will present more detailed recommendations on the new membership categories at the next Board meeting.

- Special Projects

We now have 4 requests for participation in other conferences, two of which could include financial partnerships. This could provide opportunity for participation by our members – what have we done with these in the past? How do we review these? Right now we don't have money in budget, but we may want to get info to our members that these conferences are being held.

ACTION: The committee will explore ways to reach members with this information.

- International Working Group

No report.

- Influcate Working Group

The working group has a new chair. One of the goals is to have a few ideas to pitch at conference. For example, for the upcoming CZMA reauthorization, we might want to create white papers.

ACTION: Board members should let the committee know if they are interested in participating.

TCS 21 UPDATE

The minutes of the TCS21 Planning Calls can be found online.

A special thank you to Jack Wiggin for helping with opening plenary.

Every little bit of fundraising helps. TCS is aiming for about \$100,000 which leaves about \$30,000 for off-year. It would be great to have each board members pitch in helping.

ACTION: The executive direction will send document about “ethics” of whom we should accept money from or not – are certain groups not appropriate to have money donated from?

There will be a BOD meeting at TCS21 on Saturday afternoon from 1-4pm – June 28th in Redondo Beach.

NEXT MEETING

Late April, exact date TBD.

Thanks to the NOAA Marine Sanctuary Program for sponsoring the call.