

Minutes of TWS Biometrics Working Group Membership Meeting
27 September 2005
Madison, Wisconsin

Board members present: Grey Pendleton, Terry Shaffer, Bill Thompson, Glen Sargeant, Paul Lukacs, Wayne Thogmartin, Steve Dinsmore.

Wayne recorded minutes for Mary Conner, who was unable to attend.

- 1) Introduction: T. Shaffer submitted the minutes from the 2004 TWS Biometrics Working Group (BWG) Membership Meeting for inspection by the 32 attendees.
 - W. Thogmartin moved to accept the Secretary's minutes of the 2004 meeting.
 - G. Sargeant requested that a very minor change be made to the recording of the Treasurer's Report.
 - B. Thompson seconded the W. Thogmartin motion to accept the Secretary's minutes of the 2004 meeting, pending the change to the report. Motion carried.
- 2) Treasurer's Report (G. Sargeant): Current balance of \$13,755.58 (an increase of \$3,577.32 over the 2004 balance at the time of the Calgary meeting). S. Dinsmore and G. Sargeant conducted an audit on 26 September, 2005 and reported that the accounting was accurate.
- 3) T. Shaffer reviewed the activities of BWG over the past year. This included an all-time record of 154 members enrolled in the working group (an increase by 10 over 2004). The Chair commented that the symposia (*Observational Studies: When you Can't Control Nature; Overview and Treatment of Spatial Errors in GIS Applications* [Sub-sponsored with the Geographic Information Systems/Remote Sensing/Telemetry Working Group]) were well attended. There was general acclaim for the BWG workshop offering (*Introduction to R: Free Software for Statistics and Graphics*), which was filled to capacity.
- 4) Student Travel Grant (G. Sargeant): D. Tessin was awarded \$400 from BWG to present his collaboration titled *Spatial and temporal variation in waterfowl nest initiation and predation*; this award was the result of the working group's annual effort to support student travel to the annual meeting to describe their work in a biometric-related endeavor. W. Clark, P. Dixon, and D. Howerter were co-authors on the paper. P. Lukacs and G. Sargeant served on the Student Travel Grant Committee.
- 5) Election Report (T. Shaffer): The Chair noted that internet balloting occurred for the 3rd year, but that only 33 members voted. It was noted that in future elections that a reminder of a member's identification number be sent by the Society to facilitate increased participation in the election. W. Thogmartin and M. Conner served on the Elections Committee. Results of the election were as follow:
 - Chair-elect: D. Johnson
 - Secretary: C. Bunck

- Treasurer: C. Moore
- Members of the Board: L. Bailey, J. Fieberg, B. Flanders-Wanner, and C. Fannesbeck.

6) By-law Changes (G. Pendleton): The following changes were suggested to the by-laws (details are provided as an addendum to these minutes):

- That the number of members on the Nominating and Elections Committee be changed from 3 to 2.
- A total of five candidates will be identified for the Board, down from 8.
- The Society staff member responsible for the actual mechanics of the internet balloting was empowered to tabulate the results.
- Publication of the minutes and the Treasurer's Report in the BWG newsletter will constitute reporting to the members and Society.

G. Sargeant commented on the difficulty in replacing the Secretary and Treasurer (particularly the Treasurer) every year and recommended 2-yr appointments for these positions.

D. Johnson made a motion that all changes be accepted, except that the Student Travel Award committee remain an ad hoc committee appointed by the Chair and that the Treasurer and Secretary positions be moved to 2-yr appointments. D. Diefenbach seconded. A discussion ensued, including the salient point that a time of reflection is required between when changes can be proposed to the by-laws and when they can be voted on.

S. Sheriff recommended considering staggering the Secretary and Treasurer position.

Because the required time had not elapsed, none of the proposed changes could be voted on during the course of this meeting, though it was noted that the membership should vote on these early enough for the Society Council to consider the changes during their spring meeting.

T. Shaffer inquired whether a 2-yr term might be suitable for the Board.

D. Diefenbach explained that a 1-yr term introduces more folks to the working group experience.

G. Sargeant commented that it is difficult for some to make it to 3 consecutive meetings, which would be a necessity of those serving 2-yr terms.

B. Clark indicated momentum/comfort is lost with the election of new officers.

T. Shaffer indicated, in his experience, that he benefited from being able to lean on the Chair-elect and the Past-chair.

S. Sheriff inquired whether there was a way to impose the proposed changes before the Council's spring meeting.

T. Shaffer indicated that the proposal would be run by the Council for their preliminary consideration to make sure that none of the proposed changes would be in violation of Society policy and then after that point an internet election could be held after the New Year.

A motion was offered to pursue this course of action, a second was heard, and the motion passed.

7) Workshop fees (T. Shaffer): The Society imposed a \$25 fee on workshops and a cap of an additional \$25 over that fee. B. Thompson, T. Shaffer, and W. Thogmartin

were identified as folks attending the Leader's Forum to discuss this matter in greater detail with Council. The problem with the \$25 fee imposed by the Society is two-fold. First, for most BWG offerings, students would receive the benefits of enrollment in BWG-sponsored workshops but would bear no costs concerning materials, etc. because their registration fee would be completely siphoned by the Society (the student workshop registration is typically only \$25). Second, the cap on the workshop fees impedes the working group's ability to secure funding for student and symposium speaker travel support. S. Sheriff commented that >\$200,000 was necessary to host the annual conference, and it appears that the Society is paying annual salaries for support personnel from the fees garnered during the course of the conference. The conference, and its attendant workshops, were viewed as a revenue generator for the Society. D. Otis made the point that workshop educators, especially if they are volunteer and not attending the conference otherwise, should not be charged conference registration, which he believed was the case. G. Sargeant made the point that conference registration can be made complimentary with a request to the Council.

- 8) Webpage (B. Thompson): No one has stepped up to help develop the webpage. What would be useful are links to white page reports, workshops, helpful biometric-related links, etc. J. Mathieson is doing the work for the Society's webpage with little assistance and thus may be slow to respond if the working group does not take on a larger responsibility for their webpage design and update. D. Johnson indicated that because links frequently die that the job of updating the site is nonstop. B. Thompson inquired whether we need to have a webpage committee. D. Diefenbach indicated the site needed to be revamped and content provided for Society and WG members. J. Sauer asked whether the newsletter might not morph into the website. C. Moore indicated that international members benefit solely from their interaction over the internet, and thus would benefit from website development. G. Pendleton inquired whether PDFs of course notes might be made available to WG members. M. Knutson inquired as to whether a professional might be hired to clean the site up and to make it a repository for the WG's history. T. Shaffer will serve on an ad hoc committee to oversee development of the website. S. Dinsmore and D. Diefenbach joined the committee.
- 9) Workshop and Symposia Proposals: One workshop and one symposium proposal were offered at the meeting. The workshop proposal put forth to the group by S. Dinsmore and T. Shaffer concerned *Modeling avian nest survival*. D. Johnson inquired whether the organizers were pre-supposing knowledge of MARK; T. Shaffer responded that the routines they envision presenting can be implemented in either MARK or SAS. B. Thompson suggested some time should be devoted to reviewing MARK. D. Diefenbach indicated that some consideration as to whether a half or full day is needed. M. Knutson and J. Sauer briefly described their interest in hosting a symposium tentatively titled *Monitoring: Issues and challenges for land management agencies*. D. Johnson motioned that BWG support these proposals, pending approval by the Officers and Board of the final proposals, D. Diefenbach seconded, and the motion carried.

- 10) The Calculus of Income and Expenses (B. Thompson): There is a need to increase the flexibility of workshop fees to accommodate travel needs of organizers. Currently, there is a BWG imposed \$1000 cap on expenses (\$500 per person). S. Sheriff noted that the ability to attract talented people to hold workshops will be limited if the cap is not reconsidered. D. Johnson motioned that the cap of \$1000 be retained for symposia, but dropped for workshops. S. Sheriff seconded. A discussion ensued. G. Sargeant described ethical considerations relating to his agency (the USGS). It was noted that the cap on symposia and workshops is arbitrary and unnecessarily restrictive, and that maybe a budget should be outlined and then acted on by the Board. L. McDonald indicated that the WG needed to loosen up a bit, and made a friendly amendment to D. Johnson's original motion, that the cap be dropped on both workshops and symposia and that instead the pre-existing limit of 25% of total expenditures be adhered to. C. Bunck indicated that this change would require a discussion of this sort every year. D. Johnson and S. Sheriff both accepted the change to the original motion.
- 11) Other Business. S. Sheriff motioned that a round of applause be offered to the leadership of the working group, which was seconded by several and carried by the group.

Meeting adjourned.