

TCS Board of Directors Meeting

November 2, 2014

Draft Minutes

Attending: President Lisa Schiavinato, Treasurer Mo Lynch, Directors Andy Bohlander, Tom Bigford, Chris Ellis, Tony MacDonald, Matt Nixon, Brian Smith, Executive Director Judy Tucker

Not Attending: Secretary Susannah Sheldon and Directors Susan Farady and Chad Nelsen

Summit Updates (Fletcher, Wyman, Ellis, Schiavinato)

The execution process of working together was described, including planning the technical program, the plenary sessions, marketing the Summit, sponsorship recruitment, travel scholarships, expo hall, and the social media Blue Room. The overall feeling of the TCS side of the planning team was that the RAE staff was professional and worked hard to address any difficulties that arose from dealing with an all-volunteer staff and differences in the features of prior conferences for each organization.

Lisa recognized the TCS planning team members for their efforts, including Kristen Fletcher, Caitlyn McCrary, Julia Wyman, Tom Bigford, Kari McLaughlin, Meg Gardner, Kasey Jacobs, Mary Ella Allen, Steve MacLeod, Michael Flynn, Dennis Hwang, Chris Ellis, Paul Ticco, Erika Washburn, Tiffany Smythe, Katy May, Tracie Kiernan, and Matt Nixon.

Board members were given responsibilities during the Summit, including taking shifts in the TCS exhibit booth to recruit members, visiting assigned exhibit sponsors to begin a relationship with TCS, and attending the TCS Annual Meeting.

The pros and cons of this joint conference included:

- Joint planning team: worked well with give and take.
- The logistical responsibilities could be better spelled out. TCS had to go through RAE for any hotel needs.
- Abstract reviewers: TCS side was weak; many TCS volunteers did not do their reviews or participate in the conference call review discussions.
- Abstract acceptance percentage: TCS usually works with submitters to get an abstract into acceptable shape. For the Summit, however, the number of abstracts submitted was so high that only 50% of those submitted could be accepted. The Summit program includes 500 speakers and 200 posters. Coastal management and policy topics will be fairly represented.

- The social media outreach and on-site Blue Room media center would not have happened without TCS volunteers.
- The first RAE-TCS Summit mobile app was developed by a TCS volunteer.
- TCS did not bring in many sponsors, other than Taylor & Francis Group and a few Sea Grant programs. Attempts were made by the Development Committee to NERRs and NEPs, but they had no money. However, even if TCS had brought in sponsors, the sponsor revenue went to RAE.
- The terms of the contract need to be spelled out in greater detail. For instance, the definition of “unpaid registration” would help TCS understand why there were 250+ unpaid registrations that were not included in the number needed for TCS to earn a second \$8,000.
- Travel scholarships were defined as a waived registration. TCS used to allocate the scholarship fund according to need. However, the Marc Hershman student travel scholarships, included in the TCS contract with Taylor & Francis, were awarded separately by TCS to Mary Ella Allen and Michael Flynn.
- Chris Ellis ran the Student Award process on his own. Judges were solicited via the Summit registration process. RAE’s position was that all volunteers should be used. However, there were more volunteers than needed. A different process for soliciting volunteers would be recommended. In addition, the turnaround time for the judges between the last events to be judged until the next morning deadline was too tight.

Summit Engagement with Sponsors (All)

A list of Summit sponsors with the names of Board members assigned to one or two was distributed along with a document giving guidance on how to approach the exhibitor. The Board worked through various reasons and benefits that a sponsor could obtain through a partnership relationship with TCS or a corporate membership. Contact for the right person to talk to, not necessarily the marketing person in the exhibit space, was to be obtained and given to the TCS Office.

Secretary’s Report (Tucker)

Motion: Lynch, Second: Nixon, “To approve the minutes from the September 23, 2014 TCS Board meeting as written.” MOTION PASSED.

Electronic Vote: Motion: Bigford, Second: Schiavinato, “To accept the proposal to partner with the American Fisheries Society in 2015 as the TCS-Taylor & Francis Special Event. MOTION PASSED October 5, 2014.

Electronic Vote: Motion: Schiavinato, Second: Sheldon, “To approve the following slate of candidates for the 2014 election: President: Thomas Bigford; President-Elect: Julia Wyman;

Directors (3 open): Susan Farady, Paul Hindsley, Lewis Lawrence, David Loomis, Steven MacLeod, Erika Washburn.” MOTION PASSED October 5, 2014.

Electronic Vote: Motion: Schiavinato, Second: Nixon, “ To approve submitting the following bylaws changes to the membership for a vote: (1) changing the term of office of the president from two years to one year, thereby reducing the president’s total time commitment from six years to three years; and (2) a requirement of TCS membership for TCS Chapter members.” MOTION PASSED October 22, 2014.

Electronic Vote: Motion: Smith, Second: Nixon, “To approve the recommended dues increase from the Membership Restructure Task Force as outlined in the attached spreadsheet. We also propose increasing the number of memberships included in the Corporate and institutional Member categories.”

Background with motion: Proposed dues increases: Regular (\$70 to \$100), New Professional (\$50 to \$60), Retired (\$40 - \$50), Student (\$20 to \$30). Institutional remains at \$250, but increases the number of Regular Memberships included from two to three. Corporate remains at \$500, but increases the number of Regular Memberships included from three to six. MOTION PASSED October 28, 2014.

Treasurer’s Report (Lynch)

Current Assets \$46,861

Change in assets from previous quarter (\$5,532)

Net (Revenue-Expenses) (\$7,526)

24.7% of the estimated net (\$30,506)

An actual to budgeted statement for the Summit indicated the committee had either held or decreased planned expenditures. It is unlikely that TCS will receive additional revenue from the Summit beyond the \$8,000 received due to the terms of the agreement in which revenue hinges upon paid registrations (currently 971 vs. the needed 1,150). The workshop partnership with the Environmental Leadership Program will produce a small profit, as that arrangement was made separately from the agreement. TCS will discuss with ELI repeating this type of workshop partnership at future TCS events.

Referring to the approved budget, with the Summit reflected as a Net line item, the expected year end position is \$12,448. The same document shows actual expenses for 2013 and planned expenses for 2014 as \$39,057 and \$37,189 respectively. The average is \$38,123, but does not reflect any planned activities for 2015. There is a gap of \$25,675 between an average year of

expenses and the projected cash on hand as of 12/31/14 (\$38,123 - \$12,448). An additional amount of \$20,000 would be needed to put TCS “over the hump” to financial stability and growth.

No cash flow position was projected, so it is unknown how far into 2015 TCS can operate at a reduced level without additional revenue.

Fundraising for 2015 and Beyond

Planned partnerships for events with AFS NED, CERF, and CSO do not offer revenue. Webinars offer no revenue, but a sponsor of a webinar may be receptive to the publicity webinars could offer. A contract with NOAA for organizing trainings might be possible. The Board believes a stand-alone coastal conference should be held in 2016. An interim event(s) in 2015 could include a student research symposium and poster competition on campus with a half-day core session and break-out sessions, followed by a half-day of career-focused activities such as speed dating with area employers or a job fair. Any of these activities would enable TCS to be visible, but not spend all of its time and resources making these activities happen.

Start-up funds for TCS, as the professional coastal interest society (as opposed to project management grants), would enable TCS to hire a full time executive director and perhas a development officer or program officer. TCS could bring together several foundations to fund this effort so none alone bears the investment risk. An ask for a large amount, spread over a three-year period, would be most efficient.

To help with this effort:

- Smith can help write proposals after his term as Director has ended (12/31/15).
- Schiavinato’s intern can spend some time to research foundations’ grants history. Length of time will depend on intern’s other duties for Schiavinato’s center.
- Wyman may have intern time available.

ACTIONS:

- Endorsements for TCS as the professional coastal society will be sought from leaders in the coastal management profession. They will also be asked for contact people within foundations that TCS can follow up by sending the above letter. **Board** to send name and contact information for suggested leaders to **Smith**, and indicate if s/he will make the contact. Do not wait to see the list to think of people omitted; send at least one contact you have in the profession.
- **Smith** will compile the contact list of leaders.

- **MacDonald and Smith** to draft a two-page letter for Schiavinato's signature, which includes points from our strategic plan, membership restructure, and 100% board giving. This letter would be used to contact coastal management leaders for endorsements.
- **Board** to make contact to obtain endorsements and contacts within foundations from coastal leaders.
- **Bigford** to draft a description of the student-focused campus event to offer the opportunity for a foundation to invest in the next generation of coastal management.
- **Schiavinato/Bigford** to recruit for the TCS Development Committee by offering discrete tasks on a timeline to support the Board as they make 'the ask' to potential funders.
- **All** should report out on their engagement of Summit sponsors.

Partnership Updates

Taylor & Francis CMJ Special Issue (Bigford) – Co-editor will be Tyann Lee, a new professional. Theme of habitat conservation will build off the Summit theme of restoration. Authors have been notified and given the timeline toward a fourth quarter 2015 publication.

American Fisheries Society Northeast Division and Southeast New England Chapter (Bigford) – AFS NED did not discuss the TCS proposal during their recent meeting. It will require a deviation from their past practices, so the outcome remains unclear.

Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (Bigford) - The 2015 conference organization has received the proposal for a TCS organized plenary session. Their Northeastern Regional Affiliate was interested in a TCS AFS meeting, and may be interested in a TCS CERF regional event.

Coastal States Organization (MacDonald) – CSO is interested in future Capitol Hill briefings and roundtables, and possibly taking the same presentation to various areas of the country. They may be interested in providing paid student interns to state offices. TCS would raise the funds, retain a share for indirect costs, and write a check to the state agency to fund the internship. Unpaid externships for course credit might be possible. TCS would also recruit students from the membership, and find someone local in the state to assist with the selection process.

The Water Resource Federation (Lynch) and the sewage treatment community could be approached for a joint event on the topic of the impact of sea level rise.

Annual Members Meeting (Schiavinato)

The agenda will include approval of the minutes from the June 2013 Annual Members Meeting, highlights from 2014 activities, reports from TCS Chapters (Duke, ECU, URI, UNCW), and the presentation of the TCS Awards. Non-members will be welcome to attend to learn more about TCS. TCS Board members are asked to spread out among the tables to greet them.

Proposal for Student Liaison to the TCS Board (Ellis)

The purpose of this ex-officio (appointed) position is to build a stronger relationship with the national organization, to give the chapters a representative who can communicate for them, and to help the Chapters Committee with its tasks. The draft proposal for one student liaison will be changed to reflect one liaison from each chapter. TCS Student Members who are enrolled at a TCS Chapter university will be encouraged to form a TCS chapter. The TCS Board will invite nominations from each chapter. An application form will be used, including a question about what ideas the student would like to bring to TCS. The TCS board will develop a selection process, and follow the ex-officio appointment process in the TCS Bylaws.

ACTION: Ellis to make changes to the proposal, including a selection process, for a vote by the Board before year end.

Awards

The President's Award for exceptional service to The Coastal Society and commitment to coastal leadership development and to professional development of coastal management professionals at all career levels was presented to Brian Smith by TCS President Lisa Schiavinato.

A gift made to Operation Catnip by the TCS Board of Directors in honor of Lisa Schiavinato's service as President in 2011, 2012, and 2014 was presented to her.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm ET.