



SOCIETY FOR VETERINARY EPIDEMIOLOGY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

SVEPM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NO. 33

MINUTES

Date: Thursday 27th March 2014
Time: 12:00pm
Location: Dublin Castle, Dublin, Ireland

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Tim Parkin and Lis Alban.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting No. 32 held on Thursday 21st March 2013 Madrid, Spain

Kenton Morgan proposed and Rob Christley seconded acceptance of the minutes of AGM No. 32. The minutes of AGM No. 32 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the business conducted with no alterations required.

3. Matters arising (not otherwise on the agenda)

None.

4. President's report

Kristien Verheyen (KV) President of the Society reported the following to the AGM:

KV thanked the delegates for attending the conference and especially thanked both Nils Toft and Ian Gardner for accepting the invitation to provide respectively the opening plenary and the Gareth Davies lecture.

KV also thanked the organisers of the seven workshops for their excellent work, as there had been a lot of positive feedback on the workshops.

KV especially thanked Simon More and Daniel Collins and their team including Lisa Byrne and Marije Kraan from Abbey Conference for the excellent organisation of the 2014 annual conference. She also thanked all the sponsors that support the conference.

KV thanked Executive Committee members for their excellent work, including editing of the proceedings, judging of posters, chairing sessions and a many more both smaller and larger tasks associated with the Committees responsibilities.

She also thanked the 232 delegates for attending the 2014 conference, of which approximately 25% are students. The Committee was glad to receive 88 submitted abstracts of high quality which has made it possible to put together an interesting scientific programme. KV also reminded about the selection procedure and that the abstracts are all scored blindly by Committee members. Ninety-two posters were presented at the conference of which approximately one-third have been printed on-site.

The three poster prizes and the SRUC prize for the best oral presentation will be awarded during the conference dinner and will this year kindly be sponsored by AVIA-GIS. KV also explained the selection procedure for the poster prize and the scoring criteria for the SRUC prize.

Again this year, conference bursaries have been awarded. They were awarded to one Ukranian and one Indonesian delegate, studying in The Netherlands; in all, 5 applications were received.

KV commented on an issue that has been preoccupying the Committee during the last year;

the final accounts for the Madrid conference. A loss was anticipated and agreed upon; however, in the final accounts costs had been added that were beyond the approval by the Committee. The Committee is discussing how this can be avoided in the future. KV pointed out that the Society is still in good financial health, and KV noted that it is indeed the first time during her long period of service. The result of the Madrid conference will not influence this year's result, but will be included in the audit for next year.

KV finally reserved special thanks for the outgoing Senior Vice President, Tim Parkin for his long service on the Committee.

Ann Lindberg, as Honorary Secretary, requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the President's report. Ed van Klink proposed and Christine Fourichon seconded acceptance of the President's report.

5. Secretary's report

Ann Lindberg (AL) reported that she had received regular correspondence on behalf of the Society. These were mostly related to feedback on the regular membership mailings, conference organisation and abstract submission, as well as enquiries for promotion of job announcements.

AL also reported on a limited but consistent number of bouncing email addresses when sending out SVEPM correspondence. She invited the membership to contact her when they suspect that they are no longer receiving the correspondence, and also actively provide the Honorary treasurer Marnie Brennan with any updates if their email address is changed.

AL reported that the SVEPM LinkedIn group has grown to more than 3000 members, which is twice as large as in 2013, and invited everyone to join and submit announcements and other information via the LinkedIn group.

KV requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the Secretary's report. Cord Heuer proposed and Jeroen Dewulf seconded acceptance of the Secretary's report.

6. Treasurer's report

Marnie Brennan (MB) presented the accounts for 2012/2013, which were approved and had been signed off by the auditors. Total income had been £4,492.93. Total expenditure had been £10,423.78. Net income for the year had been -£5,930.85. The total balance for the Society, as of November 2013, was £56,227.03.

Differences to last year were the opening of 2 new Santander accounts, a bond account and a high interest savings account. These had earned a good amount of interest, which will appear in next years accounts as interest is paid yearly.

MB commented on the result. The membership numbers have decreased slightly, something that is usually associated with the conference going abroad. The same number of people were removed from the list for non-payment as the previous year which suggests it is new members who aren't joining. There are also fewer paying for membership many years in a row. It may also be easier for individuals to claim conference expenses than to claim membership fees from their employers.

She noted that Committee expenses have increased £3000. This can partly be traced to some late incoming claims that should have been allocated to the 2011-2012 accounts. The extra travel costs associated with the conference in Madrid and an extra Committee member as per last year have also contributed to this increase. There is also a cost associated with making payments to Eurozone and EU non-eurozone accounts. The Committee is discussing the potential opening of a euro zone account to avoid transfer fees associated with reimbursing claims from non-UK members.

MB also mentioned that credit card charges have increased and will be subject to scrutiny in the coming year.

MB reported that there were currently 228 members of the Society from 26 different countries.

MB proposed to keep the membership fee at £20, and reminded the membership that the

membership fee was due on or around the 1st May annually and recommended that members were proactive when making payments.

Stuart Reid asked how large next year's deficit is expected to be. MB said that the overall results depends on other factors as well but reported that the loss due to the conference is approximately just under £10,000. She also noted that the budget of the current conference is in good health. Stuart Reid encouraged the Committee to investigate how this type of unexpected losses can be avoided in the future, and asked for the auditors' view on the fact that there can be a 2 year delay until the financial outcome from a conference is reflected in the Society's accounts. Dominic Mellor noted that the auditors have been aware of the situation, even though the Madrid conference is not part of the accounts to be audited this year. Stuart Reid also pointed out that the timing of the accounts and the constant succession of Committee members may be a complicating factor if there are issues of liability. MB commented that at current the finances of the Society are managed on a voluntary basis but that as the Societies' accounts become more complicated with more accounts it could be necessary for the membership to consider whether professional help is needed in the future, for accounting and/or auditing. Maarten Weber asked if there is liability insurance for the Committee, for example in the case of a cancellation of a conference. KV said this is not the case at the moment and Stuart Reid mentioned this has been considered in the past, but it has not been found necessary as the conferences were less expensive and reserves were judged as sufficient. The risks associated with the cancellation of a conference are usually covered through the insurance of professional PCOs, if such are engaged in the arrangements. KM concluded that the primary task for the Committee now is to minimise the risk for similar incidents the future. Matt Denwood commented that as treasurer of another scientific society, their organisation employs an accountant to help with the accounts. MB said it would be useful to speak with Matt about how the arrangement works.

Kenton Morgan raised a point about whether the auditors could be engaged for 2 years, bearing in mind the issues with the Madrid budget. KV said that they had to be nominated yearly but hoped that the auditors would consider running again next year to cover the issue.

The number of members from BeNeLux was questioned by Gerdien van Schaik who suggested there should be more. MB will double-check this number with the records.

KV first asked for a vote regarding the suggestion to keep the membership fee at £20. She then requested that members from the floor supported acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Acceptance was proposed by Ed van Klink and seconded by Erik Rattenborg.

7. Election of officers and Committee members

KV clarified that the positions of Senior Vice President and President are automatically filled by the President and Junior Vice President from the previous year. Therefore, for 2014 – 2015 the following positions will be occupied by:

Position	Holder 2014-2015
Senior Vice President	Kristien Verheyen
President	Koen Mintiens

All Officers of the Society with the exceptions of President and Senior Vice President are elected or re-elected annually at the AGM. Nominees for the forthcoming year were elected unopposed as follows:

Position	Holder 2014-2015	Proposer	Secunder
Honorary Treasurer	Marnie Brennan	Ann Lindberg	Kristien Verheyen
Honorary Secretary	Ann Lindberg	Marnie Brennan	Rob Christley
Junior Vice President	Hans-Hermann Thulke	Kristien Verheyen	Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen

Acceptance of these nominations were proposed by Nils Toft and seconded by Matthew Denwood.

KV stated that with Hans-Hermann Thulke becoming Junior Vice President, one position as

ordinary member of the Committee is now vacant. One nomination has been received by the deadline of 21 days prior to the AGM. This is David Brodbelt who was proposed by Kristien Verheyen and seconded by Dirk Pfeiffer. The nominee introduced himself to the AGM. Acceptance of his nomination was proposed by Jeroen Dewulf and seconded by Christine Fourichon. KV congratulated David on his election to the Committee.

8. Election of auditors

KV reported that Dominic Mellor and Fraser Menzies had both agreed to continue to act as auditors of the Society accounts. Stuart Reid therefore proposed and Ed van Klink seconded their nominations. No objections were received from the floor and Dominic Mellor and Fraser Menzies were elected to serve as auditors for the forthcoming year.

Dominic Mellor commented that the potential use of professional accountant may influence the need for lay auditors in the future.

9. Production and editing of the proceedings

KV commented on the timeliness of the production and editing of proceedings. The deadline had been brought forward to 15 December to avoid New Year's Eve, and also to allow the submission of papers for the Special Issue at a later date (15 January).

KV thanked Tim Parkin as keeper of antiquities, and noted that he has kindly offered to continue in this position after he has left the Committee, to help with printing, archives and distribution of proceedings.

KV commented on the progress toward the publication of PVM special edition from last year. Today seven out of 10 papers have been accepted and the issue will most likely be published by Summer 2014. Reasons for the delay are the move to the online system as well as a change in the Guest Editor in Chief. She pointed out that the accepted papers are published online. From the current conference, 12 papers have been submitted and they are all in the online system and under review. Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen is acting as Guest Editor for this issue.

KV thanked the authors, reviewers and editors for their contributions to the production of the proceedings and the Special issue.

10. Information on future conference venues

KV indicated that next year's conference organisers Jeroen Dewulf and Koen Mintiens will present details of the next conference at the close of the current meeting. The conference will take place on 25 – 27 March, 2015 at Het Pand, Ghent. In addition she stated that Cambridge has been selected for the 2016 conference, with local organisers to be James Wood and Richard Newton.

KV also invited the membership to submit applications for future conference venues before 31st August to the Secretary; however, it was also noted that for 2017 strong applications have indeed already been received.

11. Outcome of the SVEPM logo contest

RC reported on the outcome of the SVEPM logo contest. In all, 8 contributions were received, including one from a professional graphic designer. Three were taken forward to a membership survey. In all, 138 members responded to the survey: Forty-one per cent wanted to keep the current logo, 18% wanted a new logo, and 37% expressed that they did not mind. Among the options to be voted for, the most popular one received 47% of the votes. RC said that the Committee concluded that there is insufficient support for a radical change of the logo, and that the old logo will be maintained for the time being. He also pointed out that the Committee has noted that there are actually several versions of the current logo in use and that in any case the current logo could be consolidated and tidied up. Kenton Morgan asked whether the history behind the current logo has been documented. KV said it partly is, and suggested that it could be presented on the future website.

12. Nomination of life members

KV reported that the Committee would like to nominate Peter Cripps for lifetime membership. Marie McIntyre read the Committee's motivation for the nomination.

Giles Innocent seconded the Committee's proposal and Peter Cripps thanked the Society for the honour.

13. Any other business

13.1 SVEPM website renewal update

KV reported that Committee is still working on the launch of a new website and are now in the process of agreeing on a demand specification.

13.2 Update on videotaping of presentations from Madrid conference

KV mentioned that Committee has decided not to make the videotaped presentations from Madrid publicly available on the website as quality-wise they are not optimal. They will, however, be fully available to the presenters. She also pointed out that this year presentations are not recorded, but that we will revisit this possibility for next year's conference in Ghent.

13.3 NEAT project

Keith Howe wanted to draw the membership's attention to the NEAT project, which is concerned with the promotion of animal health economics within the veterinary profession. It is a project coordinated by the Royal Veterinary College, financed by EU for 3 years and with over 60 institutions involved. Last years' meeting in the UK had 80 attendants, and the upcoming meeting will be held in Wageningen, the Netherlands. To find relevant information about the project, google "NEAT RVC".

14. Date and venue of next meeting

KV noted that the next AGM (n°. 34) will take place on Thursday 26 March 2015, Het Pand, Ghent, Belgium.

She thanked the members for their attendance and participation and closed the meeting.

Ann Lindberg (Honorary Secretary)