



SOCIETY FOR VETERINARY EPIDEMIOLOGY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

SVEPM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NO. 31

MINUTES

Date: Thursday 29th March 2012
Time: 12:00pm
Location: The Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow, UK

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Bruce Gummow, Nigel Gibbens, James Wood, Christoph Staubach, Keith Howe, Edmilson Ferreira de Oliveira Filho, and Kenton Morgan.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting No. 30 held on Thursday 29th March 2011 Leipzig, Germany

Marnie Brennan proposed and Michel Bougras-Poulin seconded acceptance of the minutes of AGM No. 30. The minutes of AGM No. 30 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the business conducted with no alterations required.

3. Matters arising (not otherwise on the agenda)

Christine Fourichon clarified that item 11 will focus on the membership survey that was conducted after the 2011 annual meeting. There were no other matters arising.

4. President's report

Christine Fourichon (CF), President of the Society reported the following to the AGM:

CF thanked the delegates for attending the conference and especially thanked both Didier Boichard and Stuart Reid for accepting the invitation to provide respectively the opening plenary and the Gareth Davies lecture.

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

CF especially thanked Tim Parkin and his team for the excellent organisation of the 2012 annual conference. She also thanked the sponsors listed in the front cover of the conference proceedings.

CF stated that 195 delegates were attending the 2012 conference and that the Committee was able to select an interesting scientific programme out of 68 submitted abstracts. Again this year, three conference bursaries had been awarded. Twelve applications were received and the bursaries were awarded to one Slovenian, one Greek and one Portuguese delegate. This year also three poster prizes will be awarded during the conference dinner and for the first time there will be a SAC prize for the best oral presentation. Ten presenters have subscribed to the SAC prize competition.

CF reported on the efforts that were made by the Committee to make a donation to the Japanese Veterinary Epidemiology groups following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The Japanese National Institute for Animal Health was contacted, which hosts the secretary of the Japan Society of Veterinary Epidemiology. They replied by thanking the SVEPM for the hospitality by stating that none of the Japanese institutes involved in veterinary epidemiology were affected by the earthquake or tsunami.

CF thanked Executive Committee members for their excellent work and finally CF reserved special thanks for the outgoing Senior Vice President, Louise Kelly and Hans-Hermann Thulke for their long service on the Committee.

Koen Mintiens, as Honorary Secretary, requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the President's report. Michel Bougras-Poulin proposed and Lis Alban seconded acceptance of the President's report.

5. Secretary's report

Koen Mintiens (KM) reported that he had fielded correspondence from a number of sources on behalf of the Society. These were mostly related to conference organisation and registrations, and enquiries for copies of past proceedings.

KM noted that he had received correspondence from Elsevier suggesting they cancel the SVEPM members' subscription rate for PVM. But it was negotiated that the rate would remain at Euro 150 per annum. At present two SVEPM members take advantage of this discounted subscription rate.

KM received a number of requests from other epidemiological and animal health societies to communicate the existence of their website to the membership. Links to these websites will be placed on the SVEPM website.

KM reported that the SVEPM LinkedIn group currently includes 759 and invited everyone to join and submit announcements and other information to the LinkedIn group.

Finally KM reported that he had received a number of requests for distributing information through the membership email addresses. Up to now the Committee decided not to do so to protect the membership's privacy. But it can be argued that this decision blocks access to interesting information. KM asked for the AGM's opinion on using the membership mailing list for distributing interesting information, allowing members to oppose being included in the list. Tim Parkin proposed to ask the memberships for un-subscription to the mailing list. Richard Newton proposed to ask the membership to subscribe to the mailing list. It was proposed to make all relevant information available on the SVEPM website. Rob Christley argued that the information could be disseminated through the SVEPM LinkedIn group. CF clarified that only specific and non-commercial relevant information would be distributed and that the mailing list is an alternative to the LinkedIn group, to which not all SVEPM members have subscribed. In conclusion, CF proposed that the mailing list can be used for distributing interesting, non-commercial information to the SVEPM membership. The decision to distribute information to the membership will be taken by the Committee. The Secretary will ask the membership to notify their un-subscription to the mailing list in case they do not wish to receive the information. CF asked the AGM for their agreement to this proposal by show of hands. A majority agreed to the proposal.

CF requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the Secretary's report. Dominic Mellor proposed and Richard Newton seconded acceptance of the Secretary's report

6. Treasurer's report

Kristien Verheyen (KV) presented the accounts for 2010/2011, which were approved and had been signed off by the auditors. Total income had been £13,779.29. Total expenditure had been £17,918.52. Net income for the year had been - £4,139.23. The total balance for the Society, as of November 2011, was £55,741.68. KV noted that the 2011 conference had a balance of £8,015.10. The negative net income for 2011 was due a deposit of £10,200.00 that was made to the Grand Central Hotel Glasgow for the 2012 conference.

KV reported that there were currently 248 members of the Society from 31 different countries, distributed as follows:

UK & Ireland – 149
Scandinavia – 20
Benelux – 13
Other European – 42
USA and Canada – 11
New Zealand and Australia – 7
Other – 6

KV noted that the membership numbers dropped in 2011, due to the fact that delegates of the London conference could subscribe as member when registering to the conference to

obtain the membership registration fee. A large number of these members did not renew their membership in 2011.

KV proposed to keep the membership fee at £20. KV reminded the membership that the membership fee was due on or around the 1st May annually.

CF requested that members from the floor proposed and seconded acceptance of the Treasurer's report along with keeping the membership fee at £20, which was proposed by Rob Christley and seconded by Ann Lindberg.

7. Election of officers and Committee members

The positions of Senior Vice President and President are automatically filled by the President and Junior Vice President from the previous year. Therefore, for 2012 – 2013 the following positions will be occupied by:

Position	Holder 2012-2013
Senior Vice President	Christine Fourichon
President	Tim Parkin

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 2012-2013	Proposer	Secunder
Honorary Treasurer	Marnie Brennan	Tim Parkin	Kristien Verheyen
Honorary Secretary	Koen Mintiens	Christine Fourichon	Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen
Junior Vice President	Kristien Verheyen	Louise Kelly	Christine Fourichon

Acceptance of these nominations were proposed by Stuart Reid and seconded by Lis Alban.

With Louise Kelly and Hans-Hermann Thulke completing their term on the Committee and Kristien Verheyen becoming Junior Vice President, two positions as ordinary member of the Committee were vacant. Three nominations were received by the deadline of 21 days prior to the AGM. They were:

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Rob Christley	Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen	Marnie Brennan
Darren Shaw	Louise Matthews	Dominic Mellor
Hans-Hermann Thulke	Teresa Martinez	Tim Parkin

Ed van Klink and Lisa Boden volunteered to act as tellers. The three nominees introduced themselves to the AGM. Finally Rob Christley and Hans-Hermann Thulke were elected through an anonymous ballot.

CF congratulated Rob and Hans-Hermann on their election to the Committee.

8. Election of auditors

CF 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 Lis Alban 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.

9. Production and editing of the proceedings

CF thanked Tim Parkin (TP) for his efforts on editing and producing the conference proceedings and on having them available on time. CF also thanked TP for being the keeper of antiquities in 2011 and helping with printing, archival and distribution of proceedings. CF noted that the editor experienced problems with printing equations from new MS Word formats in pdf-files. In the future, authors will be requested to do a transformation to pdf themselves prior to submission in order to check compatibility.

CF reported that the editors made great efforts to have the PVM special edition from last year printed before this year's conference, which is considered as a milestone. CF thanked the authors, reviewers and editors for their contribution to achieving this goal.

10. Nominations of life members

CF reported that Tim Parkin had nominated Kenton Morgan as a Life Member of the Society for his work, past Committee membership, past presidency and past workshop organiser indicating that he deserves special recognition from the Society. The Committee decided that the nominee was appropriate. CF therefore requested a seconder from the floor. Gareth Davies seconded this nomination.

11. Summary of 2011 conference feedback

CF noted that due to the lower number of delegates attending the 2011 conference in Leipzig, the committee decided to organise a post-conference feedback questionnaire.

Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen reported on the results of the questionnaires submitted by 69 members. The main reasons for members not attending the 2011 conference were workload, financial restrictions and other conferences. The most important reasons for being a member of the Society were to help promote epidemiology and preventive medicine and to obtain the proceedings when not attending the conference

Overall, participants were happy about the conference format, content, workshops. A larger number of participants stated that the conference and hotel accommodation should all be in one venue, which is easy to access. Travel connections should be avoided and everybody should be able to return home on Friday night.

Some participants wanted the conference to be longer, with even a one-day workshop. The issue about too much statistics and modelling was raised and the necessity and varying quality of the Gareth Davis lecture was questioned. There were also some remarks about the conference becoming too expensive.

The usual remarks on the conference format (some wishes for parallel sessions contrasted by many stating that they like the format without parallel sessions), deadline for abstract submission were also mentioned in the conference feedback but these issues have been addressed during the AGM a few years ago and the membership agreed to keep the overall conference format as it is.

Dominic Mellor asked about the Committee's response to the results. CF reported that the Committee had the impression that SVEPM conferences were cheap compared to other similar conferences, but will keep emphasising to conference organisers to reduce costs as much as possible. However, it was noted that it is difficult to combine the request for all-under-the-same-roof venues and cheap solutions, when expecting approximately around 200 participants. The Committee has decided to keep the format as is and will make efforts to acquire more members. Still, the Committee does not find the results and figures alarming. CF reported that of the 195 delegates of the 2012 conference, 48 are non-members.

Lis Alban argued that organising conferences outside UK will increase the local interest in veterinary epidemiology in the countries where these conferences are organised.

12. Changes to the constitution

CF noted that at the 2011 AGM Kristien Verheyen raised the issue with new members for each conference, in that they currently pay £20, to become a member for the conference, in February or March but then should be required to pay £20 to renew membership in May of the same year. This created extra work for the Treasurer and also potentially results in delegates remaining as members for one year only (i.e. not renewing in May). KV proposed that for new or re-joining members £40 (equating to two years of membership fees) should be requested to avoid this problem.

To address this issue, CF proposed the following change to the constitution:

Membership is conditional on the return to the secretary of a completed application form and subscription equivalent to the rate for two calendar years. Subsequent subscriptions

fall due on the first day of May each year.

The proposal was discussed and several improvements to the text were proposed, which finally resulted in the following wording:

Membership is conditional on the return to the Treasurer of a completed application form and subscription equivalent to the rate for two calendar years at first application or subsequent application following an elapsed subscription. Subsequent annual subscriptions fall due on the first day of May each year.

Changing the constitution requires 20% of membership to be present at the AGM to form a quorum and this was not the case this year. Therefore the voting will be postponed to the 2013 AGM, and it was decided to encourage members to participate in the AGMs.

13. Information on future conference venues

CF reported that the Committee had received four applications for organising the 2014 conference, of which Ghent was selected. The conference will be organised by Jeroen Dewulf and Koen Mintiens. CF stated that the three non-successful applications (Dublin, Cambridge, Copenhagen) would remain valid unless the applicants wish to withdraw their application. In this case, they should inform the Honorary Secretary before 1 August 2012. Additional applications are welcomed and need to be submitted to the Secretary before 1 August 2012. The received proposals will be discussed at the Committee meeting in September 2012.

14. Any other business

No further business was tabled.

15. Date and venue of next meeting

The next AGM (n°. 32) will take place on the 21st March 2013 in Madrid, Spain.

CF closed the AGM and thanked members for their attendance and participation

Koen Mintiens (Honorary Secretary)