



# SOCIETY FOR VETERINARY EPIDEMIOLOGY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

## SVEPM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NO. 34

### MINUTES

**Date:** Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Time:** 12:00pm

**Location:** Het Pand, Ghent, Belgium

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Dominic Mellor, Frazer Menzies, Gina Pinchbeck, Laura Green, Ed van Klink and Ann Lindberg (AL). Rob Christley (RC) stepped in as secretary for the AGM.

#### 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting No. 33 held on Thursday 27th March 2014 in Dublin, Ireland

Stuart Reid proposed and Tim Parkin seconded acceptance of the minutes of AGM No. 33. The minutes of AGM No. 33 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

Koen Mintiens (KM), President of the Society reported the following to the AGM:

KM opened his report with a tribute to Professor George Gettinby, who died suddenly in June 2014.

KM discussed some of the issues which have been addressed by the committee this year. The committee has been working to update the committee handbook. At the invitation of Jorge Hernandez (University of Florida) SVEPM has agreed to support travel bursaries for delegates from low-income economies to the ISVEE 2015 conference in Yucatan, Mexico: the committee decided to provide bursaries for 3 delegates (USD 3450), which is equivalent to that provided for ISVEE 2012.

KM thanked HHT for his efforts leading the re-design of the SVEPM website.

KM also discussed the issues that had arisen with the previously proposal for the 2016 conference. As it became impossible to host the conference in Cambridge on suitable dates, the conference will now be held in Denmark. KM thanked Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen and the local organising committee for stepping in to host the conference. KM also noted that in future the dates of the conference will be set in advance of seeking proposals for future conferences.

KM reported that the society had been approached by CABI Publishing regarding indexing of conference posters. CABI Abstracts currently index and abstract the content from the Annual conference proceedings and it has been decided to include the conference posters.

Following a request from the University of Guelph, the committee has donated £300 toward paintings of Professors Wayne Martin and Ian Dohoo, commissioned in recognition of their contributions to veterinary epidemiology, and to be hung at the Ontario Veterinary College and Atlantic Veterinary College, respectively.

KM especially thanked both Crawford Revie and Piet Vanthemsche for accepting the

invitation to provide respectively the opening plenary and the Gareth Davies lecture.

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

KM especially thanked Jeroen Dewulf and his team including Lieve Ectors and Shana de Smet from Semico for the excellent organisation of the 2015 annual conference. He also thanked all the sponsors that had supported the conference.

KM thanked the 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.

He also thanked the 212 delegates for attending the 2015 conference, of which approximately 25% were students. The Committee was glad to receive 122 abstracts of high quality which made it possible to put together an interesting scientific programme. KM also reminded attendees about the selection procedure and that the abstracts are all scored blindly by Committee members. Eighty-three posters were presented at the conference of which 25 had been printed on-site.

The three poster prizes, kindly sponsored by AVIA-GIS, and the SRUC prize for the best oral presentation by young scientists was to be awarded during the conference dinner. KM also explained the selection procedure for the poster prize and the scoring criteria for the SRUC prize.

This year, 3 conference bursaries were awarded. They were awarded to one Spanish, one Italian and one Portuguese delegate; in all, 8 applications were received.

KM finally reserved special thanks for the outgoing Senior Vice President, Kristien Verheyen for her long service on the Committee.

RC, as acting Honorary Secretary, requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the President's report. Jeroen Dewulf proposed and Simon More seconded acceptance of the President's report.

## **5. Secretary's report**

On behalf of AL, RC reported that the Society had received regular requests for promotion of job announcements. Members who do not want to receive such announcements are welcome to contact the Honorary Secretary and will then be excluded from such emails.

RC also reported on a limited but consistent number of bouncing email addresses when sending out SVEPM correspondence. He invited the membership to contact the Society 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 has changed.

RC reported that the SVEPM LinkedIn group has grown to 3,188 members. He invited everyone to join and submit announcements and other information via the LinkedIn group.

KM requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the Secretary's report. Kristien Verheyen proposed and Jeroen Dewulf seconded acceptance of the Secretary's report.

## **6. Treasurer's report**

Marnie Brennan (MB) presented the accounts for 2013/2014, which were approved and had been signed off by the auditors. In the financial year ending 16<sup>th</sup> November 2014, the total expenditure was £17,971.42, income was £9,077.80, resulting in a net loss = £8,893.62.

MB also noted several items from last year's statement:

1. The Santander accounts continuing to earn more interest than the accounts we had previously (made just under £890 interest with both). The Society has reinvested £25,852.13 into another 12 months fixed bond account.
2. Membership numbers remain relatively stable (228 this time last year, 223 now).
3. The Dublin conference made a profit of approximately £2,800. MB thanked the

- conference organisers for their expert budgeting.
4. Committee expenses were down from last year, due largely to increased effort by Committee members.
  5. The Committee is investigating the possibility of opening up a Eurozone account to be able to transfer payments for expenses claims without incurring lots of fees. It is felt that this could also help Eurozone members to pay their membership fees in a more economical manner.
  6. Credit card charges are up by around £125. As a consequence, the Society has changed to a pay-as-you-go service without the monthly fees. This is more in line with the Society's needs.

MB provided a detailed explanation of the losses included at the Madrid conference (£9,937.12). She noted that prior to the conference the loss was expected to be no more than approximately £4200. It was not until August 2014 that the full extent of the loss became apparent. This resulted from lower than expected income (by €4300) and additional costs of approximately €7200 (catering costs - extra €4200; Stolen laptops - €2500; Website costs - extra €500). Following discussion the local organisers (LCO) agreed to reimburse the free registration costs as a gesture of good will (~€4800). The Committee feel that little could have been done to avoid this loss. However, there have been lessons learned and changes made, including:

- 1) More frequent formalised budget presentations by the LCO to the SVEPM Committee in order to avoid missing costs that require justification.
- 2) A more formalised written agreement between the SVEPM committee and the LCO in order to reduce the chance of further monetary losses to the Society.
- 3) It should be made clear that delegates need to take responsibility for personal belongings at conferences or meetings and LCOs will be expected to notify participants of their responsibilities in relation to insurance whilst at the conference
- 4) Conference insurance should be considered by the LCO and obtained on an as needs basis.

In addition, consideration has been given regarding engagement of a professional accountant. However, following discussions with 2 accountants, and consultation with treasurers of 2 other scientific societies (AVTRW and ECVPH) it was determined that an accountant would not have prevented the outcome of the Madrid conference. Further, as employing a basic bookkeeper or accountant would increase the costs of the Society (£200 - £1000) and would not reduce the workload of the Treasurer, the committee has decided not to appoint an accountant.

MB reported that, as of 22/03/15, there were 223 members from a variety of countries, but predominantly Europe and mostly within the UK and Ireland.

KM asked for a vote regarding the suggestion to keep the membership fee at £20, which was accepted by the majority of members present. He then requested that members from the floor supported acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Acceptance was proposed by Christine Fourichon and seconded by Keith Howe.

## 7. Election of officers and Committee members

KM 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 2015 – 2016 the following positions will be occupied by:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Holder 2015-2016</b>
Senior Vice President	Koen Mintiens
President	Hans-Hermann Thulke

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:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Holder 2015-2016</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
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Honorary Treasurer	Marnie Brennan	Ann Lindberg	Kristien Verheyen
Honorary Secretary	Rob Christley	Koen Mintiens	Ann Lindberg
Junior Vice President	Ann Lindberg	Koen Mintiens	Kristien Verheyen

Acceptance of these nominations were proposed by Lis Alban and seconded by Richard Newton.

KM stated that with Rob Christley becoming Honorary Secretary, one position as ordinary member of the Committee was now vacant. One nomination had been received by the deadline of 21 days prior to the AGM. This was Francisco Calvo Artavia, who was proposed by Koen Mintiens and seconded by Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen. The nominee introduced himself to the AGM. Acceptance of his nomination was proposed by Nils Toft and seconded by Hans-Hermann Thulke. KM congratulated Francisco on his election to the Committee.

#### **8. Election of auditors**

KM reported that Dominic Mellor and Fraser Menzies had both agreed to continue to act as auditors of the Society accounts. Jeroen Dewulf therefore proposed and Maarten Weber seconded nomination of Dominic Mellor and Lis Alban proposed and Christine Fourichon seconded nomination of Frazer Menzies. 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**

KM 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).

KM 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.

KM commented that the publication of PVM special edition from last year was published in November 2014. From the current conference, 11 papers have been submitted and they are all in the online system and under review. KM thanked Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen, who is acting as lead Guest Editor.

KM thanked the authors, reviewers and Guest Editors for their contributions to the production of the proceedings and the Special issue.

#### **10. Information on future conference venues**

KM indicated that next year's conference organiser Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen will present details of the next conference at the close of the current meeting. The conference will take place on 16 – 18 March, 2016 at Konventum, Elsinore, Denmark. In addition, he stated that Inverness has been selected for the 2017 conference, with local organiser to be George Gunn.

#### **11. Redesign of the SVEPM website**

HHT launched the new website and provided a short overview of some of its functionality.

#### **12. Nomination of life members**

No nominations had been received.

#### **13. Any other business**

No other business was raised from the floor.

#### **14. Date and venue of next meeting**

KM noted that the next AGM (No. 35) will take place on Thursday 17 March 2016,

Konventum, Elsinore, Denmark.

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

**Rob Christley (acting Honorary Secretary)**