



SVEPM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NO. 28

Date: Thursday 2nd April 2009
Time: 12.00 pm
Location: London, UK.

MINUTES

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Fraser Menzies, Dom Mellor, Jane Murray, Philip Mellor, Christoph Staubach.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting No. 27 held on Thursday 27th March 2008 in Liverpool, UK.

Jorgen Westergaard proposed and Kristien Verheyen (KV) seconded acceptance of the minutes of AGM 27. The minutes of AGM No. 27 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the business conducted with no alterations required.

3. Matters arising (not otherwise on the agenda)

Martin Hugh-Jones raised the issue of timing of SVEPM conference, stating that it often clashed with commitments in the USA. Lis Alban (LA) agreed to discuss this issue at the Post-conference committee meeting.

Stuart Reid also requested that in future every effort be made to avoid date clashes with AVTRW and BSAVA. Richard Newton stated that SVEPM committee planned as far in advance as possible. Tim Parkin (TP) indicated that he had been in touch with AVTRW and BSAVA secretaries to avoid clashes in the future. LA indicated that this issue would also be discussed at the Post-conference committee meeting

4. President's report

LA as, President of the Society, presented her report to the AGM as follows:

First of all, I would like to thank the plenary speaker Katharina Staerk for giving such an inspiring talk about veterinary public health and the challenges that we as a profession are faced with. I am also looking very much forward to the talk of Jørgen Westergaard tomorrow.

I will also take the opportunity to recognise that our Society's greatest task is to promote veterinary epidemiology and preventive medicine and this is done through:

- 1) The annual SVEPM meeting with its proceeding booklet
- 2) The Special Issue of PVM based on manuscripts from SVEPM

The SVEPM conferences are most rewarding, because they give us a chance to meet and inspire each other in our work. New people as well as regulars – all do we return from SVEPM meetings with new ideas about how to get the best out of our work. Making friends is large part of the output of these meetings. The

network is invaluable. Friends are always there to help you out when you need it.

However, such a conference does not arrange itself. A lot of effort is required – and I would like to acknowledge the team effort that has contributed to the success of this conference. On behalf of the committee, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all involved in the organisation of this meeting. I would also like to reserve special thanks for the local organisers, Kristien Verheyen, Melanie Collins, Kim Stevens, Nadia Chan, Gilly Kyriacou and Dirk Pfeiffer. I do recognise the long lead in time involved in the organisation of these conferences. But I dare say that it is worth when it results in a meeting as successful as this. I would like you all to join me in congratulating the local organisers for their effort.

This year we have a total of (236 registered delegates from 23 countries, including 54 students). So around 1/5 of the participants are students. I see this as a very positive development – lots of young people that have flair for epidemiology – they are the future of the Society. Moreover we had 99 posters – and we could have had even more posters if we had had the space required.

I will also take the opportunity to thank the delegates for their continued active participation in the conference. This results in a lively debate during sessions and in particular during the breaks.

Louise Kelly is thanked for her continued efforts as Honorary Treasurer. I would also like to thank Kristien Verheyen for standing in for Louise during her maternity leave. I shall here be noting that the auditors had commented on the excellent job Louise and Kristien have done for the society. I will also like to thank Tim Parkin for his work as Honorary Secretary. I will also like to thank Richard Newton, first for his work as a senior-vice president and secondly for the coordination of editing of the proceedings which Richard has done in collaboration with last year's local organiser Gina Pinchbeck. The production of the Special Issue is a big task – requiring help from many a reviewers and demanding a large number of working hours to get everything sorted out. Furthermore, the system of editing the proceedings, using the whole of the committee to edit papers for different sessions, has been working well this year.

All sponsors are acknowledged for their support. It definitely makes life easier when financial support is available.

Finally, I would like to thank Richard Newton for his long service on the committee and for his work as Senior Vice President in the last year. Richard has contributed to the society in several ways – among others helping out when Edmund Peeler went to New Zealand during his year in office as President.

LA asked for questions related to her report. None were forthcoming.

TP requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the President's report. Stuart Reid proposed and Katharina Staerk seconded acceptance of the President's report.

5. Secretary's report

TP reported that he had fielded correspondence from a number of sources on behalf of the Society. These had related to conference organisation, registrations and potential pre- and post-conference workshops that were not followed up this year but may be pursued in future conferences.

TP highlighted to SVEPM members the availability of a significant discount on the annual subscription to Preventive Veterinary Medicine (PVM). At present only five SVEPM members had taken advantage of this offer and TP suggested that if other members were interested they could contact him and he would direct them to the relevant contact at PVM.

Finally, TP recognised that a number of members still may not have received all mailings through the year and asked for members who felt that they were still not receiving emails to ensure that they were fully paid up members and to email current email addresses him in order to update the membership list.

There were no questions arising from the Secretary's report.

LA requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the Secretary's report. Giles Paiba proposed and Louise Kelly seconded acceptance of the Secretary's report.

6. Treasurer's report

KV presented the current state of the Society finances for the 2007/2008 financial year. There remained a total balance of £49,242.17. The total income had been £112,017.43 and the total expenditure had been £110,508.68. The net income (£1,508.75) for the current financial year was a reflection of the successful conference held last year in Liverpool. KV thanked the Liverpool conference organisers for a successful conference last year.

The current membership totalled 256 individuals (excluding new members that paid the fee as part of the current conference registration) from the following countries:

UK & Ireland – 151
Scandinavia – 37
Benelux – 18
Other European – 28
USA and Canada – 11
New Zealand and Australia – 5
South & Central America – 3
Other – 3

KV noted that the constitution required that the membership vote on the level of membership fee for the coming year. KV proposed that this remain at £20 for this year. This was accepted by a show of hands. KV reminded the membership that the membership fee was due on or around the 1st May annually.

Lisette Graat requested that the committee consider the option to pay the membership fee alongside the conference registration fee to avoid non-UK

delegates/members having to cover two sets of bank charges. KV noted that it was possible to avoid these charges if members paid by credit card but she agreed to take this suggestion to the Post-conference committee meeting.

LA requested that members from the floor propose and second acceptance of the Treasurer's report. Ed Van Klink proposed and Liza Rosenbaum Nielsen seconded acceptance of the Treasurer's report.

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 2009 – 2010 the following positions will be occupied by:

Position	Holder 2009-2010
Senior Vice President	Lis Alban
President	Dirk Pfeiffer

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 2009-2010	Proposer	Seconded
Honorary Treasurer	Kristien Verheyen	Dirk Pfeiffer	Koen Mintiens
Honorary Secretary	Tim Parkin	Lis Alban	Christine Fourichon
Junior Vice President	Louise Kelly	Tim Parkin	Lis Alban

Acceptance of these nominations were proposed by Laura Green and seconded by Richard Newton.

With Richard Newton completing his term on the committee and Louise Kelly becoming Junior Vice President one position as ordinary member of the committee was vacant.

One nomination was received by the deadline of 21 days prior to the AGM. This was:

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Hans-Hermann Thulke	Lis Alban	Tim Parkin

Hans-Hermann Thulke was therefore elected to serve as an ordinary committee member.

8. Election of auditors

LA reported that Dominic Mellor and Fraser Menzies had both agreed to continue to act as auditors of the Society accounts. Tim Parkin therefore proposed and Lis Alban seconded their nominations. No objections were received from the floor and Dominic Mellor and Fraser Menzies were therefore elected to serve as auditors for the forthcoming year.

9. Production and editing of the proceedings

The President said she was very pleased that the proceedings were again available in time for the conference. LA also thanked Mike Thrusfield for continuing in the role of Keeper of Antiquities and noted the work he continued to do with regard to ensuring SVEPM proceedings continue to be distributed to members unable to attend the meeting.

LA noted a slight delay in the publication of the 2008 PVM special issue as there had been an unfortunate sequence of events that had prevented completion of the full edition. RN noted that the committee were considering co-opting a PVM special edition editor, as it was a role that many would tackle with very little previous editorial experience. He felt that this would significantly aid rapid production of future special editions.

LA also thanked speakers for their cooperation in the production and formatting of proceedings.

Ricardo De La Rúa asked what proportion of submitted papers was eventually published. RN replied that last year there had been 13 submissions and that it was likely that eight papers would be published in the PVM special edition.

Henk Hogeveen asked for clarification of SVEPM policy on pre-publication/in press articles as he believed it was not clear in author's instructions. LA agreed to take this to the Post-conference committee meeting.

Victoria Volkova followed this with a question on papers that contained some pre-published material. LA replied that it would depend on degree of pre-published material but stressed that authors should always declare any potential for double publications.

Laura Green suggested that it might be good for future conferences to include some presentations on several completed pieces of work that contributed to a useful scientific narrative. LA replied that the primary focus of presentations at the conference should be "new work".

Martin Hugh-Jones indicated that in the USA some conferences specifically aimed to provide some form of continuing professional development and that this often took the form of very good review papers on particular topics.

LA suggested that there was ample opportunity for reviews during workshops and plenary lectures but agreed to take the issue to the Post-conference committee meeting.

Hans-Hermann Thulke suggested that it may be possible to move the acceptance of papers to later in the year therefore reducing the time between acceptance for SVEPM and eventual publication. LA replied that due to the requirement to produce full papers for the proceedings it was not possible to alter the current set of deadlines.

10. Nominations of life members

LA reported that George Gettinby had been nominated as a Life Member by Stuart Reid. LA reported that the committee had considered this and would like to propose that the membership accept this nomination for Life Membership. LA therefore proposed and requested a second from the floor. Iain McKendrick seconded this nomination.

11. Any other business

Koen Mintiens (KM) raised an issue that the committee had discussed at the Pre-conference committee meeting. He indicated that with the Society growing with more workshops and the PVM special issue, amongst other jobs that he would like to hear proposals from the floor on potential forms of recompense for committee members. KM suggested this could take the form of subsidised/free registration at the annual conference or a fixed allowance for each committee member.

Ed Van Klink questioned whether the committee were proposing free registration and travel or just free registration.

KM replied we were open to what the membership thought most appropriate.

Ed Peeler noted that it was normal for other Societies to provide free registration for committee members.

Katharina Staerk suggested that free registration would be very appropriate, citing the situation with ECVPH committee members. However, she did caution the implications of such a move without implementing some way to maintain the current very good financial status of the Society. KS suggested that the membership fee was very low and that an increase to £30 would probably be seen as reasonable by the membership.

Ed Van Klink noted that ECVPH committee members received free travel to conferences as well as registration.

Maarten Weber questioned whether local organisers also get free registration. KV confirmed that four free places were available to members of the conference organising committee.

Stuart Reid noted that the Society had not always been in such a healthy financial position and that the committee were ultimately responsible should the financial situation become problematic. Nevertheless he supported free registration for the committee but suggested it may be appropriate to consider if the size of the committee was correct. Perhaps the committee could function just as well with fewer members. He also noted that the meetings were not cheap so it would probably be more sensible to increase the membership fee rather than add extra costs to registrations.

KM thanked the floor for all of these comments and said that the committee would consider this issue further at the Post-conference meeting.

Martin Hugh-Jones commented that none of the posters had abstracts included making it difficult to decide a poster was worth further inspection.

Stuart Reid commented on the excellent conduct of the AGM and commended the committee for establishing an SOP for the AGM. He also raised an issue on behalf of Dominic Mellor requesting that future conferences strive to accommodate all delegates in the same location as he felt this was integral to the spirit of SVEPM.

Christine Fourichon confirmed that this was one of the considerations in deciding the location for SVEPM 2010. Accommodation in locations close to each other and very close to the conference venue (within walking distance) and a space to get and stay together after the meeting in the conference venue were being identified.

Stuart Reid also noted that comparable hotel rooms were available on websites such as Expedia and much reduced costs compared to the official conference organisers.

Maarten Weber asked if poster abstracts could be included in conference proceedings.

Stuart Reid stated that a list of poster abstracts had previously been included in the conference bags.

Dirk Pfeiffer noted that the posters were dealt with by the local organisers and would require additional personnel to edit to a suitable standard.

Ed Peeler stated that posters being uploaded to the SVEPM website as soon as possible after conference was initiated to take away the need for printing poster abstracts.

Martin Hugh-Jones asked if poster instructions could include a note to bring A4 copies of the poster.

Giles Innocent suggested we should not encourage this as many would be picked up and never read. He favoured searching for posters on the website.

Giles Paiba suggested that it would be useful to include a keyword search facility for all posters on the website to make searching for specific poster topics much easier.

LA agreed to take the keyword search suggestion to the Post-conference committee meeting.

12. Date and venue of next meeting

The next AGM (no. 29) will be held on the 25th March 2010 In Nantes, France.

LA closed the AGM and thanked members for their attendance and participation.

Tim Parkin
(Honorary Secretary)