

**Board Meeting of the 27th Annual Sea Turtle Symposium  
February 24 (7:00 pm), 2007  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, USA**

**Symposium Overview**

Michael Coyne, the Symposium President, indicated that 1,043 people registered for the Symposium, however, the no-shows still needed to be tallied. This year more tickets were sold for the social and banquet than ever before. At the main hotel 250 rooms were blocked for the Symposium plus there were additional villas made available. As the contractual needs with the hotel were met, the meeting room and other rooms were provided free of cost.

**Treasurer's Report**

Ed Drane reported that Dimitris Margaritoulis did an excellent job and presented the overall budget to the Board. The Operating Account is one-thirds of the amount required to run a Symposium. Typically \$2,000-\$3,000 of the travel grant goes unclaimed because of no-shows often from Africa because of visa difficulties and in the other regions it is <\$1,000; the money just gets forwarded into next year's grants. At pre-registration, about 15% signed up for the high-income option, which helped generate more money for the Symposium. Ways to reimburse travel grantees (checks, traveler's checks, or cash) were briefly discussed.

**Nominations**

Problems/concerns/questions that arose during the Nomination Committee's deliberations were presented. It was decided that the nominations procedure would be discussed in greater detail at the Board retreat.

**Resolutions**

Only one resolution had been submitted and was discussed with the author. Nancy FitzSimmons, the Resolution Committee Chair, requested a more detailed discussion of the resolutions process at the Board retreat.

**Travel Committee Report**

The allotment of cash and rooms to travel grantees and the percentage of funds that went to each region were discussed. A new South Asia region (includes India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh) was added with Kartik Shanker as the Regional Travel Chair. Some regions have new travel chairs: Aliko Panagopoulou for the Mediterranean and Alejandro Fallabrino for Latin America. The number of grantees could be increased this year because there were rooms/villas available or offered by the hotel. About 85% of the total applicants were funded. Kartik Shanker raised matching funds for South Asia—\$2,000 was received from the Ford Foundation. J. Nichols shared his idea of adding another region: the 'indigenous regions,' which would cover conservation leaders among the Seri, Aborigines, etc. Next year, the focus will be on Latin America. Discussion on selection and eligibility for a travel grant was postponed to the Board retreat.

### **Student Awards**

At the 27<sup>th</sup> Symposium there were 47 posters and 14 talks in the Conservation category and 48 posters and 20 talks in the Biology category. This year there were 21 judges from 7 countries. There are between 125-145 presentations/year. Making the student awards more ceremonial with a group picture of winners on stage was suggested. Travel grantees will also be recognized during the banquet in an effort to thank supporters of travel grants.

### **Annual retreat**

Retreat dates are 13-17 August at the NCTC in West Virginia. The BoD's Terms of Reference require attendance by all Board members. Funding to attend the retreat is available to Board members.

### **Online voting**

Online voting was discussed. Every member will be able to vote regardless of whether they are attending the Symposium. A discussion about online voting will take place at the Plenary so that the membership is engaged in the decision making process.

### **By-Laws and Constitution**

Modifications to the By-Laws and Constitution were discussed and approved unanimously.

### **2008 Symposium**

J. Nichols gave an overview of the 2008 Symposium to be held in Loreto, Mexico.

*Members in attendance: Thane Wibbels, Hedely Guada, Ed Drane, Michael Coyne, Dimitris Margaritoulis, Rod Mast, Nancy FitzSimmons, Manjula Tiwari, Brendan Godley, Kartik Shanker, J. Nichols, Donna Shaver, Ana Barragan, and Naoki Kamezaki. Observers: Tomo HIRAMA, Larisa Avens, Jeanette Wyneken, Anders Rhodin, Hoyt Peckham, Marydele Donnelly, and Kama Dean.*