

2007 AGM Minutes

New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists

The Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists Inc. was held in Stewart Lecture Theatre 1, Lincoln University, 5.05 pm on Tuesday 14 August 2007.

Matthew Turnbull welcomed the 18 members to the meeting (Julian Heyes, Mike Trought, Paula Jameson, John Clemens, Peter Minchin, John Palmer, Tony Connor, Ivan Rowe, Rainer Hofmann, Marissa Roldan, Aluh Nikmatullah, Hao Luo, Fiona Bentley, David Lewis, Brian Jordan, Ian McIvor, Margaret Barbour, Mike Clearwater).

Apologies were presented for Julian Eaton-Rye, Sarah Dorling, Nick Gould, Marion McKenzie, Michael McManus, David Whitehead, Ian Ferguson, Jim Crush, Jocelyn Eason, Kim Snowden, Julian Eaton-Rye, Jan Binnie.

1. The **minutes** of the 2006 AGM were accepted (**moved**: Matthew Turnbull, carried).
2. **Matters arising**. There were no matters arising.
3. Matthew Turnbull presented the **President's report** on behalf of Julian Eaton-Rye (attached) and moved it's adoption, seconded Julian Heyes (carried).
4. The **Treasurer's report** was presented by Mike Clearwater (attached). John Palmer queried the number of bank accounts, and it was agreed that the council should consider closing the PSIS current and term deposits the next time the term deposit matures. Paula Jameson suggested a consolidated BNZ account. Matthew Turnbull moved the adoption of the treasurers report, provisional on the receipt of a satisfactory auditors report (the books are currently with the auditor), seconded Paula Jameson (carried).

Discussion was then opened concerning the motion to increase membership subscriptions. Mike Clearwater explained that the society's main income (conference receipts) was highly variable, and that our regular spending currently exceeds our average income from all sources. Our surplus was therefore expected to decline below \$20,000 in the current year, down from a high of \$31,000 two years ago. There was a general discussion concerning the need to raise dues – whether the increase would make much difference to income, and whether potential members would consider us too expensive given that many belong to more than one society (John Clemens, Mike Trought). Matthew explained that the plan since the name change last year was for the society to become more active, and to raise its profile by supporting regional activities – some extra income was therefore necessary. Mike commented that our largest expense was student travel subsidies, in the past we awarded relatively small amounts of around \$100 or less (originally intended as leverage that allowed a student to extract further support from other sources – Mike Trought), but these days this amount was too little. Paula Jameson commented that the original intention of the society was to not accumulate too much cash, but given present costs involved in

running conferences, a buffer of \$20,000 was not excessive. Those present generally agreed that the society should try to maintain at least the current level of surplus (Ivan Rowe and others). There was also general agreement that offering membership for more than one year would be helpful.

John Palmer proposed the motion that 'annual subscriptions be set at \$50 for one year or \$80 for two years for full members, and \$30 and \$60 for associate members for two or four years respectively', seconded Paula Jameson (carried).

- 5. Election of Officers.** Matthew Turnbull led discussion concerning council positions, the need to delegate tasks from the secretary / treasurer position to the other council members, and the fact that the Vice President position was currently vacant. All current council members have indicated that they were willing to continue for the next year. Mike Clearwater stated that he intended to stand for president next year, hence there was a need to consider how the secretary / treasurer role would be filled in future.

All positions were declared vacant and nominations opened. Tony Connor nominated all existing council members for continuation in their current role (Julian Eaton-Rye, President; Mike Clearwater, Secretary/Treasurer; Marion McKenzie, Rainer Hofmann, Nick Gould, Margaret Barbour, Council), seconded Julian Heyes. There were no further nominations. Matthew Turnbull moved that nominations be closed (seconded Mike Clearwater) and that all of the above be declared elected (carried unanimously).

Matthew Turnbull then proposed the motion that 'in light of the vacant Vice President position the council co-opt an additional member to serve on council or to fill the vacant Vice President position', seconded Paula Jameson (carried).

- 6. Conference Venues 2008 and beyond**

Matthew Turnbull explained that next year's conference would be held in Dunedin (December 7 – 11, NZSPB/NZSBMB/NZIC, Julian Eaton-Rye organising), and the year following would be COMBIO 2009 in Christchurch in December (December 6 – 10, NZSPB/ASPS/ASBMB/NZSBMB + others, Matthew Turnbull as co-chair). Planning for COMBIO 2009 was progressing well, and would possibly also include the microbiologists and biomedical involvement from the hospital. The aim was for a large, high impact meeting. Julian Heyes queried whether the NZIAHS could also contribute to COMBIO 2009 (as discussed by their council), Matthew Turnbull confirmed that if an invitation had not already been extended he would make sure that one was.

There were no current plans for 2010. Paula Jameson noted that the next International Horticultural Congress would be held that year in Portugal, as well as a plant hormone meeting in Barcelona.

- 7. Update from the Functional Plant Biology Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC).** Mike Clearwater reminded members that the society has a representative on the Functional Plant Biology editorial committee. The journal continues to seek suggestions for review topics, and for special issues, usually focusing on a topic of interest covered at a conference or workshop. Our Roger Slack Award recipient is invited each year to submit a review of their work to the journal.

8. **Roger Slack Award.** This year's recipient is Kevin Gould, of Otago University. Kevin will give his plenary lecture tomorrow, entitled 'Muriel Wheldale Onslow, and the rediscovery of anthocyanin function in plants'. Members were reminded that next year's award was open to researchers within 10 years of their PhD, and that they should be on the alert for potential nominees.
9. **Annals of Botany Speaker.** This years Annals of Botany speaker is Professor Stephen Tyerman, of the University of Adelaide. Steve gave his plenary lecture yesterday, entitled 'Investigations in plant plumbing: from the genes for the valves to the physiology of the pipes'. Members were reminded to consider nominating someone as next year's speaker.
10. **Other business:**

Plants in Action – Paula Jameson gave the meeting a brief update on progress with the new edition of the Plants in Action textbook (a joint project with ASPS). Work has recently restarted on preparing invitations for contributions. The publisher has also been changed to CSIRO Publishing, which should allow more input from the societies on overall presentation and marketing. The aim is now for completion and launch at COMBIO 2009.

Expanding membership – Matthew Turnbull noted that the society needed to concentrate on maintaining or expanding membership, and called for suggestions on how this might be achieved.

Email / Website – Rainer Hofmann queried whether it might be possible to set up a list-serve style email service for members, and Matthew Turnbull noted that the website was a little plain and could possibly be redone. Mike Clearwater stated that the website address was now out-of-date (nz spp.hort.cri.nz), and that he had started discussions with HortResearch IT staff about options for a new domain name. Changing the way emails and the website were handled could be included with this change.

The meeting was closed by Matthew Turnbull at 6.00 pm.