

2008 AGM Minutes

New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists

The Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists Inc. was held in Room 6, St David Street Theatre Complex, 1:05 pm on Tuesday 2 December 2008.

Julian Eaton-Rye welcomed the 30 members to the meeting (Mike Clearwater, Simona Nardoza, Jibrán Tahir, David Whitehead, Adrian Walcroft, Jonathan Moore, Roger Young, Peter Mabbitt, Simon Jackson, Hao Luo, Nick Albert, Aluh Nikmatullah, Phuong Dinh, Marian Mckenzie, Lei Wang, Erin O'Donoghue, David Lewis, Sarah Dorling, Phillip West, Jocelyn Eason, Samuel Gregory, Robert Day, Martin Hohmann-Marriott, David Collings, Thomas Evans, David O'Keefe, Michael T. McManus, Rainer Hofmann, Connie Wong, Wouter Ballizany).

Apologies were presented for Kim Snowden, Nick Gould, Matthew Turnbull, Kevin Gould, Paula Jameson, Peter Minchin, Tony Connor, Brian Jordan, Margaret Barbour.

1. The **minutes** of the 2007 AGM were accepted (**moved**: Julian Eaton Rye, **seconded** Wouter Ballizany, carried).
2. **Matters arising**. There were no matters arising.
3. Julian Eaton-Rye presented the **President's report** (attached).
4. The **Treasurer's report** was presented by Mike Clearwater (attached). He noted that since the end of the financial year covered by the report, the PSIS term deposit had matured, both PSIS accounts had been closed, and their balances transferred to the BNZ account, as proposed at the previous AGM.

Julian Eaton-Rye **moved** that both the President's and Treasurer's reports be adopted, **seconded** Jocelyn Eason, carried.

5. **Election of Officers**. All positions were declared vacant and nominations opened. Julian Eaton-Rye nominated those members who had volunteered to stand for council prior to the meeting (Mike Clearwater, President; Kevin Gould, Vice-President; Secretary, Marion McKenzie; Treasurer, Tina Summerfield; Nick Gould, Margaret Barbour, David Collings, Rainer Hofmann, Council), **seconded** Nick Albert. There were no further nominations, Julian Eaton-Rye declared nominations closed and proposed that all of the above be elected (**seconded** Nick Albert, carried unanimously)
6. **Conference Venues 2009 and beyond**
Julian Eaton-Rye explained that next year's conference would be held as part of COMBIO 2009, along with a number of other societies (NZSPB/ASPS/ASBMB/NZSBMB/NZIAHS + others?, 6-10 December 2009). Julian also reminded the meeting that the society had accepted an invitation to act as a partnering society at the American Society of Plant Biology's annual meeting in Hawaii in July 2009 (refer to the President's report). There were currently no firm plans for 2010 and beyond. Mike Clearwater explained that the usual cycle

was for our society to meet with NZIAHS in 2010, then possibly with COMBIO in Australia in 2011. He also raised the possibility of approaching the NZ Ecological Society to enquire as to whether they might be interested in meeting jointly in 2010. David Lewis reminded the meeting that we should ensure that the society supports NZIAHS by planning to meet jointly if appropriate. Other relevant meetings discussed included the International Horticultural Congress, to be held in Portugal 2010, then in Australia in 2014 (the organizing committee for the 2014 congress held a meeting at last year's annual conference in Lincoln), and the Australasian Plant Breeding conference in Cairns in 2009.

7. **Update from Functional Plant Biology.** Mike Clearwater explained that since the last AGM the editorial structure of the journal had changed from a CSIRO in-house editor to an academic editor-in-chief model, with Rana Munns appointed as the editor-in-chief. The editorial advisory committee structure, which included an NZSPB representative, had been replaced with 15 appointed Associate Editors who directly managed the reviewing of submitted manuscripts. Mike Clearwater was appointed an Associate Editor in June after contacting Rana (who is also President elect of ASPS) to enquire about how we might best continue (and expand) links between NZSPB, ASPS and the journal. The journal continues to seek suggestions for review topics (and appropriate authors), and for special issues or part 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 Tina Summerfield, of Otago University. Tina will give her plenary lecture today, entitled 'Global gene expression in the cyanobacterium *Synechocystis* SP. PCC 6803'. Julian Eaton-Rye reminded members that next year's award was open to all researchers regardless of the time since their PhD, and that nominations could be made at any time. Next year's award recipient will have the opportunity of presenting a plenary lecture at COMBIO 2009.
9. **Annals of Botany Speaker.** This years Annals of Botany speaker is Professor Peter Nixon, of Imperial College London. Peter will give his plenary lecture tomorrow, entitled 'Repairing the 'engine of life': How plants solved their energy crisis'. Members were reminded that nominations for next year's speaker can be forwarded to the secretary at any time.

10. **Other business:**

Eligibility for student awards – Julian Eaton-Rye noted that NZSPB was unusual in comparison to other similar societies in that we offered student subsidies regardless of the time a student had been a member. This led to some students joining and immediately requesting travel awards. While such students are usually part of an established group with a lead scientist who had long supported the society, there were examples of 'unknown' students, with supervisors who were not members, joining simply to apply for a travel subsidy, and making no further contribution to the society. To limit these sorts of applications, Julian proposed the motion that 'students applying for overseas travel awards be required to join the society for at least six months before the

application is made, with exceptions made at the discretion of the council' (**seconded** Rainer Hofmann, carried unanimously).

Last year's student prize recipients – Mike Clearwater announced to the meeting that last year's recipients of the best oral and poster presentation prizes at our annual conference in Lincoln were Fiona Bentley and Hao Luo, respectively. Both had left the meeting to catch transport before the announcements were made at the closing ceremony, and Mike did not follow up afterwards. Hao Luo was present at this AGM and was awarded his prize at the close of the meeting. Julian Eaton-Rye agreed to pass on the other prize to Fiona, who was still working in Dunedin.

The meeting was closed by Julian Eaton-Rye at 1.46 pm.