

ISTS Board Retreat

August 15 and 16, 2006

National Conservation and Training Center, Shepherdstown, WV, USA

Treasurer's report

Ed Drane presented the auditor's report. The independent auditor's report has been good, but the auditor's costs will increase and a new auditor may be needed.

27th Symposium Budget

Michael Coyne presented a budget draft for the 27th Sea Turtle Symposium and discussions of budget items and funders followed. Overall it was felt that that it was very useful for the President to have a budget drafted and presented to the Board early so that it can be modified if necessary.

Corporate Governance

A draft of the ISTS Corporate governance was discussed, edited, and approved.

ISTS Budget

The need to put together a document on the ISTS funders, the amount given, the points of contact, proposals and letters, etc. to provide continuity until a fund-raising committee is put together was highlighted. Subsequently, the creation and role of a Board Chairman was discussed—issues discussed included: the Chair having a long-term perspective on finances, the ISTS not having the funds to support such a position, and a Board member taking on the responsibility. Issues raised included: the reporting conflicts of the Treasurer and Secretary to the Chair and President, and the inequality and the change in dynamics within the Board if the Chair had a paid position. It was agreed that the Board would experiment with an Interim Board Chair position using the Terms of Reference drafted (at the retreat) as the guiding principle and reevaluate this position at the annual meeting in 2008.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Current ISTS officers were asked to draft ToRs for their positions. The ToRs were reviewed by the entire Board and modified. They are posted on the ISTS' Nominations website.

Board Retreat

The importance of the Board Retreat was discussed and it was agreed that it is very important for the workings of the Society because the bulk of the Society's work is done during these retreats. It was suggested that the retreat be included as a Symposium budget item. The National Training and Conservation Center of the US Fish & Wildlife Service in West Virginia was accepted as the most convenient location. The retreat was officially expanded to 3 full days during the second full week of August and the National Training and Conservation Center of the US Fish & Wildlife Service in West Virginia was selected as the venue for the retreat. At the Symposium, the Board would meet for only

on one evening to discuss Symposium-related issues henceforth. For those Board members unable to attend, some form of teleconferencing would be explored.

Nominations

At least 1-3 nominees will be considered for each position with best possible regional representation of the membership and submitted to the Board for consideration; voting choices will be given for the Board and Nominating Committee positions with flexibility in the number of slots. If a candidate were suitable then he/she would definitely be considered. Regional representation on the Board was discussed. The Nominations Committee will solicit bids/proposals from President-Elect nominees and the biographies and photos of the final nominees will be provided to the membership. The online voting system will be discussed at the Plenary (27th Symposium) with the membership. Currently, only 10% of the membership is voting at the Plenary.

Registration fees

Adjustment to registration fees was discussed so that the increased income could pay internal bills. Discussion followed on definition of low and high income and it was agreed that instead of defining income on country-by-country basis, high-income would be defined as greater than \$50,000.

Symposium Proceedings

Book of Abstracts and Proceedings were discussed and their value evaluated. The Book of Abstracts was very useful at the Symposium, but many people use the Proceedings as a publication outlet, even though the Marine Turtle Newsletter would be a better outlet for publications.

Regional newsletters

The Board approved funding the Marine Turtle Newsletter for \$6,000 and the Indian Ocean Turtle Newsletter for \$2,000. This funding will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Resolutions

New Resolutions procedures (available on the Symposium website) were discussed. Through this new process it is hoped that the burden will shift from the Board to the Resolutions Committee although members of the Board will ensure suitability. The ISTS is responsible for Resolutions and will reject resolutions if deemed necessary to avoid putting the ISTS at risk. The Resolutions Committee will be working with the submitters so they would know whether the resolution has been accepted. The Resolutions Committee was created with Jeff Seminoff & Nancy FitzSimmons (as co-chairs), Ana Barragan, and Thane Wibbels. Kartik Shanker volunteered to help. Two non-BoD (one academic and another from a conservation NGO) would be added to the committee. Implementation of some kind of Golden Turtle Awards was discussed. Some felt that the Resolution was a political tool and could not be replaced with an Award.

Longer Symposia

The pros and cons of adding more days to the Symposium were discussed. No conclusion was reached.

2008 Symposium

J. Nichols presented the details of the 2008 Symposium to be held in Baja, Mexico.

Members in attendance: Thane Wibbels, Rod Mast, Ana Barragan, Hedelvy Guada, Donna Shaver, Michael Coyne, Dimitris Margaritoulis, Jeffery Seminoff, Kartik Shanker, Ed Drane, Manjula Tiwari, J. Nichols, Nancy FitzSimmons, and Milani Chaloupka.
Participation via phone: Larisa Avens