

Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy Council of the International System Dynamics Society

February 11, 1993 (93-1)

Last years Minutes: January 30 (92-1), July 14 (92-2) July 16 (92-3), July 17 (92-4)

In Attendance: Julie Pugh (Executive Director),

Officers: Bob Eberlein (Secretary), Janet Gould (VP Member Activities), Peter Milling (President), Jack Pugh (VP Finance), Mike Radzicki (VP Meetings), John Sterman (Past President),

Policy Council: Pöl Davidsen, Julie DiStefano, Jim Lyneis

Guests: David Andersen, Jay Forrester

1. Welcome

Welcome was extended to Pöl Davidsen, Julie DiStefano, Janet Gould and Jim Lyneis who are just starting their terms as officers and members of the policy council.

2. Treasurer's Report (Jack Pugh)

On a cash basis 1992 revenues exceeded expenditures by \$23,000 leaving the society with a cash balance of \$93,000 at the end of 1992. Finances continue to be healthy, with a surplus of \$17,000 budgeted for 1993. Wiley provides income of \$6,000.00 per year and, depending on pressures, the society might consider forgiving some of that to prevent dues increases.

3. Gordon S. Brown Fund

The Gordon S. Brown fund has a total of \$240,000 in available funds. These funds are under the stewardship of a committee (Jay Forrester, Janet Gould, Barry Richmond and Nancy Roberts) of the Society, but are separately held and accounted for. There have not been very many requests for funding, and many of those that have come forward have been inconsistent with the goals of the fund. The purpose of the fund is to promote the packaging of existing teaching materials for use in K-12 education. It is not intended for hardware purchases or the development of new material. There has been difficulty in getting the right message to the right people.

Because the Gordon S. Brown Fund monies are substantial and legally assets of the Society Jack Pugh is going to get a legal opinion on whether there is any risk to our existing non profit tax status.

4. Society Brochure

Bob Eberlein is working up a new society brochure to encourage membership. Pegasus Communications has agreed, in principle, to send this out with one of their newsletters. It was also agreed that software companies should be asked to enclose the brochure with software they ship.

5. Forrester Awards

The Forrester Award was always supposed to be a plaque of some sort followed by a cash award. To date, nothing other than a cash reward has been presented. Attempts to have a brass image of Jay Forrester made were not successful. It was generally agreed that a simple plaque would be appropriate.

Moved by John Sterman that a committee consisting of Mike Radzicki, Janet Gould and John Sterman be empowered to oversee the selection and purchase of plaques for this years

and previous years winners, along with a cumulative plaque. Seconded by Jack Pugh the motion was carried.

The Forrester award will follow the format adopted at last summer's policy council meeting. This means it is necessary to choose a winner in advance of the conference. Nominations for the award will be solicited in the President's letter. John Sterman will take over the chair of the Forrester Awards committee from David Andersen.

The principles for the award, especially the five year time limit, will be reviewed by the Forrester Awards committee to see if any change is warranted.

6. Conference Session Format

There was agreement that the format of conference sessions needs to be more carefully defined to ensure quality of presentations. The key suggestions are:

- Designated discussants for plenary sessions.
- Explicit guidelines for presentations.
- Formalized feedback from session chair to presenters.

Mike Radzicki will set up some guidelines for presentation and get them in the hands of the upcoming conference organizers.

General concern was expressed that the schedules for conference work are not being closely followed by all conference organizers. The how-to document for putting on a conference does have the dates at which key things must be done. It was agreed that more encouragement to adhere to those dates would be useful.

7. Conference Gifts and Commendations

Moved by Mike Radzicki that \$100.00 be budgeted for each conference to provide gifts to the conference organizers. The Vice President for meetings will be responsible for the purchase and presentation of the gifts. John Sterman seconded. The motion was carried.

It was also agreed that it would be appropriate for the sponsors of conference to receive recognition from the society. To this end the President will write a letter of appreciation after the conference, enclosing literature or other informational material if this is appropriate.

8. Alternative Conference Arrangements

The cost and difficulty of putting on an annual conference has prompted suggestions that it may be desirable, from time to time or on an ongoing basis, to combine the Society's conference with that of another organization. Possibilities are the TIMS/ORSA meetings, the Systems Thinking Conference and a conference of the Society for Computer Simulation. At the last policy council meeting a committee was appointed to look into possibilities, their report is pending.

In the spirit of this, John Sterman is organizing a System Dynamics Cluster at the 1994 spring TIMS/ORSA meeting to be held in Boston the week of April 24. The cluster will consist of several sessions with three or four speakers each. John feels that 12-16 quality papers and some additional workshops and tutorials would guarantee the success of this cluster. It was generally agreed that this was nice opportunity to get exposure to the TIMS/ORSA meeting and test the viability of holding our conference in conjunction with that meeting.

9. Mexico 1993

There has been only limited communication on the status of conference preparations. Mike Radzicki will contact the conference organizers to clarify how things stand, and encourage them to maintain the planned schedule as closely as possible.

There are policy council meetings scheduled for 5:00 PM on the Tuesday and Friday of the meetings.

Moved by Peter Milling that in the future the conference organizers be required to make a presentation or provide a written report on the status of conference preparations at the winter policy council meeting prior to the conference. Seconded by Mike Radzicki the motion was carried.

10. Scotland 1994

Preparations for the conference are underway by Eric Wolstenholme. In preparing for the conference Eric is considering centering all the plenary around systems thinking. It was the consensus of the meeting that this would be a mistake. While having sessions on systems thinking is legitimate, it is not an appropriate overall theme for the conference. Bob Eberlein and others agreed to let Eric know their views.

11. Japan 1995

The Japanese have submitted a budget and overall conference plan which was generally good, but did have some shortcomings.. The budget assumes what may be an unrealistically high attendance and still shows a deficit. Mike Radzicki will draft a letter encouraging more conservative assumptions on attendance, and a more Spartan conference plan, that does not budget a deficit. Many also suppressed concern about the language of the proposed conference theme and the message it seems to carry. Mike will also recommend some changes there.

It was noted during discussion that while providing constructive criticism on specific issues is useful, it is also necessary to offer encouragement and recognize the excellent work being done by the conference organizers. Mike Radzicki will make sure that this happens.

12. Bibliography and Beer Game

To date 17 DOS copies and 23 MAC copies of the bibliography have been sold. Continued thanks go to Kip Cooper and Bill Steinherst for maintaining the bibliography. Updates are welcome and should go to Julie.

50 copies of the Beer Game board have been sold (18 complete, 32 boards only) and there are backorders. Getting boards from IA has not been as simple or quick as had been hoped. It was agreed that we should look into finding an alternative source of boards. Thailand was put forward as a possibility, and Jim Hines was assigned the task of looking into this. It was also suggested, given the limited supplies that it might be appropriate to limit the number of games sold to any one member to between three and five. Mike Radzicki has also sold 5 copies of the cheaper paper beer game boards.

13. System Dynamics Review

The Review will go to four issues in 1994 and there is currently sufficient backlog to sustain this. There will be a special issue on Systems Thinking in 1994 and, as always, more contributions are solicited.

As the Review goes quarterly the demands on George Richardson's time are likely to increase. It was agreed in principle that the expenditure of society monies in support of George is a good idea. A possibility is to fund an administrative assistant for 1-2 days per week to help with the Review. David Andersen is going to find out from George the most effective way of decreasing the burden of the Review and make a proposal, this summer, to get support underway.

14. Management Science

John Sterman is now an associate editor for simulation of Management Science and encourages submissions. Gabriel Bertrand, the current editor, is enthusiastic about System Dynamics and would like to see more published on it in Management Science.

15. Slate of Officers

Of the Slate of Officers approved last summer Paula Antunes is not a current society member. In light of this an alternative slate has been proposed.

Moved by Bob Eberlein that the slate of officers nominated to take office in 1994 consist of:

President Elect: Khalid Saeed	Policy Council:	Sauwakon Ratanawijitrasin
VP Publications: David Lane		Erling Moxnes
		Lou Afeld
		Tarek Abdil Hamid

seconded by John Sterman the motion was carried.

All nominees have accepted nomination and will have their names published in the upcoming President's letter.

16. Chapters

There has been an application received for a Chinese Chapter of the Society. The application is generally in order. Bob Eberlein will respond with some small recommended changes, and ask for a formal petition to be presented during the conference this summer with the recommendation that the Chapter be approved.

17. Associate Membership

Jose Machuca has mentioned that a number of people have expressed interest in becoming members of the Society, without receiving the Review, at a reduced fee. It was the consensus of the meeting that such membership would be counterproductive to the Society's goals.

18. Awards

It was suggested that alternative awards such as the best paper at a conference, or in the Review in a year be added. The intention is to offer faster and more frequent encouragement than is available from the Forrester Award. There was no strong enthusiasm expressed for pursuing this at this time.

19. Responsibilities

The question was raised as to how officers find out what is expected of them. The importance of having outgoing officers create documents describing what needs to be done was reasserted.