

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

**April 24, 1994(94-1)**

**In Attendance:** Julie Pugh (Executive Director),

**Officers:** Bob Eberlein (Secretary), Andy Ford (President), Janet Gould-Kreutzer (VP Member Activities), Jim Hines (VP At Large), Peter Milling (Past President), Jack Pugh (VP Finance), Mike Radzicki (VP Meetings), George Richardson (Review Editor)

**Policy Council:** Tarek Abdel-Hamid, Pöl Davidsen, Jack Homer, Enrique Zepeda

**Guests:** Jay Forrester, David Kreutzer, John Morecroft, John Sterman, Eric Wolstenholme

### **1. Secretaries Report**

The minutes of July 20th and 22nd 1994 were reviewed.

### **2. Treasurer's Report**

The financial position of the society remains solid. There is a \$134,000 cash balance and a continued budgeted annual surplus of \$20,000.00. This financial position makes it possible to consider further uses of funds to support membership, the journal or conference organization. A task force consisting of Jim Hines, George Richardson, David Andersen and Jack Pugh will look into the use of the surplus to increase conference and administrative support.

### **3. Membership**

An ad-hoc committee consisting of Janet Gould-Kreutzer, George Richardson, Peter Milling, Dan Kim and others convened in the fall to discuss issues related to membership. The committee found that it was difficult to gather detailed information on membership composition. **David Lane has been charged with making arrangements with Wiley to obtain the information we need in an organized manner.**

There was wide ranging discussion on what kind of people could be attracted to the society and how their interest could be maintained. There was concern that we need to provide more applications and practical papers and talks to maintain the interest of those outside of academics. There was no clear consensus on how or whether we want to encourage membership growth beyond people interested in current society activities.

A number of people have not renewed membership and some people who join the society are doing so only to get access to the Beer Game boards. In future it was agreed that a list of people not renewing would be circulated among officers of the society for possible follow up.

A number of activities that might promote membership were discussed. These included multiple membership categories, specialized tracks at conferences, a newsletter and a practical applications portion of the journal. It was pointed out that new administrative support might be required to implement some of these.

**The membership committee has been charged with presenting at least one concrete proposal for new activities to grow the membership at the next meeting of the policy council.**

### **4. Internet Node**

Jay Forrester currently has a student setting up an Internet node to provide access to educational materials. There was interest in considering the use of this node to provide society members with access to information, models and current research.

## 5. Forrester Award

Nominations are being solicited for the Forrester award for 1994. John Sterman suggested that the current prize of \$1,000.00, which has been in place since 1983 is too low.

**Moved** by Jim Hines that the award be increased from \$1,000.00 to \$2,000.00. Seconded by Jack Homer the motion was carried.

**Moved** by Bob Eberlein that recipients of the award be encouraged to publish an acceptance paper in the System Dynamics Review, but that the monetary award be paid to the recipient without dependence on the submission of this paper. Seconded by Jack Pugh the motion was carried.

## 6. Stirling Conference (1994)

There have been 200 abstracts received and 135 papers so far. At least 190 people are expected for the conference and things look OK financially. A conference registration mailing has gone out to people though many of those at the meeting had not received it. The theme of the conference is exploring the boundaries and will include a variety of different people. A special issue of the System Dynamics Review containing plenary papers for the conference is in press, and quite large. This issue will form part of the proceedings for the conference.

During the conference Systems Thinking will be applied to the conference process. Three plenary sessions are scheduled for these papers. At the first each author will be asked to present 3 summary points from their paper. Discussion will be facilitated to create a rich picture. During the second plenary session contributions from the audience will be sought. The third session will be devoted to a debate on clarifying what the boundaries should be.

**Moved** by George Richardson that the Society pay to have extra copies of the special issue of the System Dynamics Review available at the conference so that attendees who are not society members will have access to it. Seconded by Mike Radzicki the motion was carried.

## 7. Mexico Conference (1993)

Enrique Zepeda reported that the books on the Mexican conference had been closed. Though the conference had an operating deficit of \$12,000.00 sufficient sponsorship had been found and he presented the society with a check for \$2,000.00. Enrique was applauded for the fine conference and the payment of the proceeds. He said that there is growing interest in System Dynamics in Mexico.

## 8. 1996 Conference

No site has yet been found for the 1996 conference. Banff, Alberta which was raised as a possibility last summer has not worked out. Mike Radzicki is looking for alternative locations and welcomes further input. Yaman Barlas, of Turkey, may be able to host a conference in 1997 or later.

## 9. Japan Conference

The conference site has been moved to a university with housing in hotels. A revised budget has been submitted and the conference fee has been set at US\$ 300.00. The theme of the conference is sustainable development. Plans seem to be proceeding very well. Concern was expressed at the high editorial costs budgeted for conference proceedings. Normally the proceedings require simply the mechanical assemblage of the papers submitted. The status of copyrights was also a little unclear. Normally submitted papers remain the copyright of their authors.

## 10. System Dynamics Review

The special issue contains 12 invited papers by a number of people inside and outside of the field. It is very thick and very good reading.

George is retiring as editor. He feels it is a good time to start reviewing the structure and direction of the Review and that is best undertaken by someone at the beginning rather than the end of his or her tenure. David Lane is heading the search committee and will present a nomination to the policy council for approval in Stirling. The money approved to support George should be transferred to the new editor, and this can be formalized at the next Policy Council meeting.

A number of ideas relating to future directions for the Journal were discussed. One possible way to increase the number of application articles would be to interview practitioners. This would make the burden of writing a paper a little less overwhelming for consultants and other non-academics.

George has had no problems communicating with Wiley and is puzzled that others seem to be having trouble. There are several people involved in different areas and this may be a source of problems. The directory is produced by Wiley using a separate database and they failed to bill us for its production in the first year.

George is going to look into having Wiley produce a society brochure. He thinks that they would be willing to do it at a low cost, or even absorb the cost themselves treating it as marketing material. There was a consensus that this is worth pursuing.

## 11. Membership Fee

The membership fee for 1995 will remain unchanged at \$70.00. Wiley need to know this fall what the membership fee for 1996 will be set at. Next year we will be getting additional money beyond the fixed \$6,000.00 we are currently getting. Given our financial position, and pressure from Wiley to increase the membership fee an increase to \$80.00 could be considered. Alternatively we could maintain the current fee and decrease the amount we take per member from \$10.00 to \$5.00. Jack is going to produce the budgetary implications of different choices we might make.

## 12. Sponsors

There are currently nine sponsors of the society. Recruitment of new sponsors and retention of existing sponsors requires some personal contact. Bob Eberlein was charged with writing a letter that can be sent by people to recruit potential sponsors and retain existing sponsors.

## 13. ICARE

The International Confederation of Associations for Reform in Economics is a newly founded organization promoting alternative approaches to economic problems. While a number of people expressed interest in the area it was unclear whether joining such an association would require the society to take a position or place an unwarranted emphasis on a specific problem area. Nonetheless, it was felt that the matter warranted additional investigation and Mike Radzicki was charged with looking into this further.

## 14. Adjournment

Moved by Jack Pugh that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by George Richardson the motion was carried.