

Minutes of the SSIEM Annual General Meeting

Held on 6th Sept 2007 at 12.45p.m. in Hall 6, Congress Centre of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany

1. Apologies for absence

Tiina Tyni, Piero Rinaldo and YT Chen as Corresponding Members; Anne Green as ordinary member.

Cornelis Jakobs read out a list of colleagues who had sadly passed away during the passed year: Johannes Brodehl, Nina Carson, Albert van Gennip, Libor Kozak, Stenton Segal, Stefan Srsen, Robert Surtees, Rebecca Wappner, Ichiro Yoshida. Those present stood in silence for a minute to show their respect.

2. Previous minutes

These were received and confirmed as a true record before being signed by Cornelis Jakobs.

3. Matters Arising

There were no particular matters arising not covered elsewhere.

4. Publications report

Johannes Zschocke reported. There have been increases in the number of submitted original articles: these were 18 articles/month in 2006 and now 28 articles/month in 2007. There was also a fall in the response time to authors. Case reports are still being submitted and accepted. The rejection rate has been deliberately reduced to about 30%.

It was reported that Guy Besley and Rodney Pollitt had been appointed as Honorary Editors. Up coming issues would have focus topics to include: urea cycle defects, MMA, folate deficiency, Conference Issue, Garrod Day. The Garrod Day is going to be part of SSIEM 2008 to mark the centenary of Garrod's Croonian Lectures. The programme has been developed by Council and the Editorial team and will include the Komrower Lecture.

There remained on-going tension between the desire to increase the Journal's impact factor, whilst accepting case/short reports. The impact factor was now 1.574. Various suggestions from the floor were made and the editors will continue to look at this.

It is planned that all on-line papers will be available free of charge. The publishers were very happy with the Journal's performance. Members were encouraged to continue sending it 'extras' and 'obituaries'.

5. International Committee & Meeting

Cornelis Jakobs reported that a new constitution had been agreed, a new chair was appointed (Gerry Vockley) and a new secretary had also been appointed (John Walter) The ICIEM will occur every 4 years, after San Diego in 2009, in 2013 it will be organised in Europe and in 2017 it will be in South America.

6. ETAC

John Walter, ETAC chair, reported. There had been no recent requests from centres for accreditation visits, but these were still available

It was planned to run pilots of training programmes for clinicians and biochemists at SSIEM 2008 in Lisbon. The aim was for ~30 participants for each course which would run over 1 day prior to the meeting and be interactive with long sessions for discussion. The courses would be free to

trainees who would be expected to register for the main SSIEM meeting. The programmes were currently being fleshed out.

It was suggested that there should be formal links with other metabolic training courses worldwide and that there should eventually be a move towards a Diploma in IEM. Brian Fowler, on behalf of ERNDIM, fully supported the proposal and they had committed both financially and intellectually to the idea. A training area on the SSIEM website was thought to be useful. There was concern about the dearth of enzymologists and this must be included in the biochemists' programme.

7. Treasurer's Report

Maureen Cleary reported. There are no great concerns with the Society's finances which are healthy. There had been a slight increase in expenditure resulting in a deficit of ~ £18,500 at the end of 2006. Royalties from the Journal were £40,000 and unrestricted fund reserves were £458,000. Subscriptions would remain the same at £70 per year. It was proposed that Baker Tilley be reappointed as auditors and this was carried unanimously. Council had suggested that the ETAC programmes would be funded to the order of £35,000 from SSIEM funds and this was agreed.

8. Secretary's Report

Phil Lee reported. Jean-Marie Saudubray and Ubaldo Caruso had demitted and were thanked for their contributions to Council.

There were a number of new Corresponding members who were welcomed and encouraged to be pro-active. Council had decided to discontinue the Exchange Grants due to difficulties in assessment, but the Travel grants to SSIEM meetings would continue.

Council and Corresponding members had voted for Geneva to host the SSIEM annual meeting in 2011.

Ubaldo Caruso presented a change in the SSIEM constitution regarding Honorary Members. The change relates to paragraph 67,(2): The present text is:

'The admission at any Annual General Meeting and upon the prior recommendation of Council of one or more honorary members with full voting rights and with rights and privileges of a full member, any recommendation of Council to be made in recognition of long and distinguished service to the Society; such honorary membership to be for a term expiring at the Annual General Meeting which occurs in the fifth year from admission as an honorary member: and so that honorary membership may then be renewed by Council for one or more similar terms from time to time.'

The new text is:

'... such honorary membership should be for life. The Honorary Secretary will normally seek the will of the honorary members to remain in this position.'

This was agreed by the membership.

9. Website report

Nenad Blau reported that everything was running smoothly and there were no concerns with the website.

10. Council officers/Election of Council Members

Council proposed that Viktor Kozich, Phillip Mayne and Jaume Campistol were elected onto Council. They were unanimously elected onto Council by members present. There was still space

for a further member on Council. Cornelis Jakobs' term as chair had ended but he had agreed to stand for a further 3 years, which was approved by a vote of members present.

11. Corresponding Members

Jutta Gartner presented the results of a questionnaire sent out to Corresponding Members. Only 13/25 replies were received but these provided useful information about their local societies. Members need to encourage their Corresponding Members to be actively involved in SSIEM affairs. It was felt that Corresponding Members should be elected by their local societies.

12. President for 2008/9

Isabel Tavares de Almeida was proposed to be the president for Lisbon 2008 by Jim Bonham (seconded by Rodney Pollitt). She agreed and this was unanimously voted.

13. Any other business

Cornelis Jakobs asked for proposals for hosting SSIEM 2012 and the ICIEM 2013 which will be organised by the SSIEM. Proposals need to come to the Honorary Secretary before next year's AGM.

Jim Bonham suggested ways to increase SSIEM membership would be to offer the opportunity to join as a member at the time of registration for the annual meeting and essentially no extra cost.

Dr PJ Lee

Honorary Secretary, SSIEM

September 2007