

Minutes of the 2013 Winter Policy Council Meeting (face-to-face session)

Tuesday, February 12, 2013; 11:00 AM

Hyatt Regency

Cambridge, Massachusetts USA

Chair: Kim Warren, President 2013

Attending in person: Kim Warren, Brad Morrison, David Andersen, Len Malczynski, Rod MacDonald, Khalid Saeed, Navid Ghaffarzadegan, Roberta Spencer. Others participated remotely by WebEx.

Attending by Webex: Nici Zimmermann, Edward Anderson, Peter Milling, Aldo Zagonel, Inge Bleijenbergh, Martin Schaffernicht, Etiënne Rouwette, George Richardson, Allyson Beall, David Ford, Elise Axelrad, Peter Hovmand.

I) Opening and Welcome

Kim Warren called the meeting to order, welcomed the attendees, and reviewed the Winter Meeting process.

Kim extended a welcome to new/continuing officers and members of the Policy Council: President Elect Ed Anderson (2013); Secretary Brad Morrison (2013-2014); Vice President Meetings Len Malczynski (2013-2015) and Policy Council Members (2013-2015) Inge Bleijenbergh, Paulo Goncalves, Tim Taylor, and Elise Axelrad.

Kim expressed the thanks of the Society to outgoing officers and members for their service: Past President David Lane; VP Meetings Andreas Groessler and Policy Council Members (2010-2012): Burcu Tan, Florian Kapmeier, Laura Black, and Ignacio Martinez-Moyano

Kim also thanked David Lane for organizing the rolling presidential team and for the presidential gavel, comprising a UK coin and a box on which to bang it.

A) Overview

1. There have been no electronic votes of the PC since the 2012 Summer PC Meeting that need to be reviewed. We did note, however, that the General Membership voted to adopt a new set of Bylaws as proposed by the PC. The authority to change Policies rests with the PC, so a motion to approve changed Policies will follow.

II) Vice Presidential and Other Reports: Presentation, Discussion and Announcements

Reports are available on-line. These minutes contain only items discussed at the face-to-face meeting.

Kim prepared a summary of his view of important points in the reports that were submitted. (See table below.) Kim asked that if the person responsible thinks Kim's summary is off, please speak up. Items shown in blue are Kim's personal opinions. To prepare the summary, Kim drew on the VP reports as well as on the Home Office report.

System Dynamics Society “State of the Union”: January 2013

Note: Black text = summaries from VP reports, Home Office items are in the topic to which they relate.

Blue text = President’s observations.

	2012	2013 aims	... issues
Finance	Net gain ~\$120k Conference surplus \$60k Product sales ↓\$28k Investment goals approved	Conference surplus ↑product sales ↑membership income Clarify financial priorities in the reporting systems	Products/commission sales ↑progress needs ↑cash-flow
Conferences	Excellent conference High survey satisfaction Shaping the future event	Another great conference Delft planning in hand “So you want to host a conference?” guide	“Quality” [of content] issues
Membership	Down 3% .. 18% new = 21% lost and churn rising VP User Manual Case repository	More!– especially practitioners SIG events A-VP SIG-support services	Member benefits, especially practitioners Corporate membership Record/broadcast events
Publications	Cut in SDR paper backlog Cut review lead-times Shortage of copy, but ↑ submissions Virtual SDR Issues	More virtual SDRs with SIGs Attract more good quality submissions Better use of reviewers Rethinking Assoc Editors structure Conflict of interest guidelines	Non-SDR publications + publicity Publication to win practitioners Success cases [with Membership]
Chapters	Strengthening the Field Fund Successful Chapter events VP User Manual + A-VP <i>Many</i> non-ISDS members Updated Chapter Constitutions	Spend the StF Fund! Chapter re-connect Chapter/SIG membership I.S. Chapter-support services	Clarify Chapter/SIG purpose and expectations Chapter⇒ISDS members
e-Presence	WordPress site going well In-sourced member directory Improved functionality Still-better conference support	Make our website the go-to on-line destination Comment on topical issues	Quality of Linked-In, Twitter, Facebook traffic Practitioner content
People	Strong VPs Strong new candidates President continuity	A-VPs + VP continuity VP “User Guides” Find strong activists	Diversity VPs for Marketing and Practice
Other	The Draft Strategy	Step up the pace Get the practitioners back ↑ public visibility ↑quality, especially online	Home Office workload Strategy omissions (s/w and training providers) Geographic reach

Finance: Kim noted declining product sales and some decline in membership. David A. suggested looking at the time series of churning in membership. Aldo suggested that new products would benefit both product sales and membership. David A. explained that we can use "designations" to incorporate our goals (for funding things such as the JWF Award, PhD Colloquia, and so on) into our accounting budgets and records.

A somewhat extended conversation followed, addressing several issues. Khalid suggested considering a MOOC (massively open online course) along with credentialing/certification. Another route to certification might require creating the body of knowledge, which would be a major undertaking. There are a number of recognized, high quality, degree-granting institutions. We could certify graduates of these programs.

Elise said she works for an organization that does certification. They typically interview practitioners to help define the relevant body of knowledge. David A. has experience developing certification in public administration arena, and offered to help. Ed. A. stated that we probably don't know what practitioners want.

Conferences: Thanks to Markus, Stefan, and the organizing team for their good work and to David Lane and Elke Husemann for their work as Program Chairs.

David A. moved (Rod MacDonald seconded) that in recognition of the great work of the St. Gallen organizing team and with the deep gratitude of the Society, the Society designate \$20,000 to fund the Jay Wright Forrester Award.

Len reported that he is working on helping the students who will attend Cambridge conference in 2013 - e.g., affordable meals, transportation, orientation information, and so on. He is asking software vendors to put a link to the conference on their websites. He is also hoping to do a session or workshop on hosting a conference.

Kim commented on concerns that he has heard about quality of the content at the conference. He believes that the conference should include work in process, not just perfect work, and if experienced practitioners are staying away because of that, they are missing the opportunity to help develop junior colleagues.

George noted that preserving "low quality" work in perpetuity has strong disadvantages. We don't want the quality of our work to be judged by the quality of our conference.

Khalid noted that we have reviewed proceedings, but we don't really control quality. Why not stop reviewing proceedings and put a disclaimer that we have not reviewed for quality?

Membership: Thanks to Etiënne for putting together the case repository. Now it has 35 cases, which Kim considers a small number. Kim encouraged all to get Etiënne in touch with anyone who may have a case that could be submitted.

Kim suggested that we need more members and that the ones that are missing are the practitioners. He believes that there are thousands of system dynamics practitioners out there that we don't know about.

Publications: For 2013, we are rethinking the structure of the associate editors.

We had some discussion about a practitioner-oriented journal. George raised the concern about competing with the SDR and said it is not time to do this. David A. suggested that we should put our effort into getting cases written down for our case repository, even if not in peer review journals.

Chapters: Chapters have members who are not members of the Society. We discussed concerns about how we should keep track of them. Various suggestions were brought up for discussion, such as banning "associate members," focusing instead on converting the associate members to Society members, and supporting such efforts with Society funds. Martin agreed to continue trying to understand the issue from the perspective of the Chapters and report his findings.

We had a lengthy discussion about the possible use of funds for strengthening the field, including a range of possibilities from educational activities and building capacity in various regions to increasing public awareness and developing chapters.

Kim asked all PC members not to put anything of poor quality (e.g., videos) on the internet.

Aldo is working to get the JWF Seminar Series translated into other languages.

e-Presence: The new membership directory is live. The conference submission system now accepts photos and bios. We are working on a plan to be able to see a menu/schedule on smart phones, which should eventually lead to the elimination of printed programs.

The Society website was recently hacked; we have taken care of that.

Kim asked if anyone has an objection to having Tom Fiddaman's blog linked on the Society website, and there were no objections voiced.

Kim suggested that we all sign up for Google alerts to mentions of system dynamics and respond with encouragement to any mentions from outside our community. Len suggested Giga Alerts as well.

Nominating Committee: Kim thanked David Lane for ensuring that the Nominating Committee went to great lengths to get geographical diversity in slate of candidates, but it was difficult because we don't have visibility of people in many remote areas.

III) Discussion Items

Income Brackets: Peter M. has asked for the issue of income bracket membership to be revisited. Navid and Étienne will look into it. They were asked to include the question "could strengthening the field include subsidizing conference registrations for some low income participants?" The alternative of offering regional discounts based on national income levels was raised.

Lifetime Achievement Award: Khalid raised the question as to whether there should be a cash award associated with the Lifetime Achievement Award. The minutes of the Summer PC meeting showed that this question was discussed, with a consensus that no cash award was needed.

Organization and By Laws Committee: Kim reviewed the recommendations of the Organization and Bylaws Committee regarding improving meeting effectiveness. We held one conference call among officers and would like to begin doing them with the entire PC on a more or less monthly basis.

Thanks to Bob, Roberta, and Brad for updating the Bylaws and Policies.

SPOC: David A. suggested that SPOC should be like the Admin Committee, with a chair that serves for extended periods of time, and further, that Len could be such a person. The impending motion for SPOC would accomplish this by making Len chair for as long as he is VP meetings.

Strengthening the Field: George noted that we might be better served by less detail in our description of what to do with the fund. Instead, with four smart people and the idea to "do something wise," we could expect good things. We should vote that the VP Finance designate a fund large enough to generate an available amount of \$20,000 per year; assign responsibility to the proposed committee comprising the VP Meetings (Len) (ex officio chair), VP Chapters (Martin), VP Member services (SIGs) (Étienne), and VP Finance (David A.) , and remove restrictions on spending. Martin and David Ford will take this sense of the meeting and incorporate it into the motion they submit for electronic voting.

Strategy Report: Thanks to the Strategy Committee. David A. noted that we have already reaped the benefits of the work, for example in the quality of the conversation we have had here today. We agreed to David A.'s suggestion that we should accept the report as the basis for guiding the Society's future decisions, and there will be a motion to do so during the electronic voting period. That does not mean we agree with everything, but now we have concrete ideas to agree or disagree with. There is no need for a formal motion, because it is a report. Recommendations within it, such as the creation of VPs do require motions.

Kim intends to move to create a VP Marketing, to create a VP Practitioners, and to change the name of VP Member Services to VP Membership.

In-person Meeting Adjourned: 4:15 pm

IV) Motions to be voted on electronically

These "pre-motions" are open for discussion. The full text of each pre-motion appears in the Policy Council online menu. Voting on the motions will be required by the Policy Council. This electronic discussion period allocates time for "conversation" similar to the exchange of ideas during a meeting. It allows for reflection and a simple way to converge on a correct motion before it becomes a "formal" motion that will be put to a proper vote. Motions can be amended (friendly amendment) providing there are no objections. Motions can be withdrawn if agreed by both proposer and seconder, also providing there are no objections. It would be as if the motion was never made. The motions are listed briefly below but will be presented with full details on the Policy Council Menu page.

- A) Motion to accept the Minutes of the 2012 Summer Policy Council meeting in St Gallen, Switzerland as amended and posted on the Society web site.
- B) Motion to approve list of nominees (Slate of Candidates) for positions as included in the Nominating Committee's report.
- C) Motion to accept the revised Policies for the Society as posted on the Society web site.
- D) Motion to recognize the great work of the St. Gallen team and designate \$20,000 to fund the JWF Award
- E) Motion on Strengthening the Field Fund name and make up
- F) Motion to change VP Position: VP Member Services to VP Membership
- G) Motion to create a VP Position for Marketing Communications
- H) Motion to create a VP Position of Professional Practice
- I) Motion to define the SPOC Membership and Chair
 - Len Malczynski joins the committee as a member and the chair for a three year term (2013-2015).
 - Paal Davidsen joins the committee as a member for a three year term (2013-2015)
- J) Motion to approve the 2014 Conference Program Chairs
 - Paal Davidsen and Etiënne Rouwette have agreed to be the program chairs of the 2014 conference. Therefore the SPOC recommends their approval of the same by the Policy Council.
- K) Motion that the Policy Council accept the Interim Strategy Report as the basis for guiding medium-term priorities, activities and decisions, recognizing that the strategy itself will evolve in the light of experience and that any substantive decisions will require specific approval by the Policy Council, as specified in the Policies.

Recorded by Secretary Brad Morrison.