

## **DRAFT—February 1, 2008**

2008 Winter Meeting, Face-to-Face Portion, of the Policy Council of the System Dynamics Society held at WPI, Worcester, MA, USA, January 31, 2008

In attendance: Jim Lyneis, President; David Andersen, VP Finance; David Packer, Secretary, Bob Eberlein; VP Electronic Presence, Brad Morrison, Guest; Khalid Saeed, Guest; Jack Pugh, Webmaster; Oleg Pavlov, Economics Chapter Rep; Roberta Spencer, Executive Director; Aldo Zagonel, AVP Chapters

### **Status of Officer and Committee Reports**

All VP reports were received except VP Chapters. The Nominating Committee is still working on the slate, which will be out on time. The Diversity Committee and the Curriculum Committee did not send reports, and nothing was received on Awards.

Administrative Committee: David Andersen reported that the contract with the University at Albany is paid on the basis of the contract but paid out from the Universities IFR fund which has been growing for several years and was drawn down in 2007 by about \$20,000. The relationship with the University is strong.

David Andersen and Roberta Spencer are moving to convert Robin Langer to an employee rather than a contractor, which is required by the IRS. This will change the budget. We may need to amend the contract for 2008 to accommodate this change.

### **Open Issues on Standing Committees**

There is no Organization and Bylaws committee. There are changes in the bylaws and policies that are not reflected in the current document, so it needs updating to reflect the actions the Policy Council has taken. Oleg Pavlov, Brad Morrison (chair), Jack Pugh, and David Packer will work on updating the documents.

The Assistant VPs and Nominating Process decisions probably change only Policies (but we need to check to make sure).

### **Ad Hoc Committees:**

Conference Scholarship item deferred to Awards discussion.

Curriculum Committee: This was formed some years ago to try to develop some standard guidelines for System Dynamics competence. There has been little done, but there is renewed interest in the System Dynamics Institute. Khalid Saeed has agreed to try to rejuvenate the process. There has been some discussion of the System Dynamics

Institute and this may fold in with the overall discussion. Some recommendations will be made by Khalid Saeed in the “not too distant” future.

We discussed dropping the Model Repository and Web Advisory committees from the list of active committees and disbanding the Wiley Sponsored Membership committee, which is no longer necessary now that we do the membership process.

**MOTION:** David Andersen, Second Bob Eberlein: To disband the following ad hoc committees: Web Model Repository Committee, Web Advisory Committee, Wiley Sponsored Membership Committee, and Curriculum Committee. (This leaves Diversity, Dues, Conference fees, and Strategy Development as the only active ad hoc committees.)

## **Motions and Action Items**

**MOTION:** Bob Eberlein, Second David Andersen: To approve the 2007 Summer PC minutes of the Policy Council in Boston, MA.

Electronic Votes Taking since the summer meeting: Moved by Deborah Campbell and seconded by Bob Eberlein, that the Special Interest Group for Model Analysis (SIG-MA) be formally accepted into the System Dynamics Society. Motion was passed by electronic vote closing October 26, 2007.

Dues structure change: People do not want to disclose income. We can revise the membership renewal form, and also get more information out to people. Consensus was to applaud Deborah Campbell for writing this up and providing good information on the reasons for the change to the membership via the March Newsletter.

Support for the SDR editor. Currently we are paying \$12,000 to support the activities of the Executive Editor of the *System Dynamics Review*. We do not audit how the money has been spent. The money is paid as a check directly to the executive editor.

The managing editors are concerned about the amount of work that goes into managing the journal. Travel support for Senior Editors to go to meetings is a concrete item that would be helpful. But how would that be divided between the different people? There was no clear concrete statement of what would be the most sensible way to provide additional support. David Andersen would like to increase the amount paid from \$12,000 to \$18,000 for general support of the editors.

Executive Editor Brian Dangerfield has stated in public at the summer PC meeting that more support is required. But this is something that could be better articulated by the Executive Editor. Brian suggests that the editor's submit details for expense reimbursement. Currently Yaman Barlas handles a large volume of activity under Notes and Insights and probably requires additional support. There is a consensus that what

needs to be done is to get the Executive Editor to articulate how the editors should be supported to be discussed at the summer policy council. This is definitely important and we should do something about it.

We agreed to direct the VP Publications and VP Finance (in consultation with the Executive Editor) to come up with a concrete proposal.

Khalid Saeed thinks that we should look into creating a professional editorial position, which would be a paid individual similar to what Roberta Spencer does for conferences, and that we should look at what other societies do. Brad Morrison points out that it is appropriate to give the Editor some latitude with what to do with the funds. Jack Pugh thinks that we should simply increase the amount paid generously. David Packer thinks that this is a critical core issue and something that we should use our healthy financial resources to invest in.

**MOTION** by Bob Eberlein, seconded by David Andersen: That the 2008 budget for journal support be increased from \$12,000 to \$20,000 contingent on a concrete proposal to the Administrative committee on how this money will be allocated.

### **2009 Conference**

Aldo Zagonel presented a report prepared by the 2009 conference organizing committee. Everything is going pretty much as planned. There is a signed contract with the hotel. The hotel only has 188 guest rooms but we have guaranteed 1003 room nights. In order to meet the contracted number of room nights, and enhance the experience for the attendees, the hosts are looking for attractive ways to encourage early arrival and/or late departure. Moving the PC meeting to Saturday might help as would a spillover day based on SIG working meetings. A strong social program with pre and post-conference tours to the very interesting attractions may also help. Jim Lyneis stated that moving the PC meeting be difficult, but that the other ideas were attractive.

Probably there will be some adjustment of the contract with the hotel necessary.

### **2010 Conference**

There are two proposals for 2010. The Korean Chapter proposes to hold the conference in Gyeongju which is about 2.5 hours south of Seoul by train (4 hours from airport). The conference would be in a hotel with central meeting space and sleeping rooms together. The Japan Chapter proposes to host the conference in Kyoto at the Doshisha Business School which is about 1.5 hours from the airport in Osaka. The hotels would be in different parts of Kyoto and reachable by subway from the conference site.

David Andersen likes the Korean proposal partly because it originated as a consensus proposal and seems to be a little bit better thought out. Both of them look like good

proposals. The Central versus Decentralized issue (one hotel or many) is important but there is no consensus on which is preferable. The University at Albany has had a number of Korean students and currently has a new Faculty member that is from Korea which will be helpful. Also, the center for Policy Research at Albany now has significant experience writing contracts in Korea.

David Packer feels that it is very difficult to come to a good judgment using the available information. David Andersen suggested a straw poll of all present here as to the best conference site would be useful in informing the rest of the policy council on this issue.

Jim Lyneis is concerned about the decentralized nature of the Kyoto proposal. The reservation about Korea is that it might be harder to communicate with people in Korea.

Brad Morrison is also in the 60-40 range but leaning toward Korea and likes the centralized location. The location in Japan is a little bit easier to get to.

From Khalid Saeed's perspective Kyoto is a wonderful place for a conference though the Korean proposal has merit because it was originally a consensus proposal.

Both of the proposals seem quite strong and the consensus in the room seemed to be a slight leaning toward Korea.

David Andersen proposed that we have a somewhat complete summary of the discussion posted to the PC list serve and that we encourage the full Policy Council to join the discussion. With that input, the VP Meetings, working with Bob Eberlein and Roberta Spencer will make a recommendation that will then be put to an electronic vote. We want the voting for this to be completed by the end of February when the electronic meeting closes.

### **2011 Conference**

This will be in North America and Andreas Groessler, VP Meetings, is looking for people to submit proposals for the conference.

### **Establishment of a Conference Selection Committee**

David Packer stressed that our mode of operation should involve more committees doing groundwork and then making recommendations to the Policy Council. This would increase the quality of the discussion within the PC meetings considerably and result in better decisions. For Conference decisions, Andreas Groessler, VP Meetings, should pick a set of people to do this in the future.

### **Conference Peer Review Process**

Not all thread chairs do the same quality of work. The reviews themselves are extremely variable. Sometimes there are papers where two of the reviews are similar but wrong and the paper is not treated consistently with their comments. Reviewers get limited feedback.

There is no mechanism for getting the thread chairs who are not fully doing their job to bow out or do a better job. Such a mechanism is needed.

David Andersen suggests that the thread chairs be appointed for a three-year term and their performance recorded.

Why not align the thread chairs for the conference with the editorial board of *the System Dynamics Review*?

Continuity in the Thread chairs should result in learning and consistency.

One approach to doing this is to have the past three program chairs (or a number of program chairs) pick the thread chairs.

Perhaps have a meeting of past program chairs to do this at the annual conference.

There is currently no meeting of the Thread Chairs with the Program Chair. This would be good to start.

### **Awards Committee**

Originally we had one award, and the awards Committee managed that award. Now there are additional awards available and the Forrester Award Committee does not have oversight of all the committees. How do we evaluate the different desires to give awards? An umbrella awards committee could over-see the process.

Such an umbrella awards committee would be responsible for determining the membership of the sub-committee. The committee could outline what the awards should be, and how they could be awarded.

It might be possible to have the VP at large become the VP for Awards and Scholarships.

Oleg points out that it would be nice to have some infrastructure when something needs to be done. An Awards committee could provide this sort of infrastructure.

The Awards Committee is in the bylaws and is not the Jay Wright Forrester Award Committee, which pre-dates the Society. This committee needs to be fully populated and take over the management of the currently active awards committees. They would be in the "award business".

David Andersen suggests that the Nominating Committee would be an appropriate place to look for the members of the awards committee. Jim Lyneis will look for people to appoint.

**MOTION:** That the Dana Meadows Award be increased to be consistent with the trust document. David Andersen will explore and then make a motion to do this. David Packer noted that with a total endowment of \$70,000, an annual award of about \$3000 would seem to make sense and be consistent with responsible endowment management. Currently we provide less than this.

Membership list: Currently we do not share the membership list or the list of attendees from the conference. Roberta Spencer noted that she gets requests from different places such as WPI Distance Learning, a System Dynamics Workshop at Cornell, and David Lane who wanted to send out a document to 2006 conference attendees. It was agreed that we would continue to not allow use of the list.

Duties of officers: Jim Lyneis is working on this.

One-Pager on what System Dynamics is. We could update the web page with this, if a better description is found than the one currently on the web.

Dave Packer moves to adjourn and the face-to-face meeting was adjourned at about 3:30pm

Recorded by Bob Eberlein, then edited and reviewed by Secretary David Packer

Please send any corrections or comments to david.packer@alum.mit.edu.