

# Society for Molecular Biology and Evolution

## Council and Business Meetings, 2003

### Newport Beach, California, USA

#### Council Meeting

1. *Call to order.*—President Naoyuki Takahata called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM, 26 June. In attendance were Editor Simon Easteal, Councillors G. Brian Golding and Jody Hey, Past-President Michael T. Clegg, President-Elect John Avise, Treasurer Marta L. Wayne, and Secretary Marcy Uyenoyama. Invited guests included Elizabeth Raffaele (MBE Editorial Office), Cathy Kennedy and Pete Hoffmann (Oxford University Press), Editorial Advisory Board member Stanley Sawyer, Editor-apparent William Martin, and 2005 annual meeting organizers David Lambert and David Penny.
2. *Approval of minutes.*—Council approved the minutes of the 2002 Council and Business meetings, published in the December 2002 issue of the Journal.
3. *Editor's report.*—Most of the meeting addressed a discussion, led by Simon Easteal, concerning new developments with the Journal and Journal subscriptions (see report).
4. *Treasurer's report.*—Past-Treasurer Richard Hudson and Treasurer Marta L. Wayne summarized the financial state of the Society (see report).
5. *Secretary's report.*—Secretary Marcy Uyenoyama reviewed Council actions over the preceding year, summarized here:

Society elections: Past-President Michael Clegg appointed Masatoshi Nei as chair of the nominations committee for the 2003 SMBE elections. Other members, appointed by Masatoshi Nei, included Daniel Dykhuizen, Brandon Gaut, Cecilia Saccone, and Marcy Uyenoyama (*ex officio*). OUP will produce the election packet and send it by first-class mail to all SMBE members. These election materials include the ballot (to be returned to the Secretary by 1 October 2003) and information about nominees C. William Birky, Jr., and Jeffrey Powell (President-Elect), Mark Batzer and Sudhir Kumar (Secretary), and Laura Katz and Kenneth Wolfe (Councillor).

New contract with Oxford University Press: Oxford University Press (OUP) commenced publication of *Molecular Biology and Evolution* with the January 2003 issue. At the June 2002 meeting in Sorrento, Council authorized a subcommittee (Michael Clegg, Simon Easteal, and Marcy Uyenoyama) to conclude contract negotiations with OUP. Among the issues resolved was the institution of measures to establish compliance of the Journal with United Kingdom laws on data protection, which require evidence of informed consent of MBE authors in permitting their contact information to be transmitted to OUP and also safeguards to ensure protection of privacy and ethical treatment of research subjects. The Society agreed that OUP would exercise the initial determination of acceptability of advertisements under general guidelines provided by the Society.

However, the Society reserves the right to halt further publication of any advertisement considered by the Society to be inconsistent with or in opposition to its charter. Subscription and membership categories offered to individuals have now been streamlined.

Council approved the new Journal cover, chosen from designs suggested by OUP and SMBE members.

OUP proposed and Council approved a new copyright agreement, under which authors retain the copyright to their work, rather than assigning it to the Society or OUP, as had been the case.

Council approved a low rate for membership without a subscription to the Journal. This category, which confers eligibility for the Fitch prize competition, was approved in time for registration for the 2003 annual meeting, with the understanding that all aspects of membership would be explored in detail soon.

OUP proposed a new pricing schedule for 2004, prescribing a 5% increase for all Individual categories and the introduction of an Institutional print-only category. Prices for Institutional subscriptions that include access to the online Journal would now be scaled to the type and size of the institution. Council approved the changes in Institutional subscriptions, but postponed consideration of the rate increase for Individual categories to the 2003 annual meeting (see *New business*).

Committees: Michael Clegg appointed a committee comprising himself, Naoyuki Takahata, and Walter Fitch to search for the new Editor, whose term would begin upon the completion of the 2003 volume, in September 2003. Council approved the committee's recommendation to offer the Editorship to William Martin.

At the 2002 Sorrento meeting, Council approved the establishment of a committee to study governance issues within the Society and to consider possible revisions to the by-laws. Michael Clegg appointed a committee comprising Naoyuki Takahata, Marcy Uyenoyama, and an additional individual to be named. Margaret Kidwell has since accepted Naoyuki Takahata's invitation to serve on the committee.

Naoyuki Takahata appointed Jody Hey and Naruya Saitou to audit the Treasurer's report for 2002.

Naoyuki Takahata appointed Michael Clegg, Blair Hedges, and Magnus Nordborg to the Walter M. Fitch prize committee, which selected the eight contestants and the winner of the 2003 competition.

2005 annual meeting: Council approved a proposal, submitted at the 2002 Sorrento meeting by Michael Hendy and David Penny, to host the 2005 meeting in Auckland, New Zealand. Council noted that the early approval would permit consideration of whether solicitation of proposals should begin three years in advance of the meeting date rather than the traditional two.

Sorrento meeting cost overrun: The organizers of the 2002 annual meeting informed Council of a \$10,000 deficit and of their understanding that the Society would contribute a meeting allowance of \$25,000 rather than the standard \$15,000. Various questions regarding the source of the

misunderstanding went unanswered; consequently, a motion that the Society cover the deficit did not come to a vote.

**Incorporation and liability insurance:** Since commencement of the Society's liability insurance policy with Legion Indemnity of Massachusetts in September 1998, the insurance provider had believed that the Society was domiciled in Massachusetts. Upon learning that the Society is in fact incorporated in the state of Kansas, Legion Indemnity notified the Society that it would no longer provide coverage. The related issues of site of incorporation and liability insurance were discussed but remain unresolved (see *New Business*).

**Molecular Ecology offer:** Council approved a proposal from Lynne Miller, Marketing Manager of Blackwell Press to offer SMBE members online subscriptions to *Molecular Ecology* for \$30, rather than the usual \$150.

**AAAS "intelligent design" statement:** Council approved endorsement by the Society of the American Association for the Advancement of Science statement on intelligent design. The statement, approved by the Board of Directors in October 2002 and endorsed by the Society for the Study of Evolution, opposes the inclusion of intelligent design positions in the science curriculum of public schools.

6. **New business.**—Council discussed with William Martin the terms under which he would accept the Editorship. Council approved a motion to (a) provide the Editorial Office with a fixed annual budget for 2004 and 2005, (b) request an annual financial report from the Editor, and (c) reconsider at a later time whether to continue or modify the arrangement.

Investigation and consideration of actions concerning incorporation of the Society and liability insurance coverage were referred to a committee.

Council approved the establishment of a committee

to study incentives for SMBE membership and recommend actions. Council declined the request from OUP to increase Individual subscription rates until consideration of issues surrounding membership by this committee.

David Lambert and David Penny presented a report on organizational plans and facilities for the 2005 SMBE meetings, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand.

### **Business Meeting**

1. **Call to order.**—President Naoyuki Takahata called to order the annual SMBE Business meeting at 1:05 PM, 28 June. Council members in attendance included John Avise, Michael Clegg, Brian Golding, Marcy Uyenoyama, Marta Wayne, and William Martin (for Simon Easteal). Naoyuki Takahata summarized discussion at the Council meeting, including the precipitous decline in SMBE membership.

2. **New business.**—Discussion from the floor addressed incentives for SMBE membership, mechanisms for encouraging renewals by former SMBE members, and consideration of MBE as an open-access journal.

S. Blair Hedges, organizer of the 2004 SMBE annual meeting, to be held at Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, reported excellent progress and that registration fees would be reasonable, with reduced rates for students.

**Addendum.**—The Society congratulates Yoav Gilad, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, winner of the 2003 Walter M. Fitch Student Prize for his presentation, "Loss of olfactory receptor genes is coupled to the acquisition of full trichromatic color vision."