

2009 AASC Annual Meeting Business Minutes

Thursday, July 9, 2009.

Business meeting called to order by President Doesken at 3:30 p.m.

Doesken reports that the AASC Executive Committee met by conference call 20 times in the past year. Special thanks were extended to Marjorie McGuirk for providing conference call minutes and the use of the NCDC phone bridge. Also thanks to outgoing board members Paul Knight and Hope Mizzell for their excellent service. The 2008 business meeting minutes were approved by electronic vote last fall and are posted on the AASC web site.

Treasurer Hillaker presented the AASC Treasurer's report (attachment). The report included the final budget for 2008; projected budget for 2009 and a highly speculative proposed budget for 2010. The primary point of the report is that the AASC budget has grown tremendously over the past year from \$30,748.44 in 2008 to a projected \$126,460.00 in 2009. Most of the increase resulted from a much larger State Climatologist Exchange Program (SCEP) grant from NCDC. A total of 39 grants have been awarded among 27 states. The bulk of the SCEP funds have been earmarked for three research areas: Monthly State Climate Impacts; CRN & HCN-M data summaries and applications; and an SC climate economics survey to supplement the NOAA Economics web page.

Hillaker pointed out that an error appears in the AASC budget hand-out in that service charges were already accounted for in the net income and should not have been listed in the expenses section. Thus a slightly larger budget surplus is projected than listed for 2009 and 2010. It was moved, seconded and approved for the acceptance of the Treasurer's report.

McGuirk reports that there is no way of knowing what the SCEP budget could be for FY2010 since no budget has been approved at this point. However, it would not be unrealistic to assume a potential budget of up to \$250K. Any SCEP funds likely will be for research to solve specific problems and to help state programs with critical funding needs. Efforts will be made to develop relationships between the AASC members and other organizations, such as NSF, USDA, etc. Climate Extension, Education Outreach & Research are likely areas of emphasis for the coming year, with New Jersey and Pennsylvania to be the first states in this effort. Marjorie also notes that funding would be sought for SCs who wish to participate in the NOAA Climate Speakers Bureau.

Nolan notes that it is important for SC's to stay on task and not just sit back and wait for federal funding opportunities to come to them. We need to be active in initiating research and service projects.

Paul Knight, on behalf of the AASC Nominating Committee (Crawford, Brown., Angel) presented Dennis Todey of South Dakota as the nominee for AASC President-Elect.

The membership approved the committee's recommendation and Todey accepted the appointment. Todey will be taking Knight's place on the AASC Executive Committee.

Mike Anderson reports that the 2010 AASC annual meeting likely will take place at S. Lake Tahoe, CA on July 12-14. The most likely venue will be the Embassy Suites. An informal e-mail survey of AASC members found that either June or July were acceptable meeting times, and that projected higher meeting costs should not preclude a meeting in California. Mike chose July among the two suggested months owing to preference for having the meeting in the next fiscal year.

A brief discussion was held for possible 2011 meeting locations. Doesken notes that our informal practice of rotating meeting locations would point toward returning to the eastern U.S. in 2011. Stooksbury suggested that it will have been nine years since Asheville last hosted the meeting (2011 vs 2002) and this would be a logical choice for the AASC. Boyles volunteered to help if North Carolina were to be the host state. Zierden offered Florida as the host state. He indicated that a coastal location, such as Destin or Clearwater would be the most likely location. No decision was made concerning the 2011 meeting site (presentations to be made at next year's meeting?). A few suggested a return to Bar Harbor, Maine.

The afternoon session of the business meeting was concluded with a reminder from Doesken about the mission of the various standing committees formed at the 2008 meeting. These committees are:

Meetings: Akyuz, Mote, Dupigny-Giroux, Andresen, Reges.

Strategic Plan: Redmond, Shafer, Nielsen-Gammon, Angel, Anderson, Arndt, Stooksbury.

Finance: Mizzell, Hillaker, Christy.

Policy & Procedures: Crawford, Zandlo, Guinan, D. Robinson, Foster, Young.

Partners: Boyles, Todey, DeGaetano, Curtis, D. Robinson, Archer.

Membership: Boyles, Keim, Arndt, Dutcher, Knight.

Journal: Stooksbury & JSC editors.

There was an open invitation for more members for these committees.

A training and education committee was suggested. Stooksbury noted that we need guidelines for what a climatology graduate should be expected to know. The AASC would be the logical organization to develop education standards. Nielsen-Gammon is currently the chair of the AMS education committee that sets standards for meteorologists. Doesken appoints Dupigny-Giroux, Akyuz, Hubbard, Nielsen-Gammon, Timofeyeva and Stooksbury to this new committee. Marina notes that the NWS does have specific requirements for some of their climate-related positions.

In other business, Redmond noted that he would like to see an AASC membership list. Such a list may need to be password-protected on the AASC web page.

Finally, Lou Vasquez of ERC Broadband in Asheville was introduced as the new AASC webmaster. Lou reports several items for potential inclusion on the web page:

- 1) Post conference papers.
- 2) Post the State Climatologist annual summary document.
- 3) Add an 'AASC Partners' pull-down menu (such as exists for SCs and RCCs).
- 4) Assume supervision of the AASC list-serve, if such a move was wanted.
- 5) RSS feed to allow incoming, as well as out-going messages.
- 6) JSC announcements as new articles are posted.
- 7) Add a data products list/forum.

It was noted that any 'national' news item on the AASC web page was first be approved by the Executive Committee.

Friday, July 10, 2009 business meeting session.

Doesken called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

Nominating committee needs to come up with a nominee for a new AASC Secretary-Treasurer to take office for the two years beginning January 1, 2011.

Nominations for new associate members were presented and approved. This year nominations were accepted via e-mail ahead of the meeting with a nomination form to be completed. However, this procedure was not fully utilized. The new associate members are: Jason Allard (Valdosta State U.), Joel Cline (NWS HQ), Gregory Goodrich (Western Kentucky U.), Michelle Hawkins (NWS HQ), Jenna Meyers (NWS HQ), Tye Parzybok (Metstat, Inc.), Kevin Schrab (NWS HQ), Mark Simpson (U. Tennessee-Martin), Marina Timofeyeva (NWS HQ), Tom Townsend (NWS CR), Natalie Umphlett (HPRCC), Lou Vasquez (ERC Broadband), Jim Zdrojewski (NWS HQ), Becky Smith (MRCC), Leslie Ensor (MRCC), Erin Saffell (Arizona), Karin Bumbaco (Washington SCO), Nancy Westcott (MRCC), Mike Timlin (MRCC).

Dutcher remind us that he needs the e-mails for the new associate members so that they can be added to the list-serve.

Stooksbury suggests a 'fellows' committee be formed for the AASC to draw up standards for an AASC Fellow designation. Doesken favors placing this effort into the existing membership committee. Crawford notes that the AMS limits the Fellows designation to only 0.2% of the membership.

Doesken introduces Crawford's draft 'Standards for a Surface-Based National Mesonet'. How do we move forward with this draft? Crawford reports that he drafted the document unilaterally and that it needs input. Nolan notes that we are not in a position to vote on the document at this point, but what should be our next step? Christy asks how the proposed standards would compare with those existing for CRN? Palecki will provide a copy of the CRN standards (which are the same as those for the HCN-M).

Curtis offered to provide a copy of the USDA standards. Boyles suggests going back to the committee for review and bring it back to the AASC within six months. Hilberg suggests a specific comment period open to everyone. Zierden asks if we want an 'external' review? Doesken notes that if we (AASC) don't have the necessary expertise to review this, then who does? Our federal partners will have an opportunity to review the document anyway. Crawford has sought some comments from those in the NWS. Redmond notes that we do not need to rush, but need to keep moving the document along. D. Robinson notes that the sooner we have this completed the better the chances are of the document having a positive impact. Doesken would like the comments limited to only a few weeks. Nigoyi notes that the draft is strong and does not need a lot of work, so let's move it along quickly. Christy asks why the emphasis on 'near real-time' in the proposed archives standards? Crawford notes that we can have both a 'weather' and a 'climate' network... thus get both bases covered and appeal to a broader constituency. We can't really afford both; plus NOAA doesn't care about surface climate data. Crawford would prefer to have NCDC as the archive and the more frequent the data the better. Christy notes that data volume for a surface-based network pales in comparison to most remote-sensing networks; thus high frequency of observations should not be an archive problem. McGuirk notes that NCDC likely will not comment on the draft since they already have their own set of observing standards in the CRN. Perhaps we should consider regional data centers for non-Federal networks and investigate getting an AASC seat on OFCM and DMC (Data Management Committee) committees. Crawford notes that George Frederick says that AMS national mesonet committee left AASC out, but that this was not an intentional oversight and would like to bring us in. Hubbard noted that we already have the CRN HCN-M standards. Do we need another set? Crawford reports that we are consistent with the federal standards but do not want to scare off local/state networks that think they could never meet these standards. We would like all networks to aspire to Tier 1 standards but realistically there is a place for Tier 2 and 3.

Nielsen-Gammon suggests the following time-line which was adopted:

- 1) August 1. Deadline for initial comments.
- 2) October 1. Second draft released.
- 3) November 1. Deadline for comments on second draft.
- 4) December 1. Final draft released.
- 5) December 15. Deadline for approval of final draft.

Doesken then initiated a discussion on the potential creation of an Executive Director position for the AASC. Traditionally NCDC has partially met this need for the AASC over the years. However, with our 501c3 status we need more. We need better follow-up on matters of interest to the AASC. This would require a strong commitment on the part of the AASC. Perhaps something like a one-half time position with around \$50K for annual salary and operating expenses would be ideal. However, this is probably not realistic with our present financial resources. An ARSCO fee of \$1K per year per state would nearly meet such a need. Much larger fees/dues are levied for some national organizations (State Engineers, etc.), but these positions traditionally have more stable

funding/State Code directives. Probably would be difficult to do with SC's. An informal count of 'raised hands' suggests that many SC's would at least explore the possibility implementing much higher state-office dues.

Mote notes that the role of AASC President has grown and asked how much time does this require? Doesken estimates he spends about 20 hours per week on AASC business and Hillaker about one-sixth time with Secretary-Treasurer duties. It was emphasized that much more time could be spent on AASC business if time allowed. Angel notes that an Executive Director has the advantage of bringing continuity and 'corporate memory' to the AASC. Doesken notes that we currently do not have the numbers to generate really big dollars. Some organizations use corporate sponsors, others have large sources of grant funding (such as from the EPA). Perhaps we will have the grant money to do this. Crawford notes that the NRC report on mesonets suggests a 501c3 as a 'neutral broker' for a national mesonet. McGuirk notes that it is acceptable for the AASC to charge administrative costs for administering grants from NCDC; however, such costs must never be used for lobbying. Niyogi suggests that we come up with a collective AASC project(s) and bring it up to NSF, NOAA, etc. Anderson notes that we have lots of ideas but that we must have a specific plan to move forward and direct our efforts. It takes time to develop such a plan but it is worth it in the long-run. McGuirk notes that there are opportunities in seeking donations as a 501c3. Robbins asks do we need a lobbyist, fundraiser, etc... someone who looks for opportunities? After much discussion it was agreed that an Executive Director position was a good idea and should be pursued.

Boyles notes that we need more communication from the AASC Executive Committee and that the minutes from EC meetings must be published. Doesken agrees with this suggestion.

Stooksbury made a motion to split the AASC Secretary-Treasurer position into separate Secretary and Treasurer positions. This was seconded by Nielsen-Gammon. Boyles suggests that we could use a Finance Committee to assist the Treasurer. Archer suggests a volunteer(s) to help in the interim since the split in positions will require some sort of constitutional change. The proposal to split the position was unanimously approved.

Crawford wants to see a formal thank you extended to outgoing Executive Committee members Knight and Mizzell.

Doesken reports that Climate Change writing committee was waiting for the Policy & Procedures committee to outline the procedure for developing a new AASC climate change statement. This was not followed up after last year's meeting. Mote has outlined a possible procedure which needs to be reviewed.

The business meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.