Fall 2015 NEERS Business Meeting Minutes

Held at CERF conference, Portland, OR.

1. The reading of the minutes of last meeting was waived (motion was made and accepted and voted on to accept the minutes)
2. Officer Reports
   1. President
      1. Pam Neubert will be acting as a Member-At-Large for the NEERS Governing Board, replacing Wally Fulweiler.
      2. Brett Branco has agreed to be co-webmaster with Jamie Vaudrey.
      3. This CERF meeting marks the end of Jamie Vaudrey’s service as a NEERS representative to the CERF Governing Board. Sara Grady will be taking over as the NEERS representative to CERF.
      4. Report from CERF Governing Board
         1. The Affiliate Society Presidents have started conducting conference calls a few times per year. The group includes Current, Past and President-Elects. The goal is to improve communication, ease transition, and discuss issues of importance to the affiliates. They have most recently been discussing the option of business services provided by CERF.
         2. CAERS (California affiliate) has piloted business services provided by CERF (meeting management, website, etc.). CAERS does not have non-profit status, so legally, this was an easy partnership. At the upcoming Spring 2016 NEERS business meeting, Jamie and Sara will provide a more detailed evaluation of this as an option for NEERS. The NEERS Board would like some discussion on this issue and will provide a short summary of the pros and cons to the membership prior to the NEERS meeting, as well as a presentation at our upcoming business meeting. If you are interested in being more directly involved with this assessment, please contact Jamie Vaudrey.
         3. A second point for discussion at the upcoming NEERS meeting relates to the timing of our elections versus service of our Presidential team on the CERF Governing Board. NEERS is off-cycle from most societies. CERF ED Mark Wolf-Armstrong has suggested affiliates realign their election cycles to allow President’s to serve on the CERF GB (not President Elects or Past Presidents). As written, the CERF constitution indicates Affiliate President’s will serve. CAERS and GERS follow this model, but they both meet every other year and hold elections at CERF. We will hold an open discussion at the spring 2016 NEERS business meeting to debate the merits of shifting our elections from fall of even years to spring of even years, so will not vote on this today. However, thoughts on this shift would be helpful to the Board in preparing.
         4. CERF Executive Director, Mark Wolf-Armstrong, is retiring and plans to step down at the end of the year; though he may stay on longer in a temporary position if needed. CERF is in the process of interviewing part-time ED candidates. The shift to a part time position is possible because much of the business management tasks will be conducted by CERF’s management group, SBI Management Services, [www.sbims.com](http://www.sbims.com).
   2. President-Elect
      1. Our spring 2016 NEERS meeting will be held in Maine, hosted by Sue Adamowicz. We will be hearing from her in a few minutes.
      2. Our fall 2016 NEERS meeting will be held on Block Island, hosted by Veronica Berounsky and Walter Berry.
      3. We are looking for a host for Spring 2017 - please let Sara Grady know if you are considering hosting.
   3. Treasurer
      1. NEERS Checking: $4,338
      2. NEERS CD : $20,091.98
      3. Student Endowment CD: $32,140.35 (plus $5 from everyone's 2015 dues and endowment donations- $2299)
      4. Savings Account: $22,338.18
      5. Spring 2015 Meeting Income was Registration: $10,887 and Donations: $5,354. Expenses were $11,258.45 for the cost of the meeting and $1,733 in awards. Overall, the meeting profited $2,981.44. There were 151 registrants (49 Students, 74 Members , 24 Nonmembers, 4 TCS members), of whom 69% pre-registered (of the pre-registrants: members- 79%, students-61%, nonmembers 54%) and 55% of students registered for Friday only (4 students pre-registered, 13 did not).
   4. Secretary
      1. Presented Survey Monkey Results (listed below).
      2. Overall people felt satisfied that they learned useful information, were able to network and agreed that there were a wide range of topics presented. However, they also wanted a bigger room, better AV, more time for networking, and suggested two full days of talks
      3. People came to the meeting: To network (a number of people said this), to present, to get caught up on research, to see what others are doing. Their favorite parts of the meeting were the proximity to water, the crowd, the food, the location, the Thursday Symposium, quality of student presentations, organized, the talks, the IGNITE, the field trip.
      4. Some suggestions for Symposium topics included (roman numerals in parenthesis indicate the number of times a topic was suggested, when n>1): How to communicate with the public and decision makers (III), more IGNITE, how to apply our good science to have positive management results (II), more ecology talks, working with citizen scientists, R/Python programming, case studies of successful restoration (II), aquaculture/natural systems interactions, career options workshop, climate change adaptation, oligotrophication, crab/marsh/eelgrass conundrum
      5. Suggested changes: Bigger venue (both poster & meeting room), better sound system, intermixing student & non-student talks (not just student talks on Friday), more environmentally friendly, more diverse talks, two full days of talks to allow more time for Q&A and interacting with presenters
      6. Other comments: overhaul website & order that meeting information is presented, lovely venue, great atmosphere, rooms too small, more organized events, like panel discussions, student mixer, food at poster session was really good, give judges either talks or posters, not both, keep people on time, we should sell tee-shirts or sweatshirts as a fundraiser.
3. Committee Reports
   1. Meeting Planning - Sue Adamowicz
      1. The Spring 2016 meeting will possibly at Ogunquit, somewhere around late March-early April. Bev Johnson of Bates College said she would help organize.
   2. Webmaster - Brett Branco
      1. plans to update the look of the website, make more dynamic (easier to change)
      2. we’ll be working with the Programs Chairs to further refine meeting abstract submittal and registration
   3. Newsletter - Sara Grady
      1. Summer/Fall newsletter coming out in a few weeks
      2. Winter newsletter planned for February 2016
      3. Any story ideas or news to share, please contact Sara
4. No New Business or Announcements.