

# New England Estuarine Research Society



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## Minutes of the NEERS Business Meeting

June 3, 1994

Salem State College, MA

Compiled by Robert Buchsbaum, Secretary-Treasurer

1. Meeting was called to order at about 1620. The minutes of the business meeting held at University of Connecticut at Avery Point in May 1993 were read and approved.
2. The Secretary's report was read and approved.
3. The Treasurer's report was read. There was some discussion about whether the Ketchum and Rankin Prize moneys and the ERF student travel award should be kept in separate accounts. The consensus was that they should be tracked separately but kept in the same account for convenience. After this discussion, the Treasurer's Report was approved.
4. President Berounsky thanked Alan Young for his fine job of organizing the meeting.
5. President Berounsky led a discussion of the value of moving the meeting dates around somewhat to accommodate different schedules. A later spring meeting, such as the current one in June allows faculty with heavy teaching burdens to attend more easily, but it often interferes with researchers who have already begun their field season. The sense of NEERS is that not having the meeting at exactly the same time every year is a good idea, although it is usually not difficult for professors to adjust their teaching schedules to come to the meeting even when classes are still in session.
6. The next NEERS meeting will be held in October in Orleans, MA on Cape Cod. Sandy MacFarlane is the organizer and has already arranged for accommodations (The Nauset Beach Hotel) and a meeting place (The "Jail House Tavern"). The dates are October 20-22, 1994 with an abstract deadline of September 12. She plans to organize an all day symposium on Thursday on the issue of how the interface between science and management in addressing coastal issues. She plans to include a lunch time trip to Fort Hill on Cape Cod as part of that symposium. A Saturday session on marine education is being explored by Charlene D'Avanzo.

The spring 95 meeting possibilities are a joint meeting with AERS somewhere near New York City or New Hampshire.

7. The results of the membership survey were presented by President Berounsky. She received 41 responses. Some highlights of the results are listed below:
  - a. The three most important factors determining whether a person attends a particular NEERS meeting are (1) distance from home base, (2) how well meeting fits teaching or research schedule, and (3) cost.
  - b. Most members attend at least one meeting per year.
  - c. April, May and October are the favored months for scheduling meetings.
  - d. The three most important reason that members attend NEERS meetings are (1) they provide a chance to meet other scientists in the area, (2) the meeting is small enough to talk with other scientists, (3) they provide the chance to discuss work with other NEERS members.
  - e. When special symposiums are part of the program, most members prefer that they be held on Thursday, rather than Friday or Saturday.
  - f. The survey included a list of special speakers that NEERS members would like to see invited to do a presentation at a future meeting. It also included a list of potential symposium topics.
  - g. Most members prefer to hold two meetings a year, even if they can only attend one.
  - h. Most members favor the present schedule of holding meetings from Thursday through Saturday.
  - i. Most members like the NEERS Newsletter.
  - j. Soft-funded scientists were the largest group responding to the survey.

8. ERF News

- a. The ERF 1997 meeting will be held in New England. Jonathan Garber of EPA Narragansett is the overall coordinator of this effort. He is looking for people to assist in organizing the meeting. A number of committees need to be formed, such as one for reviewing abstracts.

Veronica is assisting Jonathan in the site selection. At the moment, only Boston and Providence are serious contenders for the meetings since only those two cities have hotels or convention centers large enough to house the entire 600+ hotel rooms that will be needed without spreading the group over too wide a distance. Boston is slightly more expensive than Providence, but is also more convenient for most travelers and possibly cheaper to get to. Providence has a new convention center. Newport, RI has been discussed as another possibility. A number of NEERS members expressed that Newport provided better ambiance for an ERF meeting than did either Boston or Providence.

- b. President Berounsky thanked Wendy Leo for putting together the NEERS poster presented at the ERF meeting. Unfortunately, the poster disappeared at the end of the meeting and is still missing. NEERS will reimburse anyone whose photos disappeared with the poster.

- c. At the ERF business meeting at Hilton Head last November, the name change of the society to CERF (or some similar variant that would include the word "coastal") was tabled.
  - d. Because of recent financial limitations at ERF -
    - 1. The ERF Newsletter will no longer be sent to members of affiliate societies who are not ERF members.
    - 2. The price of *Estuaries* to libraries will increase to \$275 from its present annual rate of \$120. This is still much cheaper than most other scientific journals, so NEERS members were urged to encourage their university libraries not to drop *Estuaries* when the price increase occurs.
    - 3. The idea of ERF maintaining the membership list of affiliates and taking responsibility for affiliate mailings was tabled.
  - e. Future ERF meetings will limit the number of concurrent oral presentation sessions to four. As a result, the number of poster sessions will be expanded.
  - f. Referring back to the reading of the minutes of the Avery Point (Spring 93) meeting, Sandy MacFarlane said that she hopes NEERS continues to be feisty in its relationship with ERF.
  - g. Barbara Welsh is writing an article on dissolved oxygen for the upcoming ERF Newsletter. The subsequent newsletter will contain special articles on non point source pollution. NEERS needs to find a volunteer to write an article on that topic.
  - h. President Berounsky attended two ERF Governing Board meetings since the last NEERS meeting.
9. President Berounsky announced that we now have an official form to aid in the evaluation of student presentations for the Ketchum and Rankin prizes. Being tax exempt, we have to document our donations.
10. President Berounsky suggested that students take advantage of DIALOG, a program in which students of biological oceanography will be funded to travel for free to the Bermuda Biological Station to meet with established scientists and funding agency personnel and to give a talk on their work. ASLO is a cosponsor of this program.
11. Discussion of whether the position of Secretary-Treasurer should now be split among two people. This was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on Thursday night. President Berounsky said that it would require an amendment to the NEERS constitution. The procedure for an amendment to the constitution is that an article needs to be presented to the membership through the mail at least eight weeks prior to the next business meeting in order for it to be considered at that meeting.

President Berounsky asked Secretary-Treasurer Buchsbaum to present a list of how the current secretary-treasurer duties might be divided among two people in the future. He presented the list as follows:

Secretary

Takes minutes of the NEERS business meeting

- Takes minutes of the Executive Committee meeting
- Maintains the membership list
- Sends out yearly membership update letter
- Sends out yearly dunning letter to members in arrears
- Sends out yearly membership list
- Corresponds with ERF

Treasurer

- Maintains the bank accounts
- Handles all financial transactions
- Collects dues
- Handles pre- and on site-registrations and other financial matters pertaining to NEERS meetings

Buchsbaum said that the rationale for the change is that the responsibilities are now very time consuming because the membership is much larger than it was when the initial responsibilities of officers were outlined in the constitution. The above outline would divide the responsibilities approximately evenly among two individuals, one of whom (the Secretary) would have a more or less consistent time commitment throughout the year and the other (the Treasurer) whose major time commitment would center around meetings.

The advantage for NEERS is that it would not be so dependent on just one individual to run all its business aspects. The Secretary and Treasurer would share the work and be in a position to help each other out if for some reason one of them got sick etc. The advantage to the individual is that it would enable them to maintain their sanity a bit better. It would also be easier to attract candidates to run for the positions if the positions were separated since neither would appear as daunting as the current Secretary-Treasurer position now is.

The disadvantage is that it would require more coordination, since the Treasurer would have to inform the Secretary of who had paid their dues, etc. Both individuals would probably need to have membership lists on their computers. Also, you would need to find more candidates to run for elections.

Doug Tolderlund suggested that it made sense to have the Treasurer send out the dunning letters rather than the Secretary, since the Treasurer would know who was up to date.

Marshall Pregnall, the past Secretary-Treasurer, was asked for his opinion. He said that it made a lot of sense. The coordination issue would not be a major stumbling block. Others noted that electronic mail should increase the ease of communication between the two officers.

NEERS is the largest of the affiliate societies, yet others (AERS) have separate officers for their secretaries and treasurers.

Ted Loder moved that "NEERS should consider separating the position of Secretary-Treasurer into two positions and send a question to the membership before the fall 1994 meeting so that it could be voted on at that meeting." The motion was seconded.

Bernie McAlice amended the motion to include that "the constitutional change should be voted on before the election of officers so that, if adopted, it could be put in place immediately." This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

It was noted that the nominating committee working on the next election would have to have ready two slates of candidates, one assuming a single Secretary-Treasurer and another assuming two separate offices. President Berounsky asked for a show of hands to get a sense of support for the constitution change. An overwhelming consensus within the membership favored the change.

Another idea discussed was the possibility of voting alternate years on the two positions to avoid a situation where both officers are new to the responsibility at the same time. This would not work, however, since elections are held every other year and organizationally it would be a headache to have them more frequently. Also, this would be a problem in years when there is an ERF meeting and therefore no NEERS fall meeting.

Joan Beskanis noted that some scientific societies have a separate corresponding and recording secretary.

Ted Loder amended his own motion to say that the Executive Committee should work out the details of the individual responsibilities of the Secretary and Treasurer.

Rich Orson said that the proposed constitutional change could be put in the next NEERS News newsletter due to go out in July.

12. The next NEERS meeting will be an election meeting. President-Elect Dave Franz and Ted Loder are heading up the nominating committee. Members were encouraged to see them about suggestions.

13. NEERS and the electronic age. E mail addresses will now be input into each member's records. We should also investigate bringing NEERS into the computer network age.

14. To make people more aware that they are in arrears with their dues, the Exec Comm. suggested that Robert indicate how much back dues are owed right on the mailing labels.

15. NEERS News. Rich Orson will put out the next NEERS News in July. He urged (chastised?) members to provide input, since he and Veronica wrote all the articles for the last newsletter. Alan Young suggested having a clip-out part that members could send back in with brief communications for subsequent newsletters.

16. President Berounsky presented the NEERS Trivia Quiz. The answers would be given at the end of the meeting on Saturday.

17. Meeting was adjourned around 1800. The banquet started soon thereafter.

#### NOTES ON THE BANQUET

Jay Moore gave a history of NEERS - the organizational meeting took place at Salem State College on December 13, 1969, 25 years ago.

Bernie McAlice was made an honorary member and was suitably toasted (roasted??) by President Berounsky, Bob Radulski, Julie Rankin, Sandy MacFarlane, Alan Young, and Marshall Pregnell.

The Ketchum Prize for the best graduate student paper was given to Jody Berman for her paper entitled "Do established colonies alter the abundance or distribution patterns of later

arrivals?". Kerry Jo Guilfoyle received the Rankin Prize for the best undergraduate paper, "The effects of human exploitation and hurricane damage upon mangroves."

NEERS Secretary's Report  
Spring 1994  
Salem State College

1. Read minutes of 1993 spring meeting at Avery Point, CT.

2. Membership Report:

A. Membership database as of preregistration

Total entries	333
Regular members	259
Student members	57
Honorary members	3
ERF officers	14

New members for this meeting:

Regular	8
Student	7

About 100 people were removed from the mailing list at the end of the year because they were more than two years in arrears.

B. Status of dues payment as of preregistration

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Honorary</u>
All paid up all years	67	52	12	3
Paid 1994, owe back dues	11	10	1	
Paid through 1993	117	97	20	
Paid through 1992	71	53	18	
Paid through 1991	52	46	6	

C. Geographical Distribution of Membership

Nova Scotia	7
New Brunswick	5
Maine	24
New Hampshire	35
Vermont	2
Massachusetts	120
Rhode Island	48
Connecticut	57
New York	14
New Jersey	6
Other	20

3. This meeting:

	<u>Preregistrants</u>	<u>On Site Registrants</u>	<u>Total</u>
Regular	42	22	64
Student	13	10	23
Non-members	9 (5 regular, 4 students)		9
Total	64	32	<del>8</del> 96