



Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium

Dauphin Island Sea Lab

2008 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Troy University, Montgomery- Whitley Hall Civic Room

September 18, 2008

Mr. V. Gordon Moulton, President of the University of South Alabama welcomed the board and called the meeting to order.

The motion was made by Dr. Richard Holland (UWA) to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors meeting held, June 26, 2007. The motion was seconded by Dr. Porter Bannister (UA) and carried by the board.

President Moulton introduced Dr. Scott Quackenbush who addressed the board as Executive Director of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. In his report, Dr. Quackenbush stated that despite a decrease in state appropriations that reduced the lab's annual budget by \$300,000 in revenue; there were no significant program cuts, or reduction in staff. Dr. Quackenbush announced that construction of the Richard C. Shelby Center for Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management had begun with completion of the project expected by July, 2009. He also mentioned, the lab's online video conferencing center was now transmitting courses to college and high school campuses throughout the state. Dr. Quackenbush explained that increased funding through historical state and federal partners were not likely therefore, the development of new partnerships will be necessary. Potential programs include: The Food and Drug Administration's Seafood Safety Lab located on Dauphin Island and NASA with whom cooperative agreements are being established.

In closing, Dr. Quackenbush stated that the 2008-2009 budget posed a challenge for the lab as well as member institutions nevertheless, DISL is moving forward with a significant increase in state and federal contracts and grant funding. Dr. Quackenbush extended an open invitation to all board members to visit the Sea Lab.

President Moulton mentioned to the board that the Dauphin Island Sea Lab had commissioned a new 65 foot research vessel. Dr. Quackenbush further explained that in early September, the keel was laid for a new vessel funded by the State of Alabama at a cost of \$585,000. On board, state of the art scientific equipment valued at \$250,000 will transmit data "real time" to onshore stations then on to participating institutions. President Moulton opened the floor for questions then moved to action items outlined in the meeting's agenda.

2008 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Continued

The first item for the board's consideration was the proposed 2008-2009 budget. When asked to comment, Dr. Quackenbush stated that the budget had been prepared prior to his appointment as Executive Director by Interim Director Dr. John Dindo and Financial Officer David England. He defended Dr. Dindo's decision to reallocate items to save program funding in support of ongoing teaching and research activities. As a tradeoff he explained, there would be no funding for capital equipment, or salary increases for this fiscal year. He explained that, increased funding through grants may provide flexibility within the projected budget by January however, uncertainty of the situation warrants conservative budgeting. Dr. Quackenbush stated that when the budget was prepared, increased fuel prices were not anticipated; as a result fuel consumption cost has increased by \$50,000 this year.

Dr. David Williams (UA Huntsville) moved to approve the 2008-2009 budget. The motion was seconded by Dr. William Cale (UNA).

President Moulton opened the floor for questions. Dr. Cale (UNA) requested clarification on line item one (1), *Instruction* as it related to the description - *Academic Faculty (43%) and DHP Faculty (100%) salary*. Dr. Quackenbush explained that 43% of the salary for all university program educators (graduate and undergraduate students) is supported by unrestricted funds under the category "instruction" with the balance from other areas. Discovery Hall Program Instructors which serve grades K-12, derive 100% of their salary from the *Instruction* category. President Moulton reiterated that the budget did not contain any type of general or across the board merit increase. Approval of the budget was carried by a unanimous vote by the board.

President Moulton addressed the second item, rate increases, and asked Dr. Quackenbush to justify the changes for the board. Dr. Quackenbush explained that the lab's cafeteria has been operating at an annual deficit of \$150,000 for the past five years and recovering the loss from other sources. Dr. Quackenbush stated that rates for services offered by the Dauphin Island Sea Lab have not been increased since 1975 resulting in a shortage of revenue. Although, the proposed rate increase will not balance the deficit, it is expected to allow the cafeteria to operate at approximately \$2000 over budget annually. Dr. Quackenbush went on to explain that when compared with similar marine facilities on the East and West Coasts, the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's rates for services are still lower than the average.

Other increases discussed were the rental of the Estuarium, Dorm Rental, and Vehicle Mileage Reimbursement. The Sea Lab earns approximately \$35,000 per year through the rental of the Estuarium as a private event venue. The previous Vehicle Mileage Rate of .30 per mile failed to offset maintenance cost of the vehicles. This mileage rate is charged when DISL faculty use a fleet vehicle for the transportation of students or equipment. The rate is charged as instructional money for a particular class or a grant. This rate is also used to reimburse staff for the use of their private vehicles while conducting Dauphin Island Sea Lab business.

2008 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Continued

The proposed reimbursement rate of 58.5 is the standard set by the State of Alabama. President Moulton called for a motion for approval to be made from the floor. Dr. William Harris (ASU) made the motion to approve the rate changes but requested that he be made aware of the previous charges set forth by the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. The motion was seconded by Dr. Robert Glen (Athens State) and carried by the board.

President Moulton addressed the last action item which was to ratify a banking change approved previously by the Executive Committee. The motion for approval was made by Dr. William Cale (UNA), seconded by Dr. William Harris (ASU) and carried by the board.

President Moulton thanked the board for its participation and adjourned the meeting.