



Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium
Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Executive Committee Telephone Conference
July 15, 2013

MINUTES

Board of Directors present: President John Smith (USA), Dr. Jack Hawkins (TU), Dr. William Cale (UNA), Dr. Judy Bonner (UA) DISL Attendees: Dr. John Valentine, Dr. John Dindo, David England, Lori Pritchett (recording)

After operator roll call, President Smith called the meeting to order and gave a favorable update on retired USA President Gordon Moulton and announced that the search for a new university president should yield an appointment by end of year. President Smith inquired after additions to the agenda, none were suggested and the meeting proceeded to the first agenda item, approval of the July 17, 2012 meeting minutes. With Dr. Jack Hawkins (TU), move to accept and Dr. William Cale (UNA) second, the minutes were approved as recorded.

President Smith proceeded to the second agenda item; approval of the FY 2013-14 budget; Dr. William Cale (UNA), motioned to approve, Dr. Judy Bonner (UA), seconded the motion, the FY 2013-14 Budget was approved as submitted.

The meeting was turned over to Dr. John Valentine (DISL) for the director's report; Dr. Valentine reported that despite sequestration, all academic programs were being maintained at optimum levels. Lowered fuel and energy costs contributed to an overall revenue increase of 5.8%. After reviewing DISL 2012 financial highlights, Dr. Valentine requested the board's approval of a .50 per meal increase to offset student cafeteria costs; personnel, supplies, food, etc. Dr. Judy Bonner (UA), moved to approve increase, Dr. Jack Hawkins (TU), seconded the motion, and the increase was passed.

Dr. Valentine noted that DISL would suspend its current lobbying efforts revisiting in two years; money earmarked for lobbying efforts will go to support current DISL programs. Dr. Jack Hawkins (TU), inquired as to the lobbyist used by DISL to which Dr. Valentine replied: Mr. Armand DeKeyser. Dr. Valentine proceeded by reporting all summer college and DHP programs are continuing on track and at the same accreditation as last year, students from sixteen of the twenty two member schools are in residence at DISL. The experimental 3rd term introduced last year has been very well attended this year; growth is expected, continuing DISL's mission for statewide education.

Under New Business, Dr. Valentine asked for the board's consideration regarding recognition of President Gordon Moulton's (USA), service to the MESC. After some conversation and various ideas, Dr. Valentine agreed to work with Dr. Smith (USA), and return recommendations to the group at a later date. Dr. Valentine went on to update the board on the lobbying effort by DISL to the State Restore Act Council, resulting in the MESC being named by acclamation as the Center of Excellence in Marine Sciences. At this time, the level of compensatory damage has not been set therefore, we do not have an idea of funding expectations however, 2.5% of the total award will come to the state for the COE.

Governor Bentley was very complimentary and positive in his speech with regards to the MESC as the COE. At this time, Dr. Valentine has had meetings with administrators and personnel from Auburn, USA, and President Watts with UAB in reference to "Plan A" of what the center can be. Dr. Valentine announced that he will be meeting with Dr. Joe Benson in Tuscaloosa next month, to repeat the message of goodwill between the lab and UAT. Dr. Valentine assured the board that as the COE, the MESC will perform science to the highest standards, the MASGC has agreed to manage the peer review process that will be open and transparent. We are now looking to brand the COE as "Alabama Science". Dr. Valentine offered to meet individually with members to discuss "Plan A" which he explained will be a mixture of cutting edge science; both monitoring and creative in nature with "Sugar Grants" to allow young scientists a chance to "get their feet wet", and learn about Coastal Alabama. We have committed indirect funds, if available, for the construction of a new research center. The new center will create an opportunity for scientists to stay on campus and use our facility more actively than we can support at this time. Dr. Valentine admitted that this was a "broad brush" overview but offered to visit all participating university administration to discuss the detailed plan.

Moving on to the next item, Dr. Valentine announced that the National Science Foundation (NSF) has recommended a FSML proposal for funding in the amount \$314,000. This award will fund the purchase of an Inductively-coupled plasma mass spectrometer, (ICPM) allowing cutting edge research and environmental management to be performed at DISL. Dr. Valentine speculated that DISL may be the only facility with ICPM capability in the GOM at this time. Moving on, Dr. Valentine announced the completion of a new 36 x 30 classroom with VTC capability funded by the Moorer Foundation. In other announcements, PNC Bank presented DISL with \$40,000 to purchase a new vehicle: "Bay Mobile" DHP's traveling K-12 classroom that provides marine science education to students that are unable to travel to DISL. The Estuarium's new 64,000 gallon outside touch tank exhibit "Rays of the Bay" is now online, funded by a donation from Lucy Buffett. The Estuarium hosted over 70,000 visitors in 2012 and continues to be a popular educational attraction.

Dr. Valentine announced that he recently signed a contract with conservation for \$395,000 for the construction of a 2500 sq. ft. addition to the aquarium from the Coastal Impact Assistance Program or "CIAP" a federal funding program that helps oil and gas producing states and their coastal subdivisions mitigate impacts from production. The recent addition in admission (\$1), will help provide new programs and exhibits to the aquarium.

In conclusion, Dr. Valentine announced DISL will participate as sponsor for the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA), conference held later this month hosting the national group at DISL for a social event and providing educational speakers at the conference held on the campus of Springhill College in Mobile.

Dr. William Cale (UNA), thanked Dr. Valentine for his report and complimented his efforts and accomplishments. Dr. Cale went on to inquire as to the most urgent issue facing DISL at this time to which Dr. Valentine replied, the aged facility is in need of infrastructure improvements and renovations. Dr. Valentine went on to say that he may ask the board's approval for a bond to address such improvements at a later date after the COE indirect is determined.

Dr. Smith (USA) asked for any additional comments, Dr. Judy Bonner (UA) moved that the meeting be adjourned; the group was in favor of the adjournment.