

The Geological Society of Washington
founded 1893

DRAFT MINUTES
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OCTOBER 7, 2020

Council Members Present

Pranoti Asher
Patrick Carr, council secretary
Liz Cottrell, 1st vice president
Bill Craddock
Beth Doyle, meeting secretary
Carl-Henry Geschwind, treasurer
Graham Lederer
Larry Meinert, 2nd vice president
Julia Nord
Michael Purucker, past president
Ester Sztein, president
Bev Walker

Council Members Absent

Nick Pyenson

Others Present

Ann Benbow
Ryan Haupt
Everett Johnson
Kori Newman
Abe Padilla
Alex Speer

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 P.M. by President Sztein. The minutes of the May 13, 2020, meeting as amended were approved without objection.

REPORTS

Secretary

Carr presented his report, which is attached. The continuing pandemic will most likely necessitate conducting the Annual Meeting via videoconference. Walker added that the current version of Zoom does have a polling function for ordinary meetings; this function was tested and appears to meet our needs. From the recommendations and subsequent discussion, Annual Meeting business will be limited to the minutes, reports, and election of new Council Members; if the election is contested Sztein will use the Zoom poll function. Carr will check participants against the membership list as the meeting starts.

Treasurer

Geschwind presented his report, which is attached. The move to virtual meetings in March reduced expenditures and the investment accounts performed well, resulting in total assets at the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2020, of \$194,080. Income from memberships, however, continues to decline, so we should continue to monitor this.

Cottrell stated the motion arising out of his report, to maintain dues at the FY19 level of \$40 for regular members and \$15 for corresponding, student, and early-career members. This passed without objection.

Membership

Sztein presented Hankin's report, which is attached—note, however, that the statistics are from May. Cottrell reminded Council members of a duty to promote meetings and membership among their colleagues; Walker suggested the president at an upcoming meeting remind other members to do the same. Asher asked about buying memberships for others; Cottrell mentioned that she does do this, but that the interface does not facilitate this and Johnson has to manually add the recipient to the relevant database lists. They will explore how to adjust the web form.

Sztein asked for a membership flyer to be published across our various media platforms; Haupt will work on this.

Nominations

Purucker presented the report of the Nominations Committee, who propose the following slate of officers:

First Vice-President: Larry Meinert (Economic Geology)
 Second Vice-President: Kori Newman (Systems & Technology Research)
 Meeting Secretary: Beth Doyle (Northern Virginia Community College)
 Council Secretary: Patrick Carr (Department of Defense)
 Treasurer: Carl-Henry Geschwind (independent)
 Councillor: Ryan Haupt (University of Wyoming)
 Councillor: George Helz (University of Maryland)
 Councillor: Yasmina Matos (NASA Goddard).

The slate was approved without objection.

Sztein thanked Haupt and Padilla for their two years of service as co-chairs of the Program Committee.

BUSINESS

Sztein asked for a clarification on communication points of contact. The website content is Purucker and Haupt; social media content is Haupt and Purucker; and emails through the MSA-run list are from Sztein and Speer. There were some complaints about the web site; AGI has fallen behind in maintenance and we have a rather limited capability.

The virtual field trip on August 26th with David Williams, "Stories in Stone," was a success; there were 43 attendees. There is some hope of making the archived video available.


Sztein moved that the text of the "Society Info" section be amended to include "colleges and community colleges" in the list of members' affiliations. There was no objection to this, and Purucker will make the change.

Sztein asked about ways to increase the “membership proposition,” to use Hankin’s term from a couple of Council meetings ago, and suggested a formal mentoring program. Cottrell will ask the Geochemical Society about the legal framework of theirs; Asher reported that AGU has not had significant problems although they have ejected people from the program. Carr said he would even find a membership directory valuable to stimulate informal mentoring. Sztein will explore a pilot program through the renewal form.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick M. Carr, Council Secretary

From: Patrick Carr pat@patcarr.ca 
Subject: Voting at annual meeting
Date: October 7, 2020 at 1:39 PM
To: gsw-councilplus-l@minlists.org



As part of the secretary report:

Carl-Henry, Ester, and I had an on-again, off-again conversation over the pandemic about the annual meeting over zoom. There has also been a fair amount of discussion in the parliamentary law community (there are two international professional organizations, as well as the authorship teams of the leading manuals) about business transacted at virtual meetings during quarantine orders, whether permitted by the bylaws and statutory authorities or not. To summarize: transact the minimum required business, and ensure that voting is carried out by ballot if required.

In my memory we haven't had a contested election, so I wouldn't think we'd start now.

Most discussed systems:

1. Zoom has a polling function, but (a) it's only for webinars, (b) hosts can't vote, and (c) I don't think it's secret, although I don't know.
2. Polys <<https://polys.me/faq>> seems good, but it limits to 100 participants unless you pay, and we couldn't do that on the fly ("contact us for pricing")
3. Lumi also has a "contact us for pricing" model

Relevant bylaws summarized:

1. Only a ballot if an election is contested, otherwise voice vote or show of hands.
2. Other than the nominating committee, nominations may be made by 5 members, either before the meeting by mail or from the floor.
3. Quorum is whoever shows up.
4. No proxies.


So:

Recommendation 1: No business except the election, minutes, and reports. I don't think we had anything planned anyway.

Recommendation 2: I have a Polys poll ready to go but not sent out. When the meeting starts, I'll check participants against the membership list and have that prepped to go out if need be. I would expect that to easily be under 100 participants.

One question: we could either send out the slate from the nominating committee as normal with no notes, or specifically ask people that if they have other nominations to submit those before the meeting. I think we'd still have to have something more or less ready to go, but less pressure if not.

Pat

From: Carl-Henry Geschwind geschwind@fastmail.com 
Subject: [Gsw-councilplus-l] GSW Treasurer's Report
Date: September 29, 2020 at 10:32 AM
To: Sztein, Ester ESztein@nas.edu, gsw-councilplus-l@minlists.org



In preparation for the Fall GSW Council Meeting, please find below my Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year that ended 30 June 2020. I am attaching 4 PDFs. Please also see the Action Item at the bottom of this message.

Please turn first to the Income Statement, on which I list inflows and outflows for both the most recent fiscal year (2019/20) and the previous year.

We are still hemorrhaging revenue - membership dues were down 8.5% compared to the prior year, although contributions were slightly up. I do not have a quantitative analysis for this, but just eyeballing the figures I believe we have a significantly larger proportion of the membership this year paying the reduced early-career \$15 dues rather than the full \$40 dues, which might account in part for the drop in dues revenue.

On the other hand, expenses were significantly lower than the prior year, since we paid for only 8 rather than 12 meetings (3 meetings at the Cosmos Club were cancelled due to COVID, and the Cosmos Club charges for the Bradley lecture in November were covered by AGU due to them having backed out of their original commitment to host the meeting). As a result, the amounts I had to transfer from our invested funds (the Endowment Fund and Bradley Fund) in order to balance the General Fund were far less than in the prior year.

To see underlying trends in expenses as compared to revenue, please turn to the chart labeled Inflows vs. Outflows. On this chart I have normalised expenses for each fiscal year to what they would have been had we had 12 meetings at the Cosmos Club each year. On this basis our expenses in 2019/20 were slightly less than in the prior year - while speaker dinners were more expensive on average, and MSA fees (for our backoffice operations) also increased, our average drinks tab at the meetings we did have at the Cosmos Club decreased. But you will note on this chart that our revenues decreased somewhat more than our expenses, so our operating deficit (on a 12 meetings per year basis) is still increasing slightly (albeit not at the rapid clip shown in the previous years).

Now please turn to the Balance Sheet. Because the stock markets remained buoyant overall despite the COVID crisis, our investments in the Endowment and Bradley Funds still grew healthily last year. Coupled with the smaller General Fund deficit, this means that our net assets grew by a bit more than 11K, or by about 6%, during the year - not bad at all for a crisis year.

To understand the overall health of our finances, please see the last chart, titled "Coverage". The blue line shows our cash deficit (i.e., excess of total expenses over cash revenues) - note that, until 2015/16, this line was below zero, that is, we were taking in more cash than spending. You will note that, while the deficit had grown rapidly over last several years, the growth leveled off in the most recent year. The green line represents 4% of year-end balances in our Endowment and Bradley Funds - what our investment policy considers to be a prudent withdrawal from those funds to cover the cash deficits. This line has also been rising, due to the stockmarket-fueled increase in our investments. You will note that our cash deficit still remains below this 4% line and, at least on the trend from last year, may remain below that line for some years to come. Finally, the red line shows the actual market gains in our investments each year - which, for 6 out of the last 8 years, have been well above 4% annually.

Thus, at least for the time being, we are still in good shape - unless the cash deficit suddenly jumps again (due to further losses in revenue) or the stock markets turn decisively against us, we can still cover our operating gap from our invested funds for the next several years.

As for fiscal year 2020/21, it appears that actual expenses will once again be far below normal, as almost certainly all fall meetings, and with high likelihood most if not all spring meetings, will have to be held virtually. On the other hand, we will not know until late November (several weeks after the dues notices have gone out) how the crisis will affect membership dues and contributions - there is the

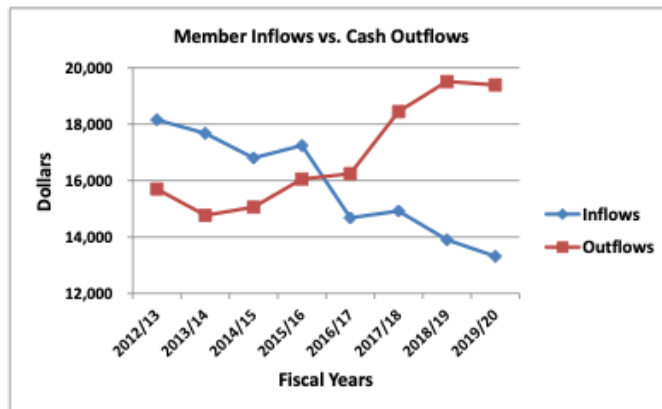
notices have gone out, now the crisis will affect membership dues and contributions - there is the potential that we might see another sharp decline in revenues as well. It is also not clear how various uncertainties this fall will affect the stock markets (though our investments have a significant bond component as well that should cushion high volatility in the stock markets). Nevertheless, I am hopeful that this current year will be another year of low operating deficit that will allow us to continue preserving and perhaps even increasing our invested funds for the future.

Action Item:

The Board needs to set dues levels for 2021. I recommend that dues be kept at the same level as for 2020.

Geological Society of Washington
Financial Statements for Year Ended 6/30/2020

<u>General Fund Activity</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2018/19</u>
Member Dues	7,685.00	8,400.00
Contributions	4,027.77	3,872.77
Miscellaneous Income	-	550.00
Total Inflows	<u>11,712.77</u>	<u>12,822.77</u>
Hall Rental and Drinks	7,944.40	13,403.00
Speaker Dinners	1,419.41	1,762.81
Bradley Speaker Travel	1,024.24	575.80
Awards	385.00	385.00
Insurance	653.00	653.00
MSA Fees (Back Office)	2,565.00	2,343.09
PayPal Fees	282.79	265.11
Miscellaneous Expenses	<u>118.00</u>	<u>120.00</u>
Total Outflows	14,391.84	19,507.81
Operating Deficit	(2,679.07)	(6,685.04)
Transfer from Endowment Fund	1,305.84	4,675.90
Transfer from Bradley Fund	<u>1,418.89</u>	<u>2,082.40</u>
Overall General Fund Surplus	45.66	73.26

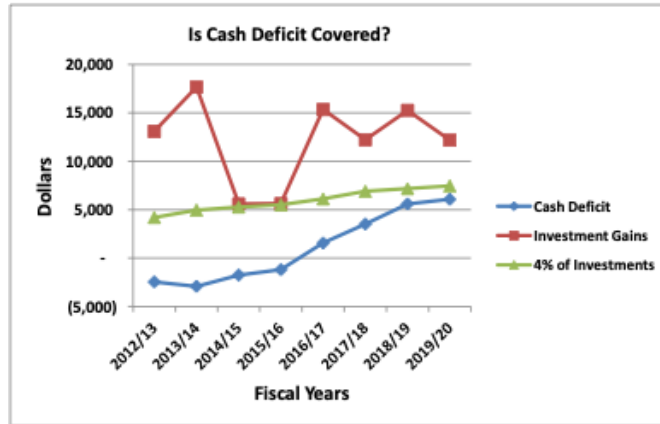


Geological Society of Washington
 Financial Statements for Year Ended 6/30/2020

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>6/30/2019</u>	<u>6/30/2020</u>
Checking Account	11,601.66	11,067.87
Vanguard Balanced Fund	112,185.83	121,431.82
Vanguard Wellington Fund	60,232.04	63,165.80
Accounts Payable	<u>(1,045.67)</u>	<u>(1,585.95)</u>
Total	182,973.86	194,079.54

<u>Funds</u>	<u>6/30/2019</u>	<u>6/30/2020</u>
General Fund	10,334.51	10,380.17
Endowment Fund	112,221.67	121,431.82
Bradley Fund	<u>60,417.68</u>	<u>62,267.55</u>
Total	182,973.86	194,079.54

<u>Required Minimum Balances</u>	<u>Endowment</u>	<u>Bradley</u>
Total	121,431.82	62,298.55
Required Minimum Balance	64,545.77	31,847.06
Spendable	56,886.05	30,451.49



GSW-Councilplus-I mailing list

The GSW Councilplus list serv intended for GSW Council members and GSW Committee Chairs to

Fall 2020 Geological Society of Washington Membership Report

GSW Council Meeting, 7 October 2020

Membership Chair, Erik Hankin, ehankin@agu.org

New Membership

Twenty individuals have applied for new membership with GSW as of 6 October 2020. Only ten of these individuals have followed through with payment and are now members of GSW. The number of student applications is down from previous years (4 approved applicants, 1 new member).

Overall Membership (from Spring report)

There are 229 paid members for the 2020 calendar year as of 13 May 2020. There are 47 members from 2019 who have yet to renew, yielding an 82% renewal rate – slightly lower than 2019’s renewal rate of 84% at this same time of year. Members from 2019 received three electronic renewal reminders and one paper renewal reminder. *Note that these numbers are from the Spring of 2020, and I am waiting on updated metrics from MSA.*

Membership Type	Paid	Lapsed	New Members
MetroArea Members	157	34	4
NonMetroArea Members	51	5	0
Student Members	12	6	0
Early Career Members	9	2	2
Total	229	47	6

Non-DC Area Membership

The virtual meetings do open up GSW to a potentially much larger audience and could be a way to bring in more non-metro area members (a membership group that has declined at a much higher rate than other over the last decade).

GSW may want to look to advertise (for free) upcoming virtual meetings in geoscience society online communities, like those used by the Geological Society of America and American Geophysical Union. The meetings may be a nice resource for non-area students and/or department chairs.