

Minutes from the SEGH skype meeting 25th Jan 2019-01-25

1. Apologies received from Robert Finkelman (USA) and Akinade Olatunji (Nigeria)

2. The meeting was held in two parts: attendees

9.00am ,

Taicheng An (China)

Xia Huo (China)

4.00pm

Munir Zia (Pakistan)

Ariadne Argyrake (Greece)

Olivier Humphreys (UK-ECR)

Keith Torrance (USA)

Ofelia Morton (Mexico)

Jane Entwistle (UK-ECR)

Andrew Hursthouse (UK – advisor to Asia and conferences)

Anthea Brown (Membership Secretary and Treasurer)

Sanja Potgieter (UK)

Michael Watts (Chair)

Gillian Gibson (Secretary)

Alex Stewart (UK – advisor for health)

Chaosheng Zhang (Past President)

Paula Marinho-Reis (Portugal)

Odipo Osano (Kenya)

Moola Mutondo (Zambia – unable to maintain skype connection)

3. Matters arising:

3.1. KT explained that he had been liaising with founder members of SEGH in America, in an attempt to end the impasse which currently exists. Andrew Hunt holds the funds, but it has proved to be impossible to make contact with him. (JE has worked directly with him, and may have direct contact details) We appear to have only 6 or 7 paid up members for North America. KT has provided AB with details of more potential members; they should now be able to pay directly into the association.

ACTION: JE to look for cell phone number for Andrew Hunt

ACTION: Joint letter from MW and KT to potential North America members explaining situation, and bringing them directly into the organisation.

KT has enlisted help of Bob Finkelman. He was invited to call, but offered apologies. **Agreed** that Bob should be seconded as an interim measure. We still need representation from Canada, and the South American continent, so it is not appropriate to automatically assume that he is a board member.

KT explained that some of the existing ‘old guard’ are no longer active, but that they had in the past paid up in some way (not transparent) to become life members. KT proposed that they be given honorary life membership. However, it was explained that the new constitution has eliminated honorary membership,

but that we are currently setting up the Fellowship level, and perhaps they would benefit from being designated Fellows as recognition of their past contribution to SEGH. KT agreed that this would indeed be good. However, it did not deal with the issue of life membership having paid for access to journals, etc. The society is currently overdrawn, and cannot support dubious life membership. The meeting **agreed** that the few members KT was talking about should still be offered life membership without journal, as well as the Fellowship level. This does not incur cost to the organisation. However, there are two provisos:

- 1: IT DOES NOT SET A PRECEDENT. This is seen as a one -off action to resolve the long-standing organisational problem and allow SEGH to redevelop the Americas section.
- 2: IT DOES NOT BECOME ACTIVE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE FUNDS HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED FROM AMERICA.

This was a unanimous decision.

3.v11 There was discussion regarding the designation of Fellows. We need to create a grandparenting process before the continuing process can be started. We need Fellows in place before the summer conference in July. Suggestions were that people who had organised a conference, past president, or otherwise made a significant contribution to the organisation, as well as having recognised standing in their field, should be in the original grouping. It was agreed that all those nominated must be SEGH members.

ACTION All to send suggested names by email for consideration of a final list to be discussed at the next meeting in three months.

3.9 AA has had a positive response to the meeting of Geolsoc in Athens in May, for a special session on chemical mapping for resource management. AA already has the SEGH banner. AH to be a keynote speaker.

6. i Past conferences: there is to be a Special Issue of the journal from papers from the Victoria falls conference. Eleven papers have been submitted, generally involving three reviewers per paper, with at least one drawn from the ECR group. Suggest we try to get a Special Issue for Manchester.

ii SP stated that everything is in place for the Manchester conference, though they are slowly building momentum to get sponsorship. Currently have a balance of £9000. Need to increase this in order to make an offer to African countries.

ACTION SJ to send flyer to everyone, to market it. Reminder to go out regarding abstract deadlines. Big push on marketing the conference in the coming weeks.

iii OM described potential for meeting in Mexico for 2020.

ACTION OM to write proposal for meeting: costings, location, themes, etc. (NB: Guidelines will be on the web site asap). MW to send example from VicFalls.

iv Asia or elsewhere 2021? Meanwhile, MW encouraged smaller, one or two day meetings to held in the regions to maintain engagement with members each year – overcome loss of members with regional rotation of 1 in 4 years to each region. KT referred to piggybacking on a SETAC meeting in Washington Oct 2020.

Potential to link in? AO is thinking of linking into a local meeting in Nigeria, to which interest in West Africa could be attracted to. OO is planning to set-up a separate meeting Kenya. MW has liaised with Agilent who are keen to sponsor a meeting in Nairobi for around September 2019, this could focus on lab based activities or maintain broad activities as in VicFalls. Sponsorship will be important owing to the financial constraints on SEGH.

AH has links into China at the moment. Encourage them to have more meetings. (TA had been keen for this in the morning meeting). AH will liaise with Asia/Pacific.

MW gave the example of the Africa section conducting skype/WhatsApp conversations to discuss how they can take the section forward – now includes potential contributors to SEGH from Ghana and Egypt, who have ideas to draw in members from their neighbouring countries. **ACTION** MW asked the other regions to undertake the same initiative. Can we co-opt more people to help build up the membership particularly in their neighbouring countries, not just their own?

7. Proposal for editorial board. Other organisations seem to be using our journal more frequently than SEGH, we need to get better at using it for ourselves!. Many members of the Ed board are not familiar to us. MW has been in discussions with Springer and they are in the process of removing people who are no longer interested. MW has received an activity/performance table for all of the editors which he can share with the board. MW asked for volunteers who will be keen to participate as an associate editor for EGAH. Editors need to have at least 15 papers as first author and/or corresponding author. If interested, please send CVs to MW. Incentives for editors have been discussed with Springer, along the lines of AH previous discussion on recognition (e.g. Publons) or discount on Open Access papers. Springer suggested a small donation to charity for each paper, which MW suggested to Springer would unlikely make any difference. (As an aside, it was suggested that past successful editors may become Fellows – agreed)

There was general discussion as to appropriate incentives for editors. These were considered to be less than attractive at the moment, and are poor relative to other offerings.

AS suggested a 'virtual' special edition: looking at current issues and referring back to see what has changed historically.

ACTION AS to write to Ming Wong.

ACTION Funnel ideas for changes to Springer platform or editorial board through MW for continuity of discussion with Ming Wong. MW in discussion to regain more control for SEGH over EGAH.

AOB:

AB has set up paypal, it is now easier to pay on-line. This is particularly advantageous to the African groups.

AB also provided a breakdown of members. Numbers are low ~121, the majority in the UK and Africa, with low numbers now in China and particularly USA.

OH has been running the Twitter feed and increased the following by x3 since VicFalls and kickstarted the Facebook content. More help is needed from each region to support Facebook content and provide more representative engagement. OH has taken over the running of the website there was a **UNANIMOUS DECISION** that this should continue: he can have access to the secure data from the BGS office and lives locally to the web host. More web content is needed. Everyone was reminded that it was a condition of their being elected that they would provide an article. Please also provide an ECR volunteer to help with Facebook posts.

Web traffic has been static at about 150 hits/week owing to lack of content, session duration has also dropped from 2.5 to 1.5mins. We should be in excess of 200-300 hits/week. 61% of users are <35 years old, ~75% <44 years old indicating need for content to draw in the ECRs for long term membership and vindicates ECR initiative.

ACTION Articles please! Everyone!

ECR is working well and connected with mentors, though they are asking what next?

ACTION JE to email ECR group, and remind them to set up their own virtual network; they should not be relying on the mentors. MW reminded everyone of the original concept for ECRs to form a community to which they can communicate their ideas, discuss highlights or challenges. Ideally, this group will become a testbed for the SEGH board e.g. Future Strategy, formats for conference, building in benefit to members, updating methods of communication. This should not be a static group, communicating together more than just at each conference. Can other board members facilitate JE? This group will need nurturing over the next year or so until it can be taken over by the ECRs themselves. Ideally the ECRs will become the 'new blood' for the SEGH board, but we need to consolidate with broader regional representation.

Need to ensure the Manchester conference reinforces the existing ECR group attracts new ECRs.

The strategy document has been sent out. Some comments have been received. Further comments should be sent to GG, and circulated. We want the final strategy to be ready for approval at the next meeting.

ACTION comments on strategy to be made by 15th Feb.

Elections originally planned for the New Year to fill the remaining posts on the board (1 Africa, 1 Europe, 2 Americas) will be paused, date tbc.

Brief mention of special task forces as in the past e.g. Arsenic, Lead. Perhaps something to discuss in the long run, plenty to do for now. Worth keeping in mind for the strategy, particularly with linking into special issues for EGAH. The meeting closed at 17.30, people were thanked for their attendance.