

ASHG Member Forum & Business Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2019
Houston, TX

Item 1. Welcome

ASHG President Les Biesecker welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their interest in the Society. This meeting gives members the opportunity to provide feedback to Society leaders, improve member engagement, and ensure that the Society is providing value to members. We also recently launched a quarterly newsletter designed to inform and engage members, and are rebuilding our website, growing our social media feeds, and exploring other ways to interact with members.

Item 2. Approval of minutes from 2018 business meeting

The minutes from the 2018 business meeting in San Diego were approved.

Item 3. Moment of silence for recently deceased members

Dr. Biesecker asked the group to rise for a moment of silence in memory of ASHG members who had died since the 2018 meeting: Mary Carlin, Sir David Weatherall, Jay Ellison, Ranajit Chakraborty, Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Newton Morton, Brian K. Suarez, Samir Deeb, and Arno G. Motulsky.

It was requested that we add to the list George Stamatoyannopoulos, who passed away in June 2018.

Item 4. Updates and Achievements

Dr. Biesecker gave brief updates on highlights of the year.

- ASHG Annual Reports are on each table and highlight accomplishments of the year in more detail.
- *Annual Meeting*: Houston has been an unqualified success with over 8400 registrants.
- *Policy & Advocacy*: New Government and Public Advocacy Committee chaired by Lynn Jorde. Advocated on the Hill for NIH funding. Partnered with ACMG to oppose legislation on gene patenting. Working to engage members in advocacy, as well, and especially trainees. One great example was inviting trainees to participate in “Rally for Medical Research” Capitol Hill day, which was a big success.
- *Journal*: Bruce Korf played a major role in helping think through innovations in publishing and ASHG will be launching a new online, open access journal called HGG Advances. Brendan Lee is leading the search committee for an inaugural Editor in Chief and we look forward to those recommendations.
- *Diversity & Inclusion*: Launched new Human Genetics Scholars’ Initiative, in collaboration with NHGRI, to support early career researchers from underrepresented backgrounds. The first class is here in Houston. Also held our first Diversity reception with a room full of very positive and energetic attendees.

- *Strategic Plan:* The Board is tremendously excited about the new Strategic Plan, and its very positive and ambitious vision for genetics and genomics research. The plan started with a lot of member input: last year's member survey, member discussions at last year's members forum, input from the attendees through polling, input from all committees, and several interviews with experts across the field. The Board met for two days to discuss directions and many possible priorities and voted unanimously in support of the plan. The Plan has four major areas of emphasis and we look forward to working on these in months and years to come:
 - Building out ASHG year-round programming, enabling us to serve members throughout the year
 - Engaging and serving members to support their own professional and career development
 - Increasing diversity across a range of areas in genetics and genomics research
 - Increasing public awareness and appreciation for genetics and genomics research

Item 5. Treasurer's Report

ASHG Treasurer Bruce Gelb reported that the state of the Society's finances is solid. ASHG had a very successful 2018 - 2019 fiscal year due to a very successful annual meeting and strong membership numbers. We also had strong revenue from AJHG, and we reinforced that in the last year with a very positive new contract. We are also investing in a new journal to advance scientific excellence and provide some flexibility as the publishing landscape continues to evolve.

ASHG also made a number of changes to have a more long-term plan that can withstand the winds of financial change. There are now two committees in this area: Finance and Audit as well as Investment Committee.

At this point Dr. Biesecker made a plea to members to consider donating to the society and thanking current financial supporters.

Item 6. Editorial Report

AJHG Editor-in-Chief Bruce Korf provided a quick update on the Journal's activities. It has been a busy year responding to both the fast pace of progress in the field as well as the equally fast pace of change in publishing. Journal submissions were slightly up this year and the journal's impact factor rose to 9.9. Working to get more trainees involved in the journal review process; this is a mentoring opportunity. The journal also saw lots of traction in publishing society statements. HGG Advances will launch next year; currently working on search for editor-in-chief. Will then form editorial board. Call for papers will be in the new year and first issue will be published in late spring, 2020.

Item 7. Questions and New Business

Dr. Biesecker asked the audience if there are any questions or new business. A question arose about emeritus membership. Kelly Ventura, sr. director of membership, explained that emeritus membership

is free for people that are retired and have been members for at least the past five years. They must pay \$60 to receive print copies of the journal. Another attendee commented that the Presidential Symposium is more interesting when there are a variety of viewpoints.

Following a last call for any questions from the audience, Dr. Biesecker thanked everyone for participating and called the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.