**Minutes – draft May 25, 2021**

NASCE Council Meeting 1

Friday May 21, 2021

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm, Eastern Standard Time

Virtual, NASCE 2021

Attendees: Kathleen Gilmour, Jean-Paul Paluzzi, John Chang, Hamid Habibi, Christopher Martyniuk, Marta Romano, Aurea Orozco, Rodolfo Cardenas, Pierre Deviche, Jim Carr, Angela Lange, Matt Vijayan, Cheryl Rosenfeld, Valérie Langlois, Maricela Luna, Yun-Bo Shi, Eugene Cheung, Farwa Sajadi

1. President’s welcome

The president Aurea Orozco Rivas welcomed everyone. She then went through the highlights of the past two years. Due to the pandemic created by COVID-19, many international meetings were cancelled including the in person biennial meeting of NASCE that would have taken place in Mexico. The executive and council decided to allow for continued collaboration the meeting for NASCE 2021 would be virtual. She thanked the Virtual Organizing Committee (VOC) for stepping forward to organize the meeting. She mentioned that throughout the world many meetings had to be postponed due to the pandemic and this makes this virtual meeting even more relevant. She noted that the virtual meeting was a very good initiative and one that she hopes will be a very good experience for everyone.

Aurea also mentioned that ICCE19 was postponed and will now be held in June 2022 in Sendai, Japan. NASCE will be sponsoring a symposium, chosen by the IFCES Program Committee at this international meeting called “Microbiome-gut-brain axis” which will be organized by Cheryl Rosenfeld. NASCE will also give some financial support (two registration fees) to Bob Dores and Matt Vijayan who will be running an all-day symposium on the “Stress Axis”.

Aurea mentioned that The Gorbman-Bern Memorial Lectureship for NASCE 2021 will be given by Angela Lange from University of Toronto Mississauga and The Gorbman-Bern New Independent Investigator Award will be given by Jan Mennigen from the University of Ottawa.

Aurea finished by welcoming Valérie Langlois, as the Vice-President/ President-elect who will start her term (2021-2023) at the end of the second council meeting.

1. Approval of minutes from the last NASCE Council meeting in Florida on May 24 and May 28, 2019 (minutes were attached to agenda)

Angela Lange (Secretary) indicated that the minutes of the last two council meetings were sent out with the meeting agenda. She asked for approval of the minutes. John Chang moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Yun-Bo Shi. There were no changes. Vote was called and the minutes were approved for both meetings.

1. Report of the Nominations Committee, Yun-Bo Shi (Chair and VP, NASCE)
   1. Introduction of newly elected officers and council members

Yun-Bo Shi indicated that the Nominations Committee was chaired by himself with membership of Carlos Arámburo (Mexico), Chun Peng (Canada), and Bob Dores (USA). Two elections were run. One was for Vice-President/President-elect and there were two nominees, Suraj Unniappan and Valérie Langlois. Valérie Langlois was the successful candidate.

There was also a vacancy for one member of council. The Nomination Committee took into account the membership from all three countries, i.e. USA, Canada and Mexico and determined that the vacancy should be filled by someone from Mexico. Only two nominations for council members from Mexico were received. One nominee declined after some consideration and Maricela Luna was acclaimed with unanimously support.

A second election was run to fill an unexpected vacancy of council. Two candidates were considered from the USA, i.e. Cunming Duan and Yong Zhu. An election was made and Cunming Duan was successful. His term will run from 2021-2025.

1. Report on the conference, NASCE 2021, Jean-Paul Paluzzi, Christopher Martyniuk and Maricela Luna (Co-Chairs VOC); Eugene Cheung, Farwa Sajadi, and Santiago M. Pech Pool (Trainee Advisory Committee)

Chris Martyniuk introduced all members of the organizing committee, including the co-chairs.

The virtual organizing committee (VOC) were thrilled with the number of abstracts, which was close to 110. Over 75% of the talks will be given by trainees; many of the normal sessions begin with a SOTA talk given by a trainee.

Chris commented that there are approximately 160 registrants. The VOC had originally planned three concurrent sessions but added a fourth session due to interest. Chris also highlighted other events at the meeting such as a trainee mixer, Picture a Scientist with EDI workshops, yoga, etc.

Chris noted that running a virtual meeting is very cost effective with some of the costs to date: Zoom, 4 licenses – $165US; Plenair Yoga - $220CDN; Picture a Scientist - $850 US. He also thanked Myriam Castonguay for help in production of the program as well as other help organizing the meeting.

Chris highlighted the invaluable help from the Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC). Eugene Cheung and Farwa Sajadi (TAC members) introduced themselves and indicated that they would have a brief session on networking and collaboration for trainees.

John Chang gave a huge thanks to the TAC for their work in organizing part of the program focused on trainees.

1. Report of NASCE Secretary (Angela Lange)

**Membership**

Membership fees this year were collected as registration for the NASCE 2021 Virtual meeting.

Membership collected 153 plus 11 lifetime members. Total approx. 164 (2019-2021 – 170 members)

**Conference Support to date**

*Directly from the NASCE funds we supported:*

Plaques for Gorbman-Bern awards - $272.40 USD

Picture a Scientist - $850.00 USD

Zoom license - $161.67 USD

Yoga – $229.95 CND

Myriam Castonguay for help organizing the meeting – $150 CDN

We will be supporting the Gorbman-Bern awardees with banquet tickets at the NASCE 2023 meeting and we will cover their registration.

Trainee awards for best talks – approx. $1000 (4 main awards, PDF long talk, Grad long talk; PDF short talk; grad short talk and honorable mentions in each category)

Louis J. Guillette, Jr. Graduate Student Award - $100

**NASCE Research Awards**  
Hannah Reynolds – October 2019 - $1000US  
Julie Robitaille - Feb 2020 - $1000US

**NASCE Finances:**

Balance of NASCE funds – May 21, 2021: $34,393.31 in bank account (of which $5281.80 belong to Louis Guillette award) and $10,039.80 in PayPal for a total of $44, 413.11

From account we have also paid the following:

Go Daddy Domains to host website- $341.24 CDN

State of Michigan fee to maintain NASCE as a nonprofit - $20 USD

The secretary called for questions.

John Chang wanted to discuss how much support NASCE will give to NASCE sponsored symposia at future ICCE meetings as per IFCES council decisions that each society constituting IFCES will provide one symposium at each subsequent ICCE meeting.

Discussion ensued on how much support would be reasonable for NASCE to provide. Council members also wanted NASCE to be recognized for their support of the symposium at the international meeting.

After much discussion, John Chang moved that NASCE council should consider supporting the NASCE sponsored symposium at the next ICCE meeting for up to four registration fees. Yun-Bo seconded. After much discussion the vote was called and the council voted unanimously to accept the motion.

1. Reports of NASCE Committees (Jean-Paul Paluzzi had to leave the meeting early so we moved his item forward)
   1. Communications Committee – Hamid Habibi

Hamid indicated that circumstances have not made it easy for him to oversee changes to the website and to set up social media. He asked that someone else take over this position.

Eugene Cheung (member of TAC) offered to help run social media for NASCE and to update the website. He indicated that this is the task he is currently doing for the Neuroendocrine Society. He would be happy to work with the communication committee.

It was suggested that Jean-Paul Paluzzi could take over this committee and work with Eugene Cheung and others to improve communication. Jean-Paul was not present since he had to leave but the council indicated that this would be discussed at the second council meeting.

* 1. Awards Committee – Jean-Paul Paluzzi

The Awards Committee had four nominations for the Gorbman-Bern Memorial Lectureship. Angela Lange was the successful nominee. For the Gorman-Bern New Independent Investigator Award, no nominations were received so they asked nominators from the previous cycle if they would let their nominations stand. Out of this process, Jan Mennigen was successful.

With regard to research awards, the committee did not receive any applications over the last two cycles due to COVID-19 and the inability to travel. However, Hannah Reynolds (Fall 2019) and Julie Robataille (Spring 2020) received $1000 each for the previous cycles.

The Awards Committee did not receive any applications for the Louis Guillette Jr. Graduate student award for the meeting so they will look at the abstracts and award the Louis Guillette award to someone in the field.

For this meeting the Awards Committee proposes to give one trainee award to one PDF giving a long talk (with one runner up) and to one graduate/undergrad student giving a long talk (with two runner ups). Similarly for the lightening talks, the Awards Committee proposes to give awards to one PDF (1 runner up) and one graduate/undergrad student (with 2 runner ups). There is a greater number of graduate/undergraduate talks so they would like to give the two runner up awards in each category.

* 1. Development Committee – Jim Carr

Jim Carr mentioned that some of the ideas such as running a silent auction at Queretaro had to be delayed since the meeting was delayed.

He indicated that the interest in a calendar for fall 2019 was not great and he did not get much response from members. He knows that a calendar should work and has worked well elsewhere. He was suggesting pictures of animals. He would like to try again this fall. NASCE will need to pay up front for the production and mailing of calendars but will recover money from the sale of the calendars that can go towards student scholarships.

1. Matters arising
   1. Discussion on bylaw changes to replace council members who may resign or unexpectedly pass away. (suggested bylaw changes highlighted below for discussion)

“4b) If the President should resign or ~~unexpectedly~~ pass away, the Vice-President shall accede to the Presidency, for the balance of the term; Council shall elect a new Vice-President from among its membership. If the Vice-President or Secretary-Treasurer should ~~die or~~ resign or pass away, the Council shall elect a new officer from among its members for the balance of the term(s).  If a council member should resign, pass away, or unexpectedly take up a position as an Officer (as per previous two sentences), the position will be left unfilled until the next scheduled election of councilor members.”

Aurea Orozco indicated that we had a council member resign unexpectedly and this made us realize that the bylaws did not cover the unexpected loss of a council member. The secretary discussed the suggested changes to the bylaws and then proposed a Motion to accept the bylaws as written above. The motion was seconded by Yun-Bo Shi. The vote was called and was unanimous in favor of the above changes to the bylaws.

Other business: Yun-Bo asked the council members to read the proposal for a new set of elected fellows of NASCE.

End of the meeting was called by Aurea Orozco.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89457334309>

**Minutes – Draft May 28, 2021**

NASCE Council Meeting 2

Friday May 28, 2021

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm, Eastern Standard Time

Virtual, NASCE 2021

Attendees: Kathleen Gilmour, Jean-Paul Paluzzi, John Chang, Hamid Habibi, Christopher Martyniuk, Aurea Orozco, Rodolfo Cardenas, Pierre Deviche, Jim Carr, Angela Lange, Matt Vijayan, Valérie Langlois, Maricela Luna, Yun-Bo Shi, Eugene Cheung, Farwa Sajadi

1. Formal appointment of new Officers and Council members (list attached)

The president, Aurea Orozco thanked outgoing members; Bob Dores for all the work he has done while on council and as a member of the Executive, and Suraj Unniappan for being on council.

She also thanked John Chang for all his work. He will become an ex-officio member of council until 2023.

She also welcomed incoming members;

Valérie Langlois – Vice-President/President-elect

Maricela Luna – Council member

Cunming Duan – Council member

Kathleen Hunt – SICB DCE Chair-elect term of 2020-2022, who joined last year.

1. Discussion of NASCE 2021 (Co-Chairs, Jean-Paul Paluzzi, Christopher Martyniuk and Maricela Luna); Eugene Cheung, Farwa Sajadi, and Santiago M. Pech Pool (Trainee Advisory Committee)

A short update was given by Chris Martyniuk on the conference. He indicated that it was a resounding success and had many trainee opportunities for networking and presenting their work. The VOC had expected far less interest in the conference, and were quite pleased with the outcome. There were some hiccups but nothing major. He gave thanks to chairs and everyone.

Jean-Paul Paluzzi also commented that the VOC decided to give more student/trainee awards than originally anticipated.

The VOC gave special thanks to Dan Buchholz for running Zoom, which was a big undertaking.

1. Discussion of site for NASCE 2023 in Mexico (Aurea Orozco Rivas)

Aurea Orozco went through some of the logistics for the next meeting which will take place in Queretaro, Mexico. This location was used in 2013 and things went well. It is a beautiful place. Things have not changed much since last time. The conference will be held at the campus. There have been some changes to the facilities. A variety of rooms of all sizes is available and will allow what is needed for the individual symposia and plenary talks.

Aurea thought that some of the events might be best held at the hotel, which will make it easier for the attendees. There is a second hotel that attendees can stay at which is 10 minute drive away. Most flights run regularly to Queretaro and Mexico City airports.

There was some discussion on the dates for the meeting and it was decided to book the meeting for May 21-25, 2023. It did not seem that any other meeting overlaps this time although the dates for CSZ have not yet been set.

John Chang indicated that Carlos Arámburo mentioned perhaps adding a virtual component to the meeting.

1. Discussion on establishing elected fellows of NASCE (Yun-Bo Shi) (discussion paper attached)

Yun-Bo Shi discussed his handout on establishing elected fellows of NASCE. He indicated that he had brought this proposal forward about six years ago without much interest. Many societies have elected fellows and Yun-Bo could not find any down side to having elected fellows in NASCE. Some discussion ensued on process, such as how the first group of fellows are elected, how many fellows a year should be elected, what the selection process will be, EDI should be part of the process, etc.

There was also some discussion on perhaps having a differential membership fee for elected fellows.

After much discussion Aurea called for a Poll. The question was “Do you think that NASCE, as a society should pursue setting up a category of Elected Fellows?” All voting members of council chose either Yes or No. The outcome was 78% in favor and 22% not in favor.

Action is for Yun-Bo Shi to set up a committee to work on the details about adding a category of elected fellows to NASCE. This committee should have members for all three countries and be diverse. This committee will bring a document to Council for discussion, approval and adoption.

1. Initiatives for the next two years
   1. Change of committee chairs - Jean-Paul Paluzzi moves to communication committee and Hamid Habibi to Awards committee. Eugene Cheung will work with Jean-Paul to develop a new website and improve social media.
   2. Discussion on calendar – Hamid Habibi thought that the calendar would be a useful initiative and suggested that perhaps it could contain not only photos of organisms but also people who work in the field. Hamid thought this would be like a historical document for people in the field within NASCE.

The council discussed this initiative and many thought that calendars would not be of interest to everyone but would be of interest to some NASCE members.

After much discussion and many suggestions, it was thought that there are two types of suggestions of items – 1) for fundraising and 2) for historical relevance and recognition.

Other items discussed were T-shirt’s from the meeting – this was considered a good idea and Jean-Paul was going to work with Jim Carr to determine how best to move this forward. The T-shirts could advertise the NASCE 2021 meeting using the logo and the cover page of the program and then advertise the upcoming conference in Mexico in 2023.

Other items were coffee mugs and caps with the NASCE logo. These were thought to be useful.

Some discussion on other ideas for the calendar and other swag. Ideas centered around those for marketing, fundraising and recognizing researchers.

* 1. Trainee Advisory Committee initiatives:

Eugene Cheung and Farwa Sajadi suggested some initiatives:

They would like to develop a program for trainees which would include some virtual workshops, seminar series, “A no stupid question panel”, etc.

“A no stupid question panel” would be helpful for new trainees to ask questions of others who are more experienced. This could be virtual and might even be a good workshop at the next NASCE meeting in Mexico.

They also suggested sessions that would run between the biennial conferences. Two years is a long time and it would be good to build community for the trainees.

Also suggested was a newsletter either monthly or every two months or a speaker series which is run virtually. They also suggested sponsoring trainees to travel and go to different labs but this would need to wait until post pandemic.

The TAC was asked to discuss these initiatives amongst themselves and to bring forward any initiatives that they want to follow through.

1. Other business

No other business.

1. Passing the baton to the new president

Aurea Orozco passed on the role of President to Yun-Bo Shi and wished him the best. Yun-Bo said a few words of welcome and the meeting was ended.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89564086151>