

36th Annual Gibbs Conference on Biothermodynamics

Minutes: Business Meeting, October 3, 2022

Touch of Nature Environmental Center

Officers: Aaron Lucius, President; Jim Horn, President-Elect; Liskin Swint-Kruse, Past-President; Aron Fenton, Treasurer; Andrew Herr, Secretary

Long-Term Board Members: Vince LiCata, Madeline Shea

Current Organizers: Aaron Lucius & Jim Horn

Other Past Organizers in Attendance: David Bain, Brian Baker, Doug Barrick, Sarah Bondos, Jannette Carey, Clay Clark, Patricia Clark, Jim Cole, Jack Correia, Trevor Creamer, David Draper, Nick Fitzkee, Karen Fleming, Ernie Fuentes, Roberto Galletto, Karen Lewis, Tim Lohman, Luis Marky, Scott Showalter, Steve Whitten

Conference Volunteers in Attendance: Hui-Ting Li, Clarissa Durie, Justin Miller, Kurt Piepenbrink, Tonya Zeczycki

1. Call to Order: Aaron Lucius

2. Summary of the new organizational structure for planning the Gibbs meeting: Aaron Lucius

Aaron Lucius described the new committee structure, briefly gave an overview of the charge of each committee and explained that the President and President-Elect will work with the two Gibbs37 Organizers and the committees to organize the upcoming meeting. A handout describing the charge of each new committee and the term of the committee members was handed out to all in attendance. The list of committees is as follows: Fundraising Committee, Speaker Nominating Committee, Local Arrangements/Lodging, Poster Committee, Saturday Night Thermo, Program Book Committee, Presentation Logistics Committee, Webmasters for Society Site and Annual Conference Site, and Sharepoint Gurus for Microsoft Teams Group. The organizers have sent out a web survey to all committee members who helped organize Gibbs36 to get feedback that will be presented to the Board. There was some discussion about challenges with fundraising; a suggestion was also made that we may need to revisit the level of support that we request from sponsors, given that the amounts we request have not been adjusted for inflation for several years.

3. Report from the Gibbs36 Organizers: Aaron Lucius & Jim Horn

Jim Horn presented an overview of statistics from the meeting. Compared to our last in-person Gibbs meetings (2017 & 2018), the number of applications were comparable. There were 207 registrants, with 7 unpicked badges, indicating we were right on target with 200 participants. The fees were the same as in prior in-person years: \$250 for PIs, \$200 for postdocs, and \$175 for students, with all first-time in-person student attendees charged \$75 less thanks to support from the Timasheff fund (77 first-time students qualified). There were 96 participating labs, which is an increase from the past two in-person meetings. Six vendors were scheduled to attend. According to registration information, there were 76 PIs, 9 industry scientists, 25 postdocs, 85 grad students, and 16 undergrad/post-bac students, and 5 Other (Instructor, staff scientist, etc). This year there were two international students from Slovenia and Lithuania. There were 12 PI talks (6 male, 6 female), 14 trainee talks (7 male, 7 female), and 117 posters. A total of 47 institutions were represented in the poster sessions. There were 13 sponsors of the meeting, and all companies that promised support followed through after reminder emails. A total of \$7300 was raised, similar to the 2018 meeting. In addition to companies, we are grateful for donations from Jim Lee and Jack Correia toward the Timasheff Fund and from Madeline Shea for Gibbs36 swag items. A total of 21 faculty and 15 trainees served as committee

volunteers, along with several individuals who played an important role in overseeing online resources such as the Society website, Jotform, and Paypal transactions.

4. Report from the Organizers of Saturday Night Thermo: Vince LiCata & Karen Lewis

Vince LiCata and Karen Lewis reported that there were ~85 attendees for both parts (Flash talks and career panel), compared to 91 trainees who registered. Both sessions were very lively, with a lot of questions. For the career panel, Sarah Bondos, Lauren Porter, and Adam Zmyslowski talked about their experiences in careers outside of the typical academic path. Karen L. pointed out that trainee participation had been rather hit-or-miss over the past couple of years when the meeting was online, so it was great to see the trainees so engaged in person. All 3 panelists were able to talk about their experiences at Gibbs, and perhaps it is a good idea for the future to encourage student volunteers to focus their nominations for the career panel on people who have attended Gibbs.

Conference Volunteers were dismissed for the Closed Meeting portion of the agenda.

5. Financial Report: Aron Fenton

Aron Fenton provided a printout of the financial report for all former organizers. There were several challenges this year due to changes with TON personnel, particularly since the person who was hired to replace Alan Teska was fired just before we started planning Gibbs36. By that point we had already gotten quotes, but very little of the detailed planning info was transferred when she left TON. Aron F. pointed out that TON wants to provide more of the meals, but they were unable to handle the number of people who would be attending, so they ended up doing the pizza for SNT only. Thus, it is a bit hard to directly compare food costs from year to year. Another change this year was that we had several additional costs to try to avoid the risk of Gibbs36 becoming a COVID super-spreader event. We made several changes to be safer, including the rental of tents, use of disposable plates, etc, so we paid approximately \$8000 extra for COVID-related costs. There was a lot of positive feedback about the tents, so we may want to continue renting those in the future. Aron F. felt that the increase due to inflation was reasonable, but if we do decide to continue renting tents, we will need to charge more per person for registration. He thought the fundraising committee did a great job reaching out and lining up new donors. Overall, the totals look good at the end of Gibbs36.

There were questions from former organizers about the printing costs that had gone up considerably compared to previous meetings. Madeline Shea agreed and said that's why the program book committee put 2 poster abstracts per page to bring the total cost down to ~\$6000. Several organizers suggested not printing a book in the future and using a downloadable PDF file. However, there are some concerns about how private the abstracts would be a digital copy could be downloaded (and easily shared). That is a major reason why we did not use a downloadable PDF version this year. It was suggested that we could set up a password-protected site for downloads, but some people still may not want their info in a digital format. Madeline suggested that we get feedback from trainees before making any decision, since a lot of them like to look through the abstracts in their cabins to plan which posters to visit.

6. Call for nominations for Gibbs37 organizers & organizing committee members: Jim Horn

There were nominations for 8 individuals to serve as Gibbs37 organizers; of these, 3 had indicated to board members that they were interested in being considered in the future but could not organize the meeting this next year. A vote was taken based on the 5 remaining nominees. Tonya Zeczycki and Krishna Mallella were elected as the new Organizers for Gibbs37. Congratulations!

7. Election of 2022 Officers: Jim Horn

Sarah Bondos and Nick Fitzkee were nominated for President-Elect. Sarah Bondos was elected as the next President-Elect. Congratulations!

A note was made of several upcoming transitions among Board members. Mike Johnson is stepping down as Vice President; he had handled all the legal actions needed to keep the Gibbs Society legitimate. Aron Fenton will be replacing Mike as VP. Karen Lewis will be taking over from Aron Fenton as Treasurer, and she will work with Aron through the end of the year to learn the ropes. Karen L. will need to be replaced as SNT organizer (after the meeting, Vince announced that Ana Maria Soto has agreed to serve with Vince as SNT Faculty Co-Organizer).

8. Items from the Floor: Jim Horn

Several items were brought up from the floor. There were comments that the projector was rather faint and that yellow/gray colors were washed out, and that the screen should be moved higher to ensure that people in the back of the room can see the bottom 20% of the screen. There were some issues with the microphones cutting out as well. The food this year was judged to be quite good. Aron Fenton pointed out that Crystal really caters to us very well and will purchase special items for people with dietary needs, and this is a strong reason to argue to keep using her rather than having TON cater all the food. The only food that TON did this year was the pizza for SNT, and several people heard that the pizza got very poor marks. Some people liked the beer truck, but Madeline pointed out that the vendors were not getting the foot traffic they wanted, which is a downside to having the beer truck. A final discussion was about vendors: first, whether there is any issue with our taking money from vendors whose instruments aren't very good. There was some concern that it may give the appearance that the Gibbs Society is promoting the company, but others felt that having a vendor at Gibbs is not giving them an endorsement. Finally, there was discussion about how much support we are asking of vendors, and that our current rates are a real bargain, since the amounts have not changed for 10-20 years. There was general consensus that it would be very reasonable for us to increase the amounts we ask for from vendors.