



California Chapter SWCS

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MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING January 19, 2007

A teleconference/meeting of the Executive Council of the California Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society was called to order by President Mark Steffek at 10:10 a.m. on Friday, January 19, 2007, with the following Executive Council Members present: Dave Rose, President-Elect; Hank Wyman, Past President; Pat Grover, Secretary; Walt Bunter, Treasurer; Kristen Hughes, Ken Trott, and Tina Vander Hoek, Council Directors. Unable to participate were Council Directors Steve Perkins and Bruce Williams, and Student Representative Richelle Leggett. A quorum was present. Also participating was Paul Laustsen, Communications Committee Chair.

It was moved by Wyman, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2006, Executive Council teleconference/meeting, as distributed.

Treasurer Bunter had emailed to Council Members a preliminary 2006 Annual Financial Report as of January 19, 2007. The balance of all funds on January 1, 2006, was \$41,525.04 and total income received to date for the period of 1/1/06 to 12/31/06 is \$10,838.92, an increase of \$136.69 since the 12/13/06 report, as a result of November interest earned from various accounts. However, bank statements showing the amount of December interest earned have not yet been received. No new expenses were incurred during the period of 1/1/06 to 12/31/06, so that total remains \$10,302.12. The balance of all funds on December 31, 2006, as of today, is \$42,061.84. Bunter will finalize the 2006 Annual Financial Report following receipt of December bank statements. Although Bunter had emailed to Council Members a Fiscal Year 2007 report as of January 19th, he had nothing to add at this time as there had been no income or expenses recorded. It was moved by Rose, seconded, and passed to accept the financial report.

The following Chapter Committee Reports were made during the meeting:

➤ Annual Conference – Rose, Chair

Rose reported that he has not yet had the opportunity to develop the program for the Conference, which will be held May 2-4, 2007, in Sacramento, but believes Ladi Asgill is working on the Sustainable Agriculture workshop. In addition, Rose would like to provide technical training that is applicable outside of NRCS. Grover reviewed the meeting rooms reserved in the agreement with the Holiday Inn Sacramento NorthEast. The Conference Site Committee has been invited to visit the facility; Rose will advise Grover when he will be in Davis – possibly the week of January 26th. Regarding scheduling CPESC and CPSWQ exams as part of the Conference, Bunter pointed out that they are being offered on the last day of the Western Chapter of the International Erosion Control Association Conference (WCIECA) being held in Reno next month. He will check to see if WCIECA thinks the exams are needed at the SWCS Conference and, also, if WCIECA would be interested in making a presentation at the Conference. Other conference details discussed were the need for a theme, whether or not to have a poster session, and options in the registration fee. It was agreed by general consent to sponsor a poster session and Wyman volunteered to again chair the committee. He will ask Trott, who had left the meeting, to join him, making the same team that had handled the poster session at last year's conference. Bunter emphasized the need to get the information out and recommended working with *RUNOFF* Editor Wendy Rash to include it in the next issue of the newsletter, the deadline for which is the end of the month. A suggestion was made by Laustsen to include a one-year's membership in SWCS in the registration fee for non-SWCS members. A motion by Bunter to table this suggestion until the registration fees are established was agreed to by general consent.

- Awards – Phil Hogan, Chair
Hogan was unable to participate. In his absence, Steffek, who is a member of the committee, reported that an announcement regarding submitting nominees for Chapter awards, with a description of each category, will be sent out. Grover suggested including the information in the next issue of the newsletter.
- Bylaws – Mike Simmons, Chair
Simmons was unable to participate. Bunter reported he had submitted to Simmons suggested revisions of sections of the California Chapter Bylaws affected by the proposed merger with the Nevada Chapter; he had not yet received a response. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be included in the Annual Meeting notice, 60 days in advance of the meeting.
- Communications – Paul Laustsen, Chair
Laustsen is incorporating ideas he received from Past President Rich Casale into the Communications Plan, and will forward them to Bunter to post on the Chapter website. He also volunteered to serve on the Annual Conference Committee. The subject of the Chapter, which is a non-profit organization, selling SWCS logo items was again discussed. According to the parent society it is OK, but Laustsen is looking at other options as suggested by Casale; Steffek will investigate SWCS logo items. Laustsen also reported he had recently completed some data-base training which included the use of fillable forms such as could be used in a membership survey. Past President Erik Beardsley has forwarded previous Chapter membership surveys to Laustsen and Asgill.
- Financial Oversight (Audit) – Trott, Chair
Trott had left the meeting, but had reported earlier that Wyman would send him his schedule and they will set up a meeting by the end of the month, as required.
- Membership – Andrea Casey, Chair
Casey was unable to participate, but sent President Steffek a report stating that the Chapter had gained three new members; however, five members' membership had been terminated. Steffek will send letters to the new members and call those whose membership had been terminated.
- Nominations – Wyman, Chair
Wyman reported the committee had taken no action to date. Other members of the committee are Past Presidents Kay Joy Barge and Jason Jackson and Asgill. The committee will meet and submit the nominations for a vote by 60 days prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- Professional Development – Phil Hogan, Chair
Hogan was unable to participate. Steffek reported he had received a reply to the announcement of the parent society's scholarships from Past President Mike Singer, who voiced a concern that the amount of these scholarships was not being increased to meet the current needs of the intended applicants. Steffek will follow-up on this concern with SWCS. Further action on this issue will be considered under the proper order of business.
- Scholarship – Vander Hoek, Chair
Vander Hoek reported she had only received three applications by last Tuesday (the due date was January 15th) and asked if the deadline should be extended. Since there are three, Wyman expressed the opinion it would be more complicated to extend the deadline than just to consider those that have been received. Grover suggested considering late applicants, but with the fact they were late indicated on the application. It was moved by Bunter, seconded, and passed to accept scholarship applications through January 31, 2007, with late applications so noted. According to Vander Hoek, the committee will review and rank the applications before bringing a recommendation to the Executive Council during the March teleconference/meeting.
- Student Representative – Leggett
Leggett was unable to participate. Regarding SWCS participation at Cal Poly's Winter Job Fair on 2/7&8/2007, Steffek will follow-up with in NRCS Human Resources Specialist Tonya Robles in an attempt to find out who will be representing USDA, which has already agreed to participate.

Unfinished business items discussed and/or transacted during the meeting were as follows:

- California and Nevada Chapters Partnership –
Steffek and Cub Wolfe, Nevada Chapter interim president, prepared and sent a letter to members of the Nevada Chapter regarding this issue. The secretary of the California Chapter received ten positive replies by the revised deadline of January 12, 2007; in addition, the letter stated that a “no reply” would be interpreted as a positive response. One reply in support of the proposal was received from a California Chapter member (Laustsen). Steffek announced that, based on these results, the merger can move forward. He will work with SWCS West Regional Representative Don Wysocki regarding following the proper procedure and notifying National Headquarters. Steffek will also work with Wolfe and discuss financial issues, such as National holding Nevada’s dues check(s) until the merger has been completed, as suggested by Bunter.
- NACD Annual Conference –
An invitation had been received from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to participate in its 2007 Annual Conference, which is being held in Los Angeles, 2/4-8/07, with a display. Steffek had not followed up on other less expensive means of participating such as putting a SWCS brochure into Conference registrants’ bags at a cost of \$150 with the Chapter providing 1000 copies, but will do so. Laustsen, who will be attending the Conference supporting the NRCS booth, offered, if needed, to assist with any SWCS participation. If a decision by the Executive Council regarding expenditure of funds is necessary, members agreed to an email vote.
- California Chapter 2007 Farm Bill Statement –
Hughes has sent information to Steffek that can be used in developing a Chapter 2007 Farm Bill Statement. According to Hughes, it should keep the focus on soil and water in California, which produces many agriculture products, and support NRCS staff. Steffek will put the information he has received together and send it to a committee of Trott, Hughes, Rose, and Asgill to develop a Statement for Executive Council review.

The following New Business was brought before the Executive Council during the meeting:

- 2007 Chapter Reports –
The 2007 Chapter Core and Outstanding Chapter Reports are due February 15, 2007. Bunter will prepare drafts of the reports, with the exception of the narrative which is required for the Outstanding Chapter Report and is prepared by the president, and send them to the Executive Council for review. Following concurrence by the Executive Council, Grover will submit the reports to the SWCS Headquarters.
- 2007 SWCS Scholarships –
Steffek proposed introducing a resolution at the SWCS International Conference, July 21-25, 2007, in Tampa, Florida, regarding the amounts of the two scholarships that are available to members of SWCS who want to pursue higher education and professional development. Current amounts are \$1300 and up to \$1500, and the concern is that these amounts have not kept up with the cost of higher education. Steffek appointed Scholarship Chairman Vander Hoek to research this issue regarding how these amounts are determined through Wysocki.
- SWCS Journals –
Bunter reported that, with the exception of three issues, 30 years’ of copies (since 1977) of the Journal are located in the California Chapter Archives and asked what we should do with them. Several suggestions were made, i.e., donate to schools and/or libraries. According to Laustsen, 1996 copies forward are available on a CD. Steffek suggested Bunter check with SWCS Headquarters in Ankeny, Iowa, for suggestions.

The next Executive Council Meeting/Teleconference was scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, February 23, 2007. Due to the retirement of Grover from NRCS, Steffek will arrange the teleconference and advise participants.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

PATRICIA GROVER, SECRETARY

MARK STEFFEK, PRESIDENT