



California Chapter SWCS

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MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

April 6, 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 10:05 a.m. on Friday, April 6, 2007, with the following Executive Council Members present: Dave Rose, President-Elect; Hank Wyman, Past President; Pat Grover, Secretary; Walt Bunter, Treasurer; and Tina Vander Hoek, Council Director. Unable to participate were Council Directors Kristen Hughes, Steve Perkins, Ken Trott, and Bruce Williams; and Student Representative Richelle Leggett. A quorum was present. Also participating were Andrea Casey and Paul Laustsen, chairs of the Membership and Communications Committees, respectively.

It was moved by Bunter, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2007, Executive Council teleconference/meeting, as distributed.

Treasurer Bunter had emailed to Council Members a Fiscal Year 2007 report as of April 6, 2007. The balance of all funds on January 1, 2007, was \$42,179.04. Total income received between 1/1/07 and 4/06/07 totaled \$780.80, an increase of \$623.85 since the 2/23/07 report as a result of interest from various accounts, \$444.05 from dues, and \$48.20 reimbursement from SWCS headquarters for shipping six boxes to it containing old copies of the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation. Expenses during the period of 1/1/07 and 4/06/07 totaled \$720.37, an increase of \$516.45 since the 2/23/07 report, which included the costs of preparing and mailing the Conference agenda, proposed bylaws amendments, and the election ballots; purchasing awards certificates and plaques; and shipping of the six boxes to SWCS. The balance of all funds on April 6, 2007, is \$42,239.47. It was moved by Rose, seconded, and passed to accept the financial report.

The following correspondence received was noted by the Secretary:

- Email from Shelly Lassiter, SWCS West Region Professional Development Representative, regarding Professional Development Activities and a 'booklet' highlighting chapter professional development activity, which the committee is going to attempt to put together and have available at SWCS International Meeting in July.
- Letter from Kristen J. Hughes, Virginia Staff Scientist, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, regarding her resignation as a Director for the Executive Council of the California Soil and Water Conservation Society.
- Email from Donna Hopwood, Florida Chapter, 2007 SWCS Silent Auction Chair, regarding the Silent Auction and requesting donations for the auction.

Correspondence requiring action was taken up under the proper order of business.

The following Chapter Committee Reports were made during the meeting:

➤ Annual Conference – Rose, Chair

The theme of the conference, which will be held May 2-4, 2007, in Sacramento is *Creative Conservation in Action*, and will include a tour on Wednesday afternoon. Bunter reported he has reserved a 48-passenger bus, at a cost of \$860 plus a \$60 gratuity and dinner. The bus will be available at noon for a 12:30 p.m. departure and return at approximately 8:45 p.m.; snacks and beverages will be provided on the bus. Concluding the tour will be dinner at the Yolo Land and Cattle Company. An inquiry from Tour Coordinator Wendy Rash about providing entertainment as well as beer and wine at the dinner was referred to the Conference Committee. Grover reported that the special rate for the block of rooms at the Holiday Inn Northeast has been extended through Friday, April 20, 2007.

Adjustments have been made to the Conference agenda with the addition of CPESC training being offered on Wednesday, May 2nd, and CPSWQ training, on Thursday, May 3rd, followed by the CPESC and CPSWQ exams on Friday, May 4th. Bunter will order the manuals needed. He has received a request to lower the fee to take the exams only from \$75 to \$50. It was moved by Wyman, seconded, and passed to stick with the prevailing rate except when the registrant if re-taking the exams, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An inquiry regarding a one-day rate for Thursday has been received by Bunter. It was moved by Bunter, seconded, and passed to set a one-day rate for Thursday, which includes the luncheon, at \$100. It was also agreed by general consent that the registration fee for NRCS employees whose registration is paid by the Agency will be the early-bird rate of \$175.

Rose reported that there may need to be an adjustment of the speakers for the Conference and will advise Laustsen, who is preparing a press release, of any changes. Bunter asked about gifts for the speakers. It was agreed by general consent to give each speaker an engraved pen and pencil set as was done last year. Rose will determine the number needed and request Diane Abbott Blohm to order them as she did in 2006. According to Steffek, SWCS West Regional Representative Don Wysocki is unable to attend the conference. Wyman reported there will be no poster session on Thursday as planned. It was agreed by general consent that, in place of the poster session, the Executive Council will sponsor a reception with a no-host bar, during which the silent auction and opportunity drawing for the Scholarship Fund will take place. Scholarship Chair Vander Hoek will send an email requesting donations.

- Awards – Phil Hogan, Chair
Hogan was unable to participate. In his absence, Steffek, who is a member of the committee, reported a total of nine nominations had been made for Chapter awards in the different categories. Hogan has ordered the plaques and members of the committee will complete the certificates and prepare the awards program.
- Bylaws – Mike Simmons, Chair
Simmons was unable to participate, but Steffek reported that Bunter had mailed to every member a copy of the proposed amended bylaws, which will be presented for a vote at the Chapter's Annual Business meeting on Thursday, May 3, 2007.
- Communications – Paul Laustsen, Chair
Laustsen reported he is updating last year's Annual Conference news release for the 2007 Conference. Regarding ordering shirts with the SWCS logo, he announced that 100 shirts would cost \$2000 with prices varying depending on size. Steffek added that these promotional items could be available at the Annual Conference and then posted on the Chapter's website. In response to Rose's question on the amount of increase in price if less number of shirts is ordered, Laustsen pointed out that the issue is the cost of the set-up fee such as designing, stitching, etc. Action on this item was delayed until new business.
- Financial Oversight (Audit) – Trott, Chair
Trott was unable to participate; no report.
- Membership – Andrea Casey, Chair
Casey reported that letters are ready to go to the Chapter's six "lost members," which Steffek will send. According to Steffek, the California Chapter currently has 172 members. Casey plans to work with Corinne Brooks, West Region Representative on the SWCS Membership Committee, in organizing a membership drive for the California Chapter.
- Nominations – Wyman, Chair
Steffek reported that Bunter had submitted ballots to the entire Chapter membership for vote, with a deadline of April 23, 2007, to return ballots to the Chapter Secretary. President Steffek will appoint a committee of Anita Brown, Charles Davis, and Jim Kocsis to count the ballots prior to the Annual Conference. In the meantime, Grover and Bunter are collecting, but not opening as they are candidates on the ballot, the returned ballot envelopes and will forward them to the Chairman of the committee when advised by Steffek.
- Professional Development – Phil Hogan, Chair
Hogan was unable to participate; no report.
- Scholarship – Vander Hoek, Chair
Vander Hoek reported that the committee recommends that Carlos Velasquez, geography and environmental studies major at UCLA, be awarded the 2007 scholarship. In an effort to encourage the recipient's attendance at the Annual Conference, where he would be awarded the scholarship, it was moved by Rose, seconded, and passed that, if he attends, to reimburse him \$250 in travel expenses and waive the registration fee. It was moved by Wyman, seconded, and passed to accept Carlos Velasquez as the 2007 Scholarship Award recipient.
- Student Representative – Leggett was unable to participate; no report.

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

- Professional Development Scholarships –
As a result of a conference call with SWCS West Regional Representative Don Wysocki and Steffek, Vander Hoek reported that Wysocki will look into the two scholarships that are available to members of SWCS who want to pursue higher education and professional development. According to Wysocki, the current amounts of \$1300 and up to \$1500 are probably based on interest earned on the principal invested. He will discuss this issue at an up-coming SWCS Strategic Planning Meeting and recommended holding off on submitting an issue paper or resolution this year as the Chapter had discussed.
- California and Nevada Chapters Merger –
Steffek contacted SWCS West Regional Representative Wysocki regarding following the proper procedure for notifying National Headquarters about the proposed merger. Wysocki advised Steffek that no formal letter to SWCS is necessary.
- California Chapter 2007 Farm Bill Statement –
Steffek reported he had sent copies of the California Chapter 2007 Farm Bill Statement to the entire California Congressional Delegation – 52 representatives and two senators. He also thanked Trott for the language he provided in the development of the statement.
- 2007 House of Delegates –
SWCS has requested the name of the Chapter's delegate to the 2007 House of Delegates meeting by April 27, 2007. Steffek has advised SueAnn Lynes that, according to our Bylaws, the President-Elect is our delegate and currently, that is David Rose. However, a new President-Elect will be elected in April, and SWCS will be advised as soon as the name of that person is determined.

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

- SWCS Embroidered Clothing –
It was moved by Bunter, seconded, and passed to authorize Laustsen, at his discretion, to order 50 items, if the price is reasonable, to have for sale at the Annual Conference. Laustsen will also have pre-order forms available, and agreed to oversee the sale of the items.
- Professional Development Request –
Steffek will provide Lassiter with a paragraph or two outlining each activity that the California Chapter has hosted in the past year or two for consideration of inclusion in the West Region section of the booklet highlighting chapter professional development activity.
- Resignation of Kristen Hughes –
It was moved by Rose, seconded, and passed to accept the resignation, with regret, of Kristen Hughes as a Director of the California Chapter of SWCS. Steffek will send her a letter.
- Appointment of Director to Fill Vacant Position –
With the resignation of Hughes, who had only completed one year of her two-year term, according to the Chapter Bylaws, the Chapter Executive Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment. It was moved by Wyman, seconded, and passed that the Executive Council make a decision regarding filling this position at the Executive Council meeting scheduled for Friday, May 4, 2007.
- Request for 2007 SWCS Silent Auction Donation –
It was moved by Bunter, seconded, and passed to authorize both Steffek and Rose to spend up to \$50.00 each on a item to take to the SWCS International Meeting in July and donate it for the silent auction. It was suggested that the items be reflective of the California-Nevada Chapter.
- Reimbursement of Executive Council Members –
It was moved by Wyman, seconded, and passed to reimburse those members of the Executive Council, including the Student Representative, who are not supported by agencies or businesses, up to \$500 for expenses incurred by attending the 2007 California Chapter Annual Conference. During discussion of this motion, it was pointed out that this has been the policy of the Chapter in the past.

The next regular meeting of the Executive Council is scheduled for 7:00 a.m. on Friday, May 4, 2007. This will be a breakfast meeting on the final day of the Annual Conference. However, a special meeting/teleconference to address any issues or concerns regarding the Annual Conference was scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Monday, April 23, 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

PATRICIA GROVER, SECRETARY

MARK STEFFEK, PRESIDENT