

The Geochemical Society

Minutes of the 1998 Board of Directors Annual Meeting

The meeting was convened at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Toulouse, France, August 29, 1998, and came to order at 1:20 PM

Present: Mike Drake (President), Mike Hochella (Vice President), Dave Wesolowski (Secretary), Ross Taylor (International Secretary), Scott McLennan (Special Publications Editor), Mike Lewan (OGD Chair), Alex Halliday (Past President), Sue Brantley (Director), Jochen Hoefs (Director), Al Hofmann (Director), Everett Shock (Director), Lynn Walter (Director), Lee Mobley (GS Business Manager), Mabel Peterson (GCA Manuscript Manager), Jacques Schott (8th V.M. Goldschmidt Conference Organizing Committee), Stein Jacobsen (9th V.M. Goldschmidt Conference Organizing Committee), Hubert Staudigel (representing GERM electronic journal proposal committee).

Current and Future Goldschmidt Conferences:

Jacques Schott reported on final preparations for the 8th V.M. Goldschmidt Conference (Aug. 30-Sept. 3), indicating that although the response was somewhat overwhelming (nearly 1,000 participants!), the organizing committee was delighted and ready to offer an exciting meeting. Stein Jacobsen reported on planning for the next Conference in Boston (Aug. 22-27, 1999), and the first circular was distributed in Toulouse. Keith O'Nions was not present to discuss planning for the 2000 Conference in Oxford, UK, but reports indicate that it is well in hand. Mike Hochella presented a proposal for the 2001 Conference to be organized by himself and Bob Bodnar of Virginia Tech and sited in Roanoke, Virginia, USA. The proposal was favorably received by the Board. Tentative future sites might include a joint Conference with ICOG in Switzerland, and a Pacific Rim venue.

Report of the Business Manager:

Lee Mobley reported that the society experienced a modest drop in regular professional members, which was more than offset by significant increases in student members and professional members in the Organic Geochemistry Division of the GS. A significant drop in professional subscriptions to *Geochimica* was partially offset by a large increase in student subscriptions. Lee indicated that she had received a number of

inquiries about the possibility of developing a student division of the GS, and an announcement inviting suggestions is listed elsewhere in this newsletter. The 1999 dues and GCA subscription rates were set at \$25 and \$122 for professionals, and \$5 and \$45 for students. It is the intention of the Board to seek ways in which future increases in the price of subscription to GCA can be held to a minimum.

Geochimica Editorial Office Report:

Mabel Peterson, GCA Manuscript Manager, read a report from Executive Editor, Karl Turekian, which indicated that GCA is in excellent shape and functioning smoothly with the new Editorial Advisory Board. The review time and revision time for new manuscripts is averaging about 3 months each, and the rejection rate has increased somewhat, to about 50%, in line with some other top earth science journals. The number of pages printed in 1998 will decrease slightly from last year. Two special issues of the journal, dedicated to Claude Allègre and Werner Stumm, will appear in the near future. Karl took this occasion to announce that he would not continue as Editor beyond the end of his current term (December 31, 1999), but would maintain an editorial office at Yale into 2000 to help with the transition to a new Editor.

Treasurer's Report:

Don Elthon was unable to attend the meeting, but his report indicates that the GS's revenue, consisting of member dues, royalties from institutional subscriptions to GCA, and interest on investments, exceeds our current expenditures by a comfortable margin, and that selected new ventures can be entertained. Our current reserves after expenses, are approximately \$530K, and the Society will initiate a more aggressive investment policy in order to generate a flow of returns that will enable even more services to members and the scientific community.

Secretary's Report:

Dave Wesolowski summarized Board actions taken subsequent to last year's meeting, which included: approval of Dave Wesolowski as Secretary, Scott Wood as Special Publications Editor, and Everett Shock and Vala Ragnarsdottir as Directors for the period 1999–2001 (these candidates have subsequently been approved by the GS membership); granting of the Business Office Management contract to Lee Mobley; extension of the web site coordinator's contract with Mark Bloom; approval of a new Special

Publication dedicated to the career of Francis R. (Joe) Boyd; authorization of a student travel grant for the Toulouse Goldschmidt Conference of \$10K; approval of Everett Shock and Susan W. Kieffer as the 1998 Gast and Ingerson Lecturers.

International Secretary's Report:

Ross Taylor will serve as GS representative to the International Geological Congress in Rio de Janeiro in 2000. Approximately six symposia will be co-sponsored by the Society, and we will be sole sponsors of a symposium on the Evolution of the Atmosphere, Hydrosphere and Lithosphere. Taylor will take an active role in identifying opportunities for the GS to foster geochemical meetings outside Europe and North America.

Proposal for an electronic database journal:

Hubert Staudigel presented a proposal formulated by a subset of the scientists involved in establishing the Geochemical Earth Reference Model (GERM), for the creation of an all-electronic publication geared toward archival and peer-review of large geochemical databases and other material that does not fit well in standard geochemical hardcopy journals. Several other institutions and organizations are being approached for start-up funds as well. The Board requested a more detailed proposal, specifying the dollar amount requested from the GS, how our web site coordinator's activities might mesh with this effort, how the publication would be managed and archived in the future, and several other issues.

Joint Publications Committee Report:

JPC Chairman Frank Podosek was not present, but the Board discussed his report, which included the JPC's plans for seeking a replacement for Karl Turekian as Executive Editor of GCA (see ad elsewhere in this issue). The report also describes the efforts of the JPC to address concerns raised by a number of geochemists about the new editorial policies of GCA. The JPC is supportive of the new policies and also satisfied with certain adjustments that were made, including the addition of an aqueous geochemist (Terry Seward) to the Editorial Advisory Board.

Board Internal Communications:

Much of the Board's communications are now done via email. It has become increasingly difficult to conduct business without flooding individuals with messages, and accidentally broadcasting personal comments. A very

restrictive protocol, involving the Secretary as point contact, proved unwieldy. A new approach involving self-discipline, but free interaction among Board members will now be tried.

Proposal for Joint MSA/GS Reviews Series:

Mike Hochella presented a proposal, previously approved in principle by the Mineralogical Society of America Council, for the replacement of the highly successful "Reviews in Mineralogy" series, with a jointly-sponsored publication "Reviews in Mineralogy and Geochemistry". The Board approved the preparation of a formal merger contract, with a target date of 2000. Scott Wood is proposed as the Executive Editor of the GS contributions to this series, and Managing Editors of the joint publication will be Paul Ribbe and Jodi Junta Rosso.

Patterson Medal:

Alex Halliday proposed that, due to the large number of outstanding candidates identified for the first Clair C. Patterson Award in environmental geochemistry, the award be granted annually, rather than biennially as originally planned. The Board approved this proposal and a call for 1999 medallists is included elsewhere in this issue.

GS Web Site and Newsletter:

Mark Bloom (web site coordinator) and Neil Sturchio (newsletter editor) were not present at this meeting, but progress reports on their activities were reviewed by the Board. The web site is rapidly developing into a highly useful resource for members, the scientific community, and the general public. The newsletter, which is now distributed quarterly, continues to generate many positive comments and is playing a vital role in bringing the geochemical community together. Both of these individuals enthusiastically encourage the participation of GS members in the development of these services. Monitors and developers are badly needed for the web site discussion groups and database projects, and the newsletter needs material in the form of short articles, announcements, letters to the editor, and items of general interest to the community.

Miscellaneous Items:

The Board approved a recommendation to the European Association for Geochemistry that the two Societies institute a cap on the number of new joint Geochemistry Fellows of approximately 10 individuals per year, in order to preserve the stature of the title.