

## **CNSORG.ORG Board Meetings Minutes 2010**

### Meeting #1: July 24, 2010 in San Antonio, Texas, USA

Erik De Schutter called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm on Saturday July 24th, 2010 at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel in San Antonio. The following board members were in attendance:, and each described their role on the board:

Erik De Schutter, president  
Carmen Canavier, secretary and vice president, sponsorship chair  
Klaus Obermayer, vice president  
Frances Skinner, treasurer  
Avrama Blackwell, travel award chair  
Ingo Bojak, webmaster (nonlocal matters)  
Alex Dimitrov, workshop organizer  
Erik Fransen, CNS 2011 local organizer and webmaster for local meeting items  
Brian Mulloney, tutorials organizer  
Tay Netoff, outreach  
Astrid Prinz, assistant travel award chair  
Patrick Roberts, assistant workshop organizer  
Nathan Schultheiss, postdoc representative  
Charlie Wilson, CNS 2010 local organizer

Ex officio:

Past President: Ranu Jung

Past Vice President: Dieter Jaeger

CNS 2010 Program Chairman: Don Johnson

Also in attendance were Yuan Liu (NINDS) and Dennis Glanzman (NIMH)

Carmen Canavier announced that Astrid Prinz had been unanimously elected as Program Chair to replace Don Johnson.

Erik De Schutter described the current status of OCNS as a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization with a board whose only function is to organize the annual CNS meeting. Then he discussed his vision for the future of OCNS, specifically that he saw the scope of the OCNS mission as ripe for expansion by becoming a member society. He discussed the potential for affiliation with other entities with similar interests, for example other meetings such as COSYNE, NIPS, ICANN, SIAM Life Sciences meeting and the INCF Congress of Neuroinformatics, the summer courses in Computational Neuroscience, and the Journal of Computational Neuroscience. An association management company might provide a permanent secretariat with some centralization of function and assistance to

local organizers. The main benefit that he described was to provide a true society that was representative of and accountable to people who self-identify as computational neuroscientists sufficiently to become dues-paying members.

Erik then asked the board members to go around the room and give their thoughts on this subject. There were concerns about the specifics of the implementation that came down to the need for a specific business plan on what benefits will be offered the members and what they will be charged. A consensus emerged that there was indeed a need for such a society, and that OCNS was the logical choice to provide this level of leadership to the community. There were concerns that the targeted community is fragmented and that a strategy was needed to reach out to other groups. One issue that emerged was whether to initiate the move to a membership-based society alone or whether to reach out to other groups first. Yuan Liu had some specific suggestions such as reaching out to mentors of attendees as members and to increase our outreach by putting links on the OCNS website to tutorial content.

Brian Mulloney moved that OCNS become a membership-based society. Ranu Jung seconded. The measure passed unanimously by show of hands.

A committee was formed to draft the necessary bylaws changes and formulate a business plan including benefits and incentives for members, and costs of association management. Erik De Schutter, Carmen Canavier, Alex Dimitrov, volunteered for the committee with Ranu Jung and Frances Skinner as consultants. The goal is to present a plan to the full board by email. An extra board meeting at the annual SFN meeting in San Diego was discussed with the idea of pressing forward with this agenda as soon as possible.

Brian Mulloney moved to authorize Erik De Schutter to negotiate with Springer and other organizations on behalf of the board. Avrama Blackwell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by show of hands.

We next discussed the planning of future OCNS meetings. Erik Fransen reported on the status of planning for the 2011 meeting in Stockholm. Astrid Prinz offered to send Erik a spreadsheet that automatically regenerates budget versions as estimated of projected attendees are revised, as requested by Erik De Schutter. Erik De Schutter noted that we need to be proactive regarding applications to host the 2012 meeting and requested that Jonathan Rubin or Tim Lewis be contacted by the next board meeting on Monday July 26 2010 regarding possible coordination with the 2012 SIAM Life Sciences meeting.

Frances Skinner presented the budget. Brian Mulloney moved to approve the budget<sup>1</sup>. Ingo Bojak seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by show of hands.

Erik De Schutter moved that we elect Victoria Booth as Treasurer beginning Jan 1 2011 for a three year term. Ingo Bojak seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by show of hands.

Avrama Blackwell requested that we keep in mind that she will be rotating off in a year, and that she no longer has a backup to train since Astrid Prinz will be program chair instead of travel award chair.

Erik De Shutter pointed out that we need to replace board members who are rotating off or who have accepted other responsibilities: Ingo Bojak, Frances Chance, Astrid Prinz Emilio Salinas and Patrick Roberts. The following three people were suggested as candidates: Axel Hutt, Markus Diesmann, and Jeanette H. Kotaleski.

Erik De Schutter agreed to contact these people to determine whether they would be willing to serve, and to announce at the general meeting that we request volunteers to be considered as board members.

Finally, Erik De Schutter asked for thoughts on how the transition to a member society should be handled. A consensus emerged that the logical approach was to maintain continuity via a gradual transition in which each individual remained in their position on the board and executive committee until they rotated off, and at that time they be replaced by an election in which all dues-paying members can vote. It was also suggested that provisions be inserted into the bylaws that board directors, in order to remain on the board, are required to attend board meetings, as long as they are announced well in advance, unless there are valid extenuating circumstances.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 pm.

#### Meeting #2: July 26, 2010 in San Antonio, Texas, USA

In attendance: Erik De Schutter, Carmen Canavier, Frances Skinner, Avrama Blackwell, Dieter Jaeger, Ranu Jung, Klaus Obermayer, Victoria Booth, Patrick Roberts, Ingo Bojak, Astrid Prinz, Tay Netoff, Erik Fransen, Jonathan Rubin (outreach), Alex Dimitrov, and Charlie Wilson.

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<sup>1</sup> After the meeting Erik De Schutter moved that Brian Mulloney be OCNS agent of record. The move was seconded by Carmen Canavier. The board voted electronically and the motion passed by 11 votes 'yes' and two abstained.

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm.

The approval of the minutes from the previous meeting was deferred. Erik De Schutter moved to extend Ranu Jung's ex officio status on the executive committee as past president until January 1, 2012. Erik explained that this would enable us to keep the mailing address of OCNS fixed as a practical matter until the transition to the member society model is complete. Frances Skinner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ranu Jung brought up the possibility of establishing a memorial fund for people who had been active in OCNS, like Susan Wearne and Phil Ulinski. Possible uses for these funds would be student awards or memorial lectures or prizes. As an action item, Erik will announce the intent to establish a memorial fund and assign an incoming board member to work out the details, such as establishing guidelines, adding the appropriate content to the web page, and tracking any memorial funds separately. Frances Skinner moved to establish a memorial fund, Ingo Bojak seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Next Erik revisited the suggestion of holding an OCNS board meeting at the SFN meeting in San Diego. It was agreed that we would meet before the Computational Neuroscience social at a time to be announced later. An action item is to advertise CNS2011 at the social.

Erik moved to offer Volker Steuber, Marcus Diesmann, Jeanette Kotaleski, and Axel Hutt positions as OCNS board members. Frances Skinner seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Erik noted that although we had five open positions on the board, filling four of them kept us above the minimum number stipulated in the bylaws. Erik will assign tasks to the new board members to replace duties vacated by outgoing board members, plus the organization of the new memorial fund. There was some discussion about whether webmasters were required, or whether the board should interact directly with the subcontractor, Academic Webpages. There was also some discussion about the best person to maintain the google docs system, and whether it was the appropriate system to use. A consensus emerged that the person replacing Frances Chance in charge of google docs should be someone who uses it regularly. A need for an assistant workshop organizer and an assistant travel award chair was noted.

Erik brought up a concern that the coordination between the board and the local meeting organizers could be improved, and suggested we do this by adding a nonvoting ex officio member to the board as meeting liaison. The duties of the liaison include interfacing between the board and local organizers, writing up detailed guidelines for running the local meeting, and ensuring that the local organizers meet appropriate milestones throughout the preceding year. Frances Skinner moved that the liaison position be created as an officer on the executive committee and that Udo Ernst be appointed to this position for a three year term. Avrama Blackwell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jonathan Rubin was asked about coordination with the 2012 meeting of the SIAM Life Sciences, and he replied that Tim Lewis is the contact person, and that currently San Francisco was a strong contender for the meeting venue. Jonathan noted that SIAM is somewhat inflexible regarding meeting organization, so a loosely interleaved strategy might be best with joint registration but separate organization.

The final agenda item was a report by Erik Fransen on the status of meeting organization for CNS2011 in Stockholm. An action item was to coordinate with the program committee and apply to the Swedish Research Council for support for invited speakers.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.

In addition a number of electronic consultations of the Board were held on which is briefly reported below.

Electronic consultation started on October 15, 2010 and ended October 19, 2010

Proposal to make the Journal of Computational Neuroscience the official society journal of OCNS as specified in a contract with Springer Science+Business Media, LLC to be signed by the President.

Fourteen board members agreed, none disagreed or abstained.

Electronic consultation started on November 13, 2010 and ended November 19, 2010

Proposal to hold the CNS\*2012 meeting in Atlanta/Decatur, USA with Ron Calabrese as the local organizer.

Twelve board members agreed, none disagreed or abstained.

Electronic consultation started on November 23, 2010 and ended November 29, 2010

Based on a suggestion from Terry Sejnowski that a new, international member-based society for computational neuroscience be founded with which OCNS can collaborate, and to keep OCNS as it is now: an organization only dedicated to organizing the annual CNS meeting, Erik De Schutter proposed that: “we delay the plan to transform OCNS in a member based society and for CNS\*2011 we will keep the current system (including the professional services we currently use) in place. The journal deal with Springer will also be put on hold. At the Board meeting in Stockholm we will evaluate the progress that has been made towards an international society for computational neuroscience. If progress is being made we either delay further or definitely cancel our transformation plans. If no progress has been made, we reactivate our plans with a roll-out of the member-based OCNS in 2012.” There was a consensus that we should aim at forming a widely accepted computational neuroscience organization with a broad basis. Some felt that a short delay in achieving a broad-based membership was worth having a broad-based unified computational neuroscience community, although there was some concern about who would step up to organize this society. However, the majority felt that the best strategy is for OCNS to move to a member-based society first and reach out to Cosyne, INCF, NIPS, ICANN, the Bernstein network, Cognitive and Neural Systems and other relevant bodies afterwards. Nine board members agreed with the proposal, nine disagreed and one abstained.

Electronic consultation started on December 9, 2010 and ended Dec. 16, 2010

Proposal to hold the CNS\*2013 meeting in Paris. There was some concern about holding it during Bastille Day. Eleven board members agreed, one disagreed and none abstained.