



**SERMACS Inc. Board Meeting Minutes**  
**23 October 23, 2019**  
**Savannah, GA**

I. Call to Order (Jordan Poler) 8:00 AM

The meeting was called to order by SERMACS Inc. Chair, Jordan Poler at 8:00 AM on Wednesday October 23, 2019 at Savannah Marriott, Ballroom D, in Savannah Georgia.

ATTENDANCE (New method utilizing Google web form and QR code): Executive Committee.; Jordan Poler (Carolina Piedmont, Chair); Will Lynch (Coastal Georgia Section, SERMACS 2019); Marc ter Horst (North Carolina Section, Past Chair); Chris Bannochie (Savannah River, SERMACS 2018, Chair-Elect); Tad Whiteside (Savannah River); Herman Holt, Jr. (Western Carolinas)

Regional Board:

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>District</b>
Elizabeth	Walters	Eastern North Carolina
Starleetah	Gaddis	N/A
John	Struss	Tampa Bay
Linda	De la Garza	Southwest Georgia Local Section
Anne	Gorden	Auburn
John	Engelman	Northeast Tennessee
Christopher	Chouinard	Orlando
Rigoberto	Hernandez	Georgia / ACS BOD
Xinyu	Zhang	Auburn local section
TAMMARA	ESTES	Louisiana
Bommanna	Loganathan	Kentucky Lake
Tracy	Hamilton	Alabama
Amanda	Coffman	Wilson Dam Local Section
Stacy	Hutchison	Carolina piedmont
Marilynn	Sikes	Carolina-Piedmont
Ajay	Mallia	Georgia
Brent	Feske	Coastal georgia
Bryan	Wakefield	South Carolina
Katherine	Glasgow	North Carolina
Zachary	Davis	Western Carolinas

Meeting minutes from 2018 were distributed and reviewed. The meeting minutes were approved with editorial corrections.

II. Chair's Report (Jordan Poler)

Chair Poler stated “The Region is strong.” He believes the SERMACS is the best ever region now and will be moving forward. Several sections in the region are ChemLuminary Award nominees and winners. These accomplishments should be celebrated on the webpage.

SERMACS 2017 (Charlotte) was a recent ChemLuminary Award winner. The Georgia Section and Savannah River Section were recognized for being excellent sections.

Chair Poler would like to see the section broaden its base of membership with younger leaders (anecdotally), suggesting we need to consider adding new blood to the section to broaden the cohort.

Chair Poler provided a look ahead regarding new business including bylaws updates to discuss including meetings ending in ‘5’, audit committees, and registration fees to name a few.

Chair Poler provided early recognition for Tad Whiteside (Treasurer) for his years of service to SERMACS, Inc. (since 2011) and Savannah River Section. Tad will be further recognized at the Awards Luncheon as outgoing Treasurer.

Finding members of the local organizing committee (LOC) is difficult. The Board should be better at keeping people in the loop.

### III. 2024 Bid

- a) District I has priority, but did not bid. Bid is now open to the floor.
- b) While both 2024 and 2025 bids can be presented in 2020, District II presented a bid in 2019 for 2024. Chair-elect Bannochie mentioned that it is always good to have a bid prepared if you are thinking of hosting SERMACS. By-laws provide preference as ordered in the by-laws, but not to an unreasonable bid by a preferred district.

Ajay Mallia (Georgia Section) presented the bid for Atlanta, GA. This date, 2024 is better for them as Atlanta will host the ACS National Meeting in 2021 and 2026.

Proposed venue: Loews

Potential Chair: Mallia or Heather Lyon

Other positions included potential volunteers as well.

A motion to approve this bid was provided, seconded and approved for District II (Georgia Section) to host SERMACS 2024 in Atlanta.

SERMACS 2024 should finalize their list of core officers and provide their update by SERMACS 2020.

#### IV. Meeting Status Reports

##### a) 2018 Savannah River Section (Chris Bannochie)

- Bannochie recognized the team and their efforts for SERMACS 2018.
- There are still some updates incoming.
- Bannochie provided a presentation to review SERMACS 2018 highlights.  
Conference space was on one level, while the EXPO was on the level below.  
There were several promotions provided to the attendees.  
Fundraising targets were met.  
Some data included:  
There were 1596 attendees; 86 oral sessions, 15 poster sessions; 506 total posters of which 356 were undergraduate; 44 Expo booths and 34 grad school booths;  
There were several workshops offered.  
Net revenue was around \$66,775, where over \$13K went to SERMACS Inc.  
It was suggested this was an “average” meeting looking at the data including revenue Bannochie presented that covered several years.  
The presentation showed the variety of networking and well-being activities that were at the meeting. Some of these included Tai Chi and yoga in the early morning, Career Day, Flags of the 15 countries represented, Local Section recognizing 70 year member, and national historic landmark and presentation.
- There was a question from the floor regarding their ‘multiplier’ (attendees to paper ratio) which was noted as ‘1.4’ for Augusta 2018.

##### b) 2019 Coastal Georgia Section, Savannah, GA (Will Lynch)

- Meeting attendees was estimated at 1555 at the time of the meeting presentation.
- The multiplier was very helpful in planning budget for the 2019 meeting. Lynch recommended caution be taken when drawing up the attendee numbers. Their multiplier was off from 2018’s by approximately 0.15, which equates to approximately 200 attendees.
- Venue size was a concern of the meeting committee. Rooms were in use 24/7 with no spare rooms throughout the meeting.
- SERMACS 2019 decided to include the ACS Lounge in the meeting offerings rather than the traditional ACS Store. Lynch found that the Lounge worked out well and

did a great job planning and executing and thus it was very popular. There were about 3-4 events in the Lounge per day.

- Related to the ACS Store, less than 5 total inquiries were made about the absence of the ACS Store to staff. Perhaps having some version of an on-line store through the Lounge would be a future best practice.
- The Marriott block of rooms were sold out quickly. The organizing committee came back to the Marriott to get more room blocks. Totaled about 1000 room nights.
- The organizing committee approached the Hilton property for overflow (nearby to Marriott), but price negotiations were not reasonable as such, SERMACS did not provide extra hotel space.
- Savannah budget was about the same as Augusta's.
- Blue Chip Pipe and Drape; Audio Visual did a great job and kept under \$40K.
- Food and beverage target was \$40K and should make it by meetings end.
- Savannah must use the Sunday to Wednesday format due to hotel availability and cost.
- There were 1449 submitted abstracts. There were 77 invited half day sessions; 23 contributed half-day sessions; poster numbers not available at this time of the meeting.
- Organizer developed slotting to help everyone "get what they want".
- Attention was paid to having undergraduates on Sunday/Monday in effort to maximize student and academic success.
- Sponsorship was linked to the sessions, e.g. \$500 sponsorship reward for 5 invited non-undergraduate symposium. Total sponsorship included \$47K plus \$48K match.
- Lynch stated that Brianne and Starleetah (ACS) did a great job supporting the meeting. They helped with the Marriott contract and helping to understand hotel contracts.
- Commentary from the floor: Members should work with ACS and the hotel in preparing a future bid for SERMACS.
- ACS said that there is a task force looking at meetings.
- Marriott and Hilton are/were not required to be the preferred SERMACS valued venue.

c) 2020 Joint with SWRM, New Orleans (Tamara Estes; Sean Hickey in absentia)

- It was noted that Sean Hickey took a position at Wayne State University, but is still officially the Chair. In his absence, they've developed a four-person steering committee that is meeting weekly.
- Dates will be Wednesday October 14 through Saturday October 17, 2020.
- The meeting will be at the Hilton Riverside @ \$189/night. Starleetah and Carleen provided a site visit and worked on the contract.

- The current committee is working on the SERMACS2020 website. The website not being up was noted as a deficiency. It was suggested that websites be up 2-3 years in advance.
- A 4-star restaurant was secured for the awards.
- It was recommended that the SERMACS Board work with ACTIVE local chapter members.
- The budget for 2020 was reviewed.
- Most of the budget was as presented previously.  
Food and Beverage expected to be about \$80,000  
Profit expected to be about \$75,000  
Planning on 1550 registrants at the following registration costs: \$200 members, early; \$250 late registrants; \$75 undergrad; \$125 grad.  
High registration fees were again called into question.  
Additional discussion occurred stemming from this concern such as:
  - Undergraduate registration fee should be smaller (Savannah \$60).
  - Early registration for graduate students is the same as on-site, whereas undergraduate registration goes up by \$25 (\$75→\$100) respectively
  - Low to reasonable K-12 teacher registration costs should be considered as well.
  - Members from the floor suggested that ACS has a schedule that can be used as a reference/guide when considering registration fees.
  - Also, it is more important for the meeting to be successful. The section does not need to make a fortune. To help ensure a successful meeting, the vice-chair needs support and guidance.
  - Chair Poler expressed concern that this budget approval is past due by a year and is also not approved by the Southwest Region. Approval by the Southwest section is desired in El Paso, TX which will consist of 2020 SERMACS Inc. Chair Bannochie in attendance as well.
  - There was motion to not approve this budget (Piedmont, Georgia seconded)
  - Treasurer Whiteside suggested the budget can be approved with adjustments
  - Chair-elect Bannochie reminded us that we are approving the liability, which turned out to be \$12K. There was a motion and second to approve an amended budget to present to the Southwest Region. Motion passed unanimously.
  - The Board recommended that the planning committee to rethink these concerns that were addressed and come back to the Board.

d) 2021 Alabama (Tracy Hamilton) sermacs2021@gmail.com

- Hamilton presented the planning update for SERMACS 2021 themed “Chemistry in the Magic City”.
- SERMACS 2021 will take place November 10-13, 2021 at the Sheraton Birmingham (contracted)

- These dates include Veterans Day, where K-12 teachers are expected to have a four-day weekend.
- There are 810 room nights, at \$149 single and \$10 parking. There is a Westin (non-contract) a stone's throw away.
- MOU is signed.
- PSAV is the audio visual supplier.
- Composition of the Board is filled out top to bottom. General and Program Chairs include: Tracy Hamilton, General Chair; Anne Gorden and David Dixon, Program co-Chairs.
- Hamilton expressed and presented the conservative approach they took to develop their budget and planning.  
Planning on 1500 attendees, where 1200 is the break-even point.  
There will be about \$167K revenue from registration (which includes 'Family' plan) and \$229 total revenue  
Budgeting \$34K for Food and Beverage (F&B).  
Ice Cream Social was seen in the budget and it was suggested by the SERMAC Board that this event should be ACS National cost as a 'Governance Event'.  
Net revenue was suggested at \$35K with 20% to SERMACS, Inc.  
It was recommended by the Board, despite the conservative approach, that attendance should be lowered and sponsorships should be raised.
- There was a motion to approve the budget and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

e) 2022 San Juan, Puerto Rico (Ingrid Montes)

- Montes presented the highlights of SERMACS in Puerto Rico.
- SERMACS 2022 will be October 19-22, 2022 at Puerto Rico Convention Center.
- Sheraton and Hyatt are walking distance from the convention center; There are 1260 room nights (950 Sheraton/310 Hyatt). Montes welcomed assistance from ACS regarding working with the convention center and hotels.
- The meeting logo was provided and it is symbolic to emphasize goals in chemistry sustainable development.
- The desire to be as successful in 2022 as in 2009 was expressed by Montes.
- The local organizing committee chairs have been identified and committed. There are several active chemistry clubs that will collaborate with the organizing committee.
- There are strong relationships with the local section chapters of Latin America as well as chemical sciences chapter, AAAS Caribbean Division. Proud and excited to have a strong Latino culture present at SERMACS 2022.
- The budget presented a revenue projected at \$143,500, with a net revenue projected at \$35K with 20% to SERMACS.  
The amount proposed for expo booths was \$350. There was concern from the board, with a suggestion to raise this amount (\$400 Charlotte 2017).  
The Convention Bureau has committed to \$15K.

- They are waiting for the domain for the website.
- They are working on a keynote speaker.
- The technical program is being planned as usual.
- The Chemistry Festival and outreach event will be on Friday.

f) 2023 North Carolina (Marc ter Horst)

- Ter Horst informed the Steering Committee that he was stepping aside to allow Katherine Glasgow to be General Chair.
- To date, the section is working with Starleetah to secure a location. The anticipated Raleigh Convention Center is not willing to contract this far out. They are checking out venues in north Durham that will provide shops/entertainment within walking distance from the meeting venue, such as the Hilton.

V. Treasurer's Report – Tad Whiteside (Savannah River)

- Treasurer Whiteside provided a comprehensive report, along with strategies and future goals for Board consideration, including reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint related to these meetings.
- The projected budget for 2020 is \$199,892.99.
- There was an amount of \$13,355 paid by SERMACS 2018
- Loans were made for future SERMACS meetings.
- The backup loss budget was increased to \$68,750.
- Whitesides presented how Board can better serve the region, including meeting support and emissions off-set proposal.

a) support travel to national meetings (of relevance to the southeast region) to promote SERMACS. There was value found by those who traveled to the national meeting to promote SERMACS. Tammy (SERMACS 2020) should have a booth at National ACS meeting in Philadelphia.

b) proposed the use of a telepresence robot to help support those steering committee members from traveling long distances to SERMACS for the steering committee meeting which also helps to off-set carbon dioxide emissions.

- The budget for 2020, despite being 'red' was unanimously passed after a motion to approve and use the proposed 2020 budget as a starting point for the next Treasurer.

VI. Chair Elect's Report – Chris Bannochie (Savannah River)

- Chair-Elect Bannochie expressed concern for the joint meeting. He will meet with them in El Paso in the very near future, especially since Sean Hickey moving to Wayne State University.
- There was also a concern expressed for SERMACS 2030.

VII. Immediate Past Chair's Report – Marc ter Horst (North Carolina)

- No Report

VIII. Secretary's Report – Herman Holt (Western Carolinas)

- No Report. Website update in new business.

IX. Elections

- Nomination and selection of 2020 Chair-Elect, which begins after the SERMACS Board meeting.

Two nominees included: Ajay Mallia (Georgia) and Brent Feske (Coastal Georgia)

Mallia and Feske presented their nomination statement.

Brent Feske was elected as chair elect of the Board by vote of the Board. (15-5, confidential vote).

- Nominations and selection of Secretary for 2020-2022 , which begins after the SERMACS Board meeting.

Two nominees included: Herman Holt (incumbent, Western Carolinas) and Tyler Kinner (Georgia).

Holt presented his nomination statement. Kinner's bio was presented ***In absentia.***

Herman Holt was elected as Secretary of the Board by vote of the committee.

- Nominations and selection of Treasurer for 2020-2022, which begins after the SERMACS Board meeting.

Nominee included: John Larese (East Tennessee).

John Larese's bio provided ahead off the meeting.

John Larese was elected as Treasurer of the board by unanimous vote of the committee.

- Chair-Elect for 2021 (Chair 2022) to be elected in New Orleans



X. Old Business

- Website

New website up and running so presenters to the Board should provide their presentations to Jordan Poler.

- A recommendation from the floor included having a public relations person to promote SERMACS and the southeast region
- A recommendation from the floor included there be regional meeting support and development coordination between regional and national.
- MOU discussion

MOU requirements are not in the By Laws, but should be. ACS representatives engaged in this discussion.

ACS suggested that all contracts **should permit\_\_\_\_\_**.

- By-Laws

Joint meeting ending in '5' provided an involved general discussion. There was a proposal for an open bid for these years and such language should go into the ByLaws. For the sake of time, there was a motion to take up the language in the By Laws by the appropriate committee members (Poler, Feske, Holt). Motion and second, approved unanimously.

There was a consideration to remove all gender pronouns from all documents. It was noted that there are no gender specific pronouns in the current By Laws.

**Reminder: The by-laws state the Awards Committee is a three person committee, composed of a variety of possibilities, which includes Executive Committee members, General Chairs of the past present and future meetings and disignees from the current meeting officers. The Awards committee was stated to be composed of: Board Past Chair, Board Chair-Elect and Current meeting**

XI. New Business

- An ad hoc committee will form to discuss social media, website management, etc.
- An audit subcommittee was discussed and put into play/action. The by-laws state the Audit Subcommittee is to be composed of Chair and Past-Chair.
- ACS (Starleetah)  
**noted something about SERMACS 2020**

She also discussed how the Office of Regional Meetings is taking initiative (and action) to remove paper contracts, since they are not compliant related to privacy

Regional Meeting Planning Committee (RMPC) (joint with Leadership Institute) update to dates: 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> are the new dates.

XII. Adjournment

Motion (and second) to Adjourn at 11:35 AM.

DRAFT