



**SERMACS Inc. Board Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2020
ZOOM Virtual Meeting**

I. Call to Order and Local Section Roll Call (Chris Bannochie) 8:00 AM

The meeting was called to order by SERMACS Inc. Chair, Bannochie at 8:00 AM on October 17 via ZOOM.

- **ATTENDANCE:** Executive Committee - Chris Bannochie (Savannah River, SERMACS Chair); Jordan Poler (Carolina Piedmont, Immediate Past-Chair); Will Lynch (Coastal Georgia Section, SERMACS 2019); John Larese (East Tennessee, Treasurer); Brent Feske (Coastal Georgia); Herman Holt, Jr. (Western Carolinas, Secretary) Tracy Hamilton (Alabama, SERMACS 2021).
- **Regional Board:**

First Name	Last Name	District
Starleetah	Gaddis	N/A
Al	Hazari	East Tennessee
Lillian	Frazier	East Tennessee
John	Engelman	Northeast Tennessee
Morgan	Ponder	Alabama
Catherine	Situma	Auburn
Sara	Johnson	Wilson Dam
Ingrid	Montes	Puerto Rico
Juan	Lopez-Garriga	Puerto Rico
Marie	Bourgeois	Tampa Bay
Christopher	Chouinard	Orlando
Michael	Hampton	Orlando
Michel	Johnson	Orlando
Titel	Jurca	Orlando
Duy	Le	Orlando
Van	Quach	Orlando
Carmen	Gauthier	Florida
Allan	Ford	Pensacola
Cliff	Padgett	Coastal Georgia
Ajay	Mallia	Georgia
Cheryl	Trusty	Georgia
Stephanie	Meyers	Augusta - Savannah River Section
Linda	Shimizu	South Carolina
Lynette	Watkins	Virginia
Rodney	Bennett	Central North Carolina
Mary Beth	Koza	North Carolina
Ruth	Hathaway	East Texas, Southwest Region
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II. Review of interim SERMACS Executive Committee actions since Savannah [8:15 – 8:30]

a. Elections

- Chair Bannochie indicated that we plan to continue with the current slate of officers since there was no 2020 meeting. The board voted unanimously to continue with the current slate of executive committee members:

Chair: Christopher Bannochie
Chair-Elect: Brent Feske
Immediate Past Chair: Jordan Poler
Secretary: Herman Holt
Treasurer: John Larese
Past Meeting (2019): Will Lynch
Current Meeting (2021): Tracy Hamilton

b. Awards Program

- Immediate Past Chair Poler provided an update to the awards; Nominations were received for the Teacher of the Year, Ann Nalley and P3 Awards.

It was decided to keep awards for the next meeting and thus all award nominations will still be in the hopper for 2021. The 2021 call for nominations will be added to the current group of nominations from 2020.

c. Memphis Section withdrawal from hosting 2025 Joint SE/SW Regional Meeting

- Memphis officially notified SERMACS, Inc. that they will not be bidding/hosting the joint Southeastern/Southwestern SERMACS 2025. Laura Wolf, ACS Memphis Section Chair, originally indicated on 9/12/2020 to ACS, and then on 10/9/2020 notified SERMACS, Inc. Chair Bannochie.

d. Steering Committee Concurrence Vote – 19 votes/unanimous (to maintain current slate of officers)

e. Merck Sponsorship MOU – (Bannochie)

- Chair Bannochie introduced a collaborative opportunity with Merck by way of a MOU for a two-year agreement where Merck would contribute \$5000 a year for the next two years, both in 2021 (Birmingham) and 2022 (Puerto Rico). This will make Merck a Gold-Level sponsor for each of the next two meetings. Merck is not expected to be the main meeting sponsor. This MOU will be revisited in 2022 for reconsideration for the years to follow. Merck has agreed to:

1) maintain a focus on diversity

- 2) organize a symposium for the SERMACS meeting and include a Merck speaker
- 3) sponsor a student breakfast and/or a diversity lunch
- 4) Merck participants will register for the meeting without additional discount

SERMACS, Inc. has agreed to:

- 1) display the Merck Logo on the SERMACS, Inc and the SERMACS meeting websites
- 2) provide a booth for Merch at the Career Expo and Grad School Fair
- 3) organize the breakfast and lunch sponsored by Merck

Discussion followed.

Board member Poler asked: *How does it show up in the profit line for the local section?* Chair Bannochie suggested we *Keep to the same mechanism.* Merck will provide \$5000 to SERMACS, Inc. and the treasurer will transfer the funds to the local section. Board member Larese commented, *This will keep it simpler for the bookkeeping.* It may be counted as part of the fundraising for the section for that meeting. This could increase the bottom profit line for the local section.

Board member Montes asked: *Is the breakfast covered by the \$5000?* There are many expenses associated with organizing the breakfast. Another comment (Poler) included, *We might normally find a sponsor on the breakfast.* Chair Bannochie commented, *The idea is that this would help to cover the breakfast, whereby the meeting section sets a ticket limit.*

It was suggested that we keep the MOU less prescriptive as we get this started. We will hopefully expand our opportunities with other partners.

The Board voted on accepting the MOU. The MOU was supported unanimously.

f. SERMACS, Inc. Historical meeting data

- Chair Bannochie presented data relative to the historical attendance and profits for each meeting. Profits have been around \$71K and attendance around 1600. In addition, Chair Bannochie noted that the 72nd meeting did NOT happen, thus the 72nd meeting will occur in 2021.

III. Bids for the 2025 Joint SE/SW Regional Meeting

a. Orlando Section [8:30 – 8:45]

Key Points included:

- Planning based on 2019 meeting of SERMACS Saturday October 18, 2025 starting the meeting on the 19th, going through mid-day Wednesday. K-12 will be a big component. Dining, social, and attractions were presented.
- Christopher Chouinard presented the Bid for Orlando for 2025 Joint SE/SW Regional Meeting. Key officers were presented. General Chair: Christopher Chouinard; Program Chair Titel Jurca; Exhibition Chair – Michel Johnson; Treasurer - Van Quach; Other key individuals were also named.
- Convention Center area was the focus, but there flexibility to host in other quarters of Orlando are possible. The meeting would not take place at the Convention Center, but a hotel as noted below. Support from Visit Orlando was noted. UCF home football game should not impact the meeting hotel vendors.
- Hotel rates were shown at \$269-281/night with about 350 rooms at each hotel Hyatt and Hilton respectively. The Hilton will be the focal point to host the meeting with appropriate ballroom space (3 ballrooms) and meeting room spaces.

Board questions regarding hotel contract language (Poler) was raised. It was noted (Gaddis) there is a difference with an 'Impossibility clause' vs. 'force majeure' clause (New Orleans). Impossibility clause is desired by ACS and is used for hotels for the Birmingham 2021 meeting.

b. Knoxville Section [8:45 – 9:00]

Key Points included:

- John Larese presented Knoxville as a centrally located site and noted that this might be the first student's meeting and should have a good networking space. Knoxville Convention Center provides that space for this meeting (Unified meeting space).
- November 5-8 2025 proposed for the meeting. Experienced team of volunteers. General co-Chairs noted as: Lillian Frazier and Gernot Rother and Program co-Chairs Michele Kidder and John Larese. Arlene G. for the Expo Chair; Kayla B. as Communication chair.
- Hotel rates are around \$100-150/night (but soar to \$300/night on football weekends). It was noted that there are about 11 hotels within walking distance to the Convention Center. Good location for socializing and

dining after the meeting, which provides opportunities within walking distance from the Convention Center.

- Other attractions were noted as options for things to do other than meeting. It was noted the affiliation of Oak Ridge and its significance to the centrality of chemical and scientific significance and discussion. Eastman would also be a supporting contributor along with other major companies in the area.

c. Discussion/Site Selection Vote [9:00 – 9-15]

- It was noted that this would be a joint meeting with the Southwest Region.
- Voting ensued (18 votes) and there were 12 for Orlando and 6 for Knoxville. Orlando wins the bid.
- Knoxville was encouraged to bid again for 2026 (Section II (Alabama/Auburn) has preference, but not likely to bid.

IV. Update from Upcoming SERMACS Meetings [9:15 – 9:55] 10 minutes each

a. 2021 – Birmingham, AL (Hamilton)

Key Points included:

- Wednesday November 10 – Saturday November 13, 2021
- Sheraton Birmingham – downtown; all meeting rooms included within the Sheraton. Co-hosted Auburn/Alabama sections.
- Local Organizing Committee is set.
- There will be four plenary talks (one geared towards undergraduates, protein crystal structures and medicinal on Saturday) and a radiochemistry talk Thursday, Suzanne Lapi (UAB Cyclotron). Technical meetings everyday. There are about 51 half-day sessions scheduled.
- Large K-12 programming and Undergraduates focused on the weekend. Veterans Day is Thursday November 11, 2021.
- Budget:

General Chair Hamilton took a conservative approach with the budget. Fundraising in budget was about \$15,000 and Merck contribution was not included in the budget proposal.

Proposed 1200 registrants. Registration fees held consistent with 2019. Advance registration rates for members \$185, Students \$60, K-12 \$30, Postdoc \$120.

Major expenses include space rental, AV, and food and drink.

Net - \$16,899

Revenue - \$217K (This is our liability amount)

The Board voted (unanimously) to accept the budget.

b. 2022 – San Juan, Puerto Rico (Montes)

Key Points included:

- October 19-22, 2022 “Chemistry Transcending Boundaries for a Sustainable Future”
- Goal is to have an outstanding meeting that is collaborative.
- Executive organizing committee is set with some additional volunteers identified. General Chair (Montes)
- Presented 17 sustainable development goals.
- Location:

Plan A: Convention Center

Plan B: Sheraton Hotel – space a bit more limited

Dates are booked for both places.

- Hotels include Sheraton (\$189/night) and Hyatt Place (about the same).
- Invited two Nobel Prize winners: Sir J. Fraser Stoddart and Frances Arnold. Their decision to attend is based on COVID.
- Budget:

Net: \$21,647

Expenses: \$260,000

Attendees: 1500

This number was suggested to be lower ~1300.

AV budget was low (~\$20K). The suggestion was to double the AV budget.

c. 2023 – North Carolina Section

Key Points included:

- General Chair Klasgow was not present, so Mary Beth Koza presented information as she understood it to be. Things on hold until January due to COVID. High level planning is ok, but hotel selection is on hold and no dates have been set yet.

Question from the board about hotels for this meeting came up.

Starleetah stated hosting meeting at Convention Center. Raleigh NC not contracting space so far out in advance. North Raleigh Hilton is also up for discussion as is the Marriott is up for proposals for the committee. Also looking at smaller space such as Residence Inn close to Convention center and Sheraton. Room peak nights too low, as Marriott wanted ~600 peak nights. Lowering peak night room rate numbers will be best for us, thinking how students might stay off-site. The 2012 numbers were shared with the bureau and there were some discrepancies identified that has caused some delays in negotiating. Hospitality industry will have to adjust how they do things in 2023 in allotting so much space up front.

North Carolina will be expected to present their budget in 2021 in Birmingham.

d. 2024 – Georgia Section (Mallia)

Key Points included:

- No dates set yet; no hotel yet until after the National ACS meeting
- Committee will be composed of:
 - General Chair – Mallia
 - Program Chair – Mark Mitchell
 - Treasurer – Holly Davis
 - Expo – jahai Soward and Stephanie Wofford
 - Webmaster – David Gottfried
 - Outreach – Laurel Royer and Manju Venugopal.

V. Officer Report

- Immediate Past Chair: (Poler)

IPC Poler indicated that he would remain the Awards Chair. He also indicated a need to have a Bylaws discussion soon.

- Chair-Elect: (Feske)

No report

- Treasurers report: (Larese)

\$8636.15 (Checking) as of October 15, 2020 (\$10,231.05 as of 12/31/2019)
\$65,516.08 (Savings) as of October 15, 2020 (\$66,797.19 as of 12/31/2019)

\$116,959.92 (Vanguard) as of September 30, 2020 (\$102,812.11 as of 12/31/2019)

*This report does not include \$22,000 from the Savannah meeting.

- Secretary: (Holt)

Website being worked on and approach to managing it is still in discussion.

VI. New Business [9:55 – 10:00]

- No new business presented

VII. Adjournment [10:00]

Meeting was adjourned approximately 10:37AM

DRAFT