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**Society for Technical Communication**

**Annual Business Meeting**

**Hyatt Regency Denver, Centennial Ballroom**

**6 May 2019, 5:00pm MDT**

# Call to Order

Ms Jane Wilson, STC President, called the meeting to order at 5:12pm MDT. Ms Wilson introduced the board members on-stage, parliamentarian, timekeepers and assistants.

# Credentials Report

*Ms Taylor moved that the list of checked-in delegates be the official roll of the voting members of the convention. The motion passed.*

127 members in attendance.

# Adoption of the Rules

Ms Wilson put the business rules to the gathering.

The rules for the meeting were adopted without objection from the membership.

# Agenda

* Call to Order Jane Wilson, President
* Credentials Report Kirsty Taylor, Secretary
* Adoption of Business Meeting Rules Lola M. Fehr, PRP, Parliamentarian
* Adoption of Business Meeting Agenda Jane Wilson
* President’s 2018-2019 Report Jane Wilson
* Treasurer’s 2018-2019 Report James Bousquet
* Introduction of Outgoing Board Jane Wilson
* Nominating Committee Report Alyssa Fox
* Installation of the 2019-2020 Officers Jane Wilson, Past President
* Incoming President’s remarks Ben Woelk, President
* Business from 2018 Annual Meeting Jane Wilson
* New Business Jane Wilson
* Adjournment Jane Wilson

# Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted without objection from the membership.

# President’s 2018-2019 Report

Ms Wilson gave a report on the activities in the past year.

The STC office has moved. A new SIG was launch in Autumn of 2018 to meet the needs of the growing area of health and medical writing. STC will be adding Practitioner level certification to our offerings later in 2019.

The new STC Roundtable offering has been launched this year. Fresh new content every week, curated by professionals in the technical communication field.

This has been a dynamic year of change and growth. Ms Wilson thanked all board members for their thoughtfulness and good humour. Ms Wilson thanked the STC staff. Ms Wilson thanked the STC membership for the gift of being on the STC board of directors. She looks forward to an even brighter future for STC.

# Treasurer’s 2018-2019 Report

Mr Bousquet presented the financial report for society operations in 2018.

Mr Bousquet reported that the audited financial statements for 2018 were accepted by the Board at its meeting on Wednesday, April 24, 2019. As part of the Society’s income tax submission, a summary financial report for the past year will be available for members on the STC website.

The Society ended the year with total assets of $687,067 and total liabilities of $1,047,215. Our investment portfolio balance was down at the end of 2018, due to market conditions at that time. We continue to work to reduce our overall deficit. However, after four consecutive years of reporting surpluses, in 2018 we experienced a deficit. We had projected an $18,345 surplus, and unfortunately, we missed that by approximately $210,000. The change in total net assets (restricted and unrestricted) was negative by $191,390. This brought our total net deficit for the year down to negative ($360,148).

Total unrestricted revenue for the year was reported as $1,714,647, which is less than the budgeted $2,053,655 by about $339,000. Total expenses were $1,882,599, which is better than the budgeted $2,027,310.

Thanks to effective cash flow management, no investment funds were used for cash-flow purposes.

During the year, the Society monitored and rebalanced the its investment portfolio to ensure that it maintained a conservative profile and aligned with the asset allocation for equities, fixed-income funds and cash equivalents specified in our updated Investment Policy.

The Society closed 2018 with $396,430 in total investments. The average return on our investments was negative 5.6% for the year, which was consistent with the broader market.

CEO Liz Pohland and the entire STC staff again deserve tremendous credit for their diligence in controlling expenses and creating operational efficiency. On the revenue side, over half of the shortfall is due directly to low membership dues revenue. Another quarter of the shortfall was from failure to achieve budgeted education program revenue. Facing similar potential challenges this year, we cannot return to solid financial ground solely by reducing expenses further. We are also moving to diversify and to grow revenue from existing and new educational offerings.

# Introduction of Outgoing Board

Ms Wilson introduced the 2018-2019 board members, and acknowledged the outgoing board members. Ms Wilson thanked Ms Fox for serving seven years on the board. Ms Wilson introduced those rolling off the board:

* Alyssa Fox, Immediate Past President
* Robert Perry, Director
* Jessie Mallory, Director

# Nominating Committee Report

Ms Alyssa Fox presented the nominating committee report on the 2019 society election.

Of 2,482 eligible voters, there were 402 votes cast, which is 16.2% of total voters. Votes were cast through a secure, third-party software, provided by Intelliscan, which certifies the election results are accurate and confidential. All STC election rules were strictly adhered to and all necessary internal controls were in place to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voting.

For the office of President, Vice President Ben Woelk automatically ascends to the office of President.

For the office of Vice President, two candidates were nominated:

* Craig Baehr received 238 votes
* Alan Porter received 161 votes

By your vote, Craig Baehr was elected Vice President.

For the office of Treasurer, one candidate was nominated:

* James Bousquet received 396 votes

By your vote, James Bousquet was re-elected Treasurer.

For the office of Director, three candidates were nominated for two positions:

* Bethany Aguad received 253 votes
* Laura Palmer received 282 votes
* Kirk St.Amant received 221 votes

By your vote, Laura Palmer and Bethany Aguad were elected Directors.

For the office of Nominating Committee, four candidates were nominated for two positions:

* Sara Feldman received 158 votes
* Jack Molisani received 181 votes
* Li-At Rathbun received 220 votes
* Kelly Shrank received 227 votes

By your vote, Li-At Rathbun and Kelly Shrank were elected to the Nominating Committee.

# Installation of the 2019-2020 Board

* Ben Woelk, President
* Craig Baehr, Vice President
* Kirsty Taylor, Secretary
* James Bousquet, Treasurer
* Bethany Aguad, Alisa Bonsignore, Todd DeLuca, Laura Palmer – Directors

The incoming Nominating Committee members were recognised: Li-At Rathbun and Kelly Shrank.

The 2018-2019 Nominating Committee was recognised.

# President’s Address 2019-2020

Mr Woelk addressed the meeting. He discussed why he chose to run for Society President, and mentioned the financial state of the society, as discussed in Mr Bousquet’s financial report for 2018. Mr Woelk was compelled to run for society office, as he believes the society is salvageable, and that he could help make a difference, and give back to the technical communication profession. He has learned and developed so much throughout his STC experience, at multiple levels of the society and with his local community, the board, and the Community Affairs Committee. Mr Woelk applauded Ms Fox who has just completed seven straight years of board service, and Ms Wilson, who is about to enter her seventh year.

We're in very complex times and the issues that are facing STC are common to membership organizations across the world. The membership organizations were built by the baby boomers; most of whom have retired or are in the process of retiring. When they built an organization, they expected to stay in that organization for life, or at least as long as their career was active. Now, we are in a scenario where people will join an organization, stay three, four years and maybe move on to something else as their interests and their careers change. That makes it especially challenging for us because we face a constant churn of new members coming in, older members retiring, members who've been members for three or four years moving on. But, we continue to get new members.

In general, there are a lot of changing expectations. What is membership today? In terms of what I expect us to do, I expect us to get through this year and to build a sustainable future. We will make whatever changes we need to make to do that. But, we're going to make that in a positive sense. We've done about as much as we can in terms of reducing expenses and we're already in a situation where we have a very limited number of staff to actually execute the direction that the Board gives them. So we're going to need help. We're going to need your help on this. It means we're going to build for tomorrow and you'll see new models in terms of how STC works. We haven't all figured it out yet. And I know there's always been an opinion over the years of "Why, what is with this Board? Why can't this figure this out?" The board is a very sharp, talented, and devoted group of people who want to make STC succeed and to make STC grow.

We'll be looking at growth mechanisms this year to build membership and not just try to survive. Not to rebuild STC, but to build it into whatever the new form is that it needs to be. I encourage you to come along with us and help us do that. We'll have new opportunities for engagement for members, for involvement in the Society. Expect much increased opportunities for membership engagement, which kind of sums up my speech tonight, and also improving the membership experience.

We have a percentage of members who are in communities; we have a larger percentage of members who are not in communities at all. They get very different types of membership experiences. One of the things that we will look at this year is how do we improve our membership experience overall? How do we provide what you as members need for your career growth to continue to move forward? A lot of cutting edge things are starting to happen here, such as Information 4.0, micro content, all sorts of new concepts and new areas that we're starting to move into. And we want to make sure that you all are prepared for that as our members as well. I challenge you to invest your time, invest your resources. You're here. You're committed to this organization, or you're 127 people who could not find the way out to dinner tonight and decided to join us instead. I want you to get involved. If there are opportunities to mentor others, mentor younger communicators, or those who are newer entrants into the field.

Mentor others! Invite others to join! Share what STC has done for you! There's a reason you all are here tonight. You all are passionate about the organization or you honestly would not be attending a business meeting the end of the day like this. So share that passion! Get people excited about STC! This is not all about doom and gloom. It's about building something new for the future. And I do believe we can do it. I wouldn't be here if I did not believe that, nor would our Board be here at all. So share what STC has done for you.

I'd also like to see us invest in the future. Now, as you all picked up your red cards, there was another form sitting there, which has to do with our scholarship program. And my three years when I was not on the Board, I was helping build a framework around the scholarship program. We have money in the scholarship program, but we do not have what we need in order to be able to have a sustainable scholarship. So I would invite you to contribute to that. You can do that online. I'm not passing the plate or anything like that. If we get a lot of members contributing small amounts of money, we can offer scholarships, we can invest in our future and our future is our students.

Also there's always been questions of why doesn't the Board tell us more about what's going on? Why aren't they more transparent? How do I talk to the Board? How do I get information to the Board outside of the annual business meeting about things that I'd like to see, or the changes that I might like to see. I encourage you to let us know what you want to see. What do you want STC to be for you? We're not hiding. We're at board@stc.org. All of you can write us. The board receives that email and we will respond to everything that comes in. So I'd like to, again, thank you all for an incredible opportunity. It's a bit daunting. Absolutely. But I'm absolutely looking forward to serving you all as your president for 2019--2020. Thank you.

# Business from 2018

The following motions from the 2018 Annual Business Meeting, held on 22 May 2018, were referred to the Board of Directors.

Motion: “*The Board consider holding a Summit outside North America within the next five to eight years.*”

The motion was put to vote at the meeting. The motion carried.

The official board response is: “The board discussed various aspects of this motion during the June 2018 board meeting, including cost implications, local laws, ability of STC staff to travel to support an international event, and the learning curve of holding an event outside the USA. Ms. Liz Pohland, STC’s CEO, confirmed that research for future venues for the conference would include locations outside North America.”

Motion: “*The Board consider reattaching community affiliation to the basic STC membership.*”

The motion was put to vote at the meeting. The motion carried.

The official board response is: “The Board discussed the motion during their July 2018 board meeting. In response, the STC Board created a community task force to investigate the feasibility of such a request. The work of the task force is ongoing.”

Motion: “*That the board consider allowing non-English inscriptions on Associate Fellow and Fellow honors. Either both in English and in an additional language, or the language of their choice.*”

The official board response is: “The board voted to approve this motion during the August 2018 board meeting. Inscriptions would need to be reviewed by the awardee to ensure the language is appropriate. Other requests for languages other than English on awards will be considered by STC’s CEO.”

Motion: “*The Board consider making SIGs equivalent to geographic communities.*”

The motion was put to vote. The motion did not carry.

# New Business

Ms. Wilson asked if there was any new business.

TJ Cardenas, New York Metro chapter presented the motion:

*Move that the board consider providing greater visibility and recognition for local/regional competitions.*

Mr Cardenas presented specific suggestions for the board to consider as activities in support of providing greater visibility and recognition for local and regional competitions.

The motion was seconded.

Ms Bobbie Werner, STC Central New York and Rochester chapters – spoke for the motion.

The leaders of the seven communities are not requesting the reinstatement of the international competition.

Danielle Villegas – Philadelphia Metro chapter – spoke for the motion.

John Garrison – NY chapter – spoke for the motion.

Li-At Rathbun, - Los Angeles and Santa Barbara chapters - spoke for the motion.

As there were no member speaking against the motion, the motion was put to the meeting.

*The motion carried.*

Ms Liz Fraley, East Bay chapter, presented the motion:

*That the board consider reporting results of recommendations, considerations, and reports from internal task forces to the membership, specifically the motion that passed at the 2018 Business meeting concerning holding a Summit outside the US each year until a location is finalised.*

The motion was withdrawn.

Ms Lara Tellis, Houston chapter, presented the motion:

*Move that the board consider providing a virtual track for the Summit.*

The motion was seconded.

Ms Tellis spoke for the motion.

Danielle Villegas, Philadelphia chapter, spoke for the motion.

Kathleen Kelly, Minneapolis Twin Cities chapter, spoke for the motion.

Johanne Lavallée, Rochester chapter, spoke for the motion.

Grant Hogarth, Rocky Mountain chapter, spoke for the motion.

The motion was amended

*Move that the board consider providing some way for attendees to see the session if they are not physically at the Summit, in whatever capacity is most financially beneficial.*

Carrie Schaeffer, Rocky Mountain chapter, spoke for the motion.

Darce Berry, Rocky Mountain chapter, spoke for the motion.

Andrea Ames raised a point of order to clarify the wording of the motion under discussion.

The motion was clarified for those present.

Eva Miranda, Rocky Mountain chapter, spoke for the motion.

The motion was put to the meeting.

*The motion carried.*

Ms Liz Fraley, Easy Bay chapter, presented the motion:

*That the board consider adopting a diversity program at the committee level to represent geographic diversity so that the committee membership reflects the diversity of the society at the committee level.*

The motion was seconded.

Ray Gallon, no community affiliations, spoke for the motion.

Bernard Aschwanden made a point of order regarding the remaining time for the meeting. The meeting will adjourn one hour after starting.

David Caruso, Rocky Mountain chapter, spoke for the motion.

The motion was put to the meeting.

*The motion carried.*

Li-At Rathbun moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. The motion was seconded.

*The motion did not pass.*

Li-At Rathbun, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara chapters, presented the motion:

*Move that the board consider including in basic membership one geographic community and one virtual community.*

The motion was seconded.

Alyssa Fox, Houston chapter, spoke against the motion.

Ms Rathbun spoke to the motion.

The motion was put to the meeting.

*The motion did not carry.*

# Adjournment

Ms. Wilson adjourned the meeting at 6:13pm MDT.