



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

July 7, 2008

Le Grand Salon, Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel
Montréal, Quebec, Canada

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order and began at 17:00 local time with Reiner Banken welcoming all members present to the Annual General Meeting. Reiner indicated that he and Vice-President Laura Sampietro - Colom would be sharing the task of chairing the meeting.

Approximately 80 members of the Society were present for the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted with no revisions or deletions.

3. Approval of minutes of the 2007 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 2007 meeting were provided to the members for review and approval.

Dr. David Hailey asked that more information on the member survey on the Journal be provided to members. Guy Maddern indicated that the survey contained a number of inappropriate remarks that should not be released. The Secretariat agreed that more information on the membership survey would be provided to members.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Guy Maddern and seconded by Reiner Banken. The motion was passed and the minutes were approved.

4. Results of the 2008 Board of Directors Election

Berit Mørland presented the report of the Nominating Committee for the 2008 election to the Society's Board of Directors. She reported that three new members had been elected to the Board for three year terms:

Dr. Tammy Clifford (Canada)
Dr. Janet Hiller (Australia)
Dr. Sun Hae Lee Robin (France)

The new members were introduced to the meeting and formally welcomed to the Board of Directors.

5. Business Arising from the 2007 Annual General Meeting: HTAi Voting Procedure

Berit Mørland commented on the report of the Board Working Group on the Society's election processes. The Working Group had been created to address the following motion from the 2007 Annual General Meeting:

We propose that the Society should review its procedures for elections and investigate and consider alternative models.

The report outlines possible models for voting and ballot counting for Society elections, including the system in place that allows members to vote for none, one, or all candidates running for Board and Executive offices, as well as systems that allow votes to be allocated or weighted to selected candidates.

After reviewing the report the Board of Directors has provided a recommendation to the meeting that the current voting and ballot counting system be retained. Berit asked that a motion be brought forward endorsing retention of the current system. Alicia Granandos moved the motion, which was seconded by David Hailey.

In discussing the motion members compared the current voting and ballot system used by HTA with that used by other organizations such as ISPOR. It was suggested that systems such as those allow a broader sharing of the strategic vision, as well as allowing opportunity for constituencies within an organization to play leadership roles. It was felt that the current system for HTAi did not allow that. Other member felt that the current system was not problematic as it allowed all members to have equal representation, and that the 2007 motion was addressed at technical issues around how elections would work as opposed to addressing strategic issues and representation of constituencies within the Society.

After discussion the motion to retain the current voting system was passed by a significant majority, with two votes opposed.

6. President's Report

Reiner Banken presented the report of the President which focused on four key areas:

Activities of the Board and Executive Committee;

Reiner reported on the number of Board meetings and teleconferences that had been held since the 2007 Annual Meeting as well as the teleconferences of the Executive Committee, regular interaction between Board/Executive members between meetings, and regular contact with the Secretariat.

Membership and Revenue growth from the 2007 Annual Meeting in Barcelona;

Reiner reported that the meeting in Barcelona in 2007 had been a success in terms of membership numbers and revenue to the Society. The 2007 meeting also helped to establish a new type of relationship between the Local Organizing Committee and HTAi as a global partnership for HTA.

Building relationships with other organizations;

Reiner reported that the Society had signed a three year agreement on membership with the Italian HTA organization SIHTA, entered into a memorandum of understanding with the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) and formalized the relationships between the International Clinical Epidemiology Network (INCLLEN) and INAHTA as observers to the Board. He also reported that the Society was exploring the Society becoming a World Health Organisation (WHO) recognized Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

Other Society Activities;

Reiner also reported on the strength and growth in the reputation of the HTAi Policy Forum as an internationally recognized meeting place for decision makers and others with a strategic interest in HTA. He also reported that the Society's Strategic Fund had been used to support the participation of Board members at several international meetings, helping to raise the international profile of HTAi. Reiner also reported on the new agreement with Cambridge University Press (CUP) for the Journal; noted that collaborative work spaces and tools were being installed to the web site to help build the Society's capacity as an international forum, that a tender process for the Secretariat had been undertaken; and that the robustness of the election voting systems used in the Society's 2006 elections was being reviewed.

Reiner closed by noting some future directions for the Society; increasing the global relevance of HTA as a decision support for health systems; continuing to build connections with other international HTA and evidence based medicine and evidence informed policy making bodies, working to engage members in the Society throughout the year, and raise the Society's profile in the Asia – Pacific region in anticipation of the 2009 Annual Meeting in Singapore.

7. Treasurers Report and Approval of Auditors

Mitchell Sugarman provided the report from the Treasurer. He indicated that the budget for 2008 – 2009 was anticipated to run a deficit and that the Board would be looking at ways of increasing revenue and decreasing costs. He also reported that the membership cycle, which seems to be determined by the location to the Annual Meeting, affects the Society's revenue and that a slight decrease in revenue was expected for 2008 – 2009 relative to 2007 – 2008.

In discussion of the report members commented on membership issues; some members noted that the current membership categories do not allow some members of some Interest Sub-Groups to become HTAi members as part of their organization and their individual memberships are not supported by their organization. It was suggested that some sort of affiliate or other member status for people linked to an organization should be considered. It was noted that the Board had just established a Membership and Communications Committee that is looking for members. This Committee is charged with addressing membership issues and providing recommendations to the Board.

Concern was expressed that the Society was living beyond its means and was exacerbating the situation by its choices for Annual Meeting locations. The option of lower membership fees was also suggested, and some concern was expressed that the relationship between the revenue from and costs of Policy Forum. In response to that concern the chair of the Karen Facey indicated that she was working with the Secretariat for better accounting of Board versus Forum costs for

Forum meetings and that she was looking for greater transparency in how the Forum reported to the membership.

Discussion closed with a suggestion that the Society should look for ways to lower its dependency on membership fees and the turnout at the Annual Meeting by introducing an attendance fee for people who wished to attend the meeting but did not want to become members.

A motion to approve the appointment of Allan Welsh & Company of Edmonton as the auditors for HTAi for 2008 – 2009 was made by David Hailey and seconded by Jill Sanders. The motion was passed.

8. Agreement with Cambridge University Press regarding the *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care*

Ken Stein reported on the development of a new agreement with Cambridge University Press (CUP) the publisher of the Society's official journal; the *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care*. He reported that an excellent relationship with CUP had developed as the new agreement was negotiated and that it boded for well for the relationship between HTAi and CUP over the term of the new agreement. He also indicated that he believes the new agreement will provide an opportunity to address the qualitative issues that members have raised in regard to the Journal.

Ken provided an overview of the new agreement; the most salient features being that the Journal would now be available to all members of HTAi electronically as a benefit of membership, and that paper subscriptions to the Journal would also be available to members at discounted prices, as well as lower prices for members in low and middle income countries. Ken closed by noting that the revenue from members that would have previously gone to the Journal would be used to support communications and information dissemination activities for HTAi.

9. Membership Benefits 2009 - 2010

Discussion of this issue was covered under the items in the President's Report and the Society's new strategic plan.

10. Strategic Plan 2009 - 2013

Laura Sampietro Colom provided an overview of the consultation process used to develop the five year strategic plan and how that had resulted in a plan that reflects the goals of the Society's members. She indicated that it was important that the Strategic Plan support a Business Plan for the Society, and that the Business Plan will include indicators over a two year period. Laura then outlined a process for how a Business Plan would be developed. Reiner indicated that the Business Plan will include specific, definable outcomes and measures over its term.

A motion to accept the new Strategic Plan for the Society was moved by Jill Sanders and seconded by David Hailey. The motion was passed.

11. Location of the 2010 Annual Meeting

Reiner announced that the 2010 Annual Meeting of HTAi would take place in Dublin Ireland.

12 Vote of thanks for Board Members

A unanimous vote of thanks was made for members of the Board who had completed their term of office with this Annual Meeting:

Jill Sanders
Jean – Francois Baladi
Americo Cicchetti

were thanked and for their service to the Society over their terms of office.

13. Other Business

The location of the HTAi Secretariat was raised as an issue of other business. Reiner indicated that this issue was being considered by the Board and that a decision on the location would be made by the Fall 2008 teleconference of the Board of Directors.

14. Adjournment

With no further business raised a motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Reiner Banken, seconded by Guy Maddern. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 18:20 local time.