

SPER Business Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2005

1. David Savitz, our outgoing president, officially closed 18th Annual Meeting. David was given a plaque honoring his service as SPER president and SER liaison.
2. We welcomed Mary Hediger, new president, who then chaired the meeting.
3. Michelle Kiely, co-editor of the Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology Journal, gave the annual report on the journal.

2004-2005:

Number of Submissions = 67

~52% rejected

~33% accepted

~15% revise & resubmit OR accept with minor revisions

<1% rejected without review (n=4)

Average time from submission to response back to author = 96 days.

Approximately 6 month turn around from acceptance to publication.

Currently publishing 6 issues per year.

The desire for electronic submission of manuscripts and reviews for the journal was raised by SPER members. Michelle noted that this issue had been repeatedly raised, including the prior day at the SPER Executive Board meeting. The American editors are supportive. A resolution to request this change to the editor in chief, Jean Golding in the UK, was proposed, seconded, and unanimously supported by the SPER members in attendance.

3. Dawn Misra, SPER secretary (2004-2007), gave the Secretary's Report.
 - The preliminary count was 146 registrants for the 18th annual meeting, including on-site registration. This compares favorably to past meetings.
 - Outcomes of changes that occurred this year:
 - Waiving of the abstract submission fees was successful, as evidenced by an increased number of abstracts submitted, no discernible drop in quality, and satisfaction of SPER members.
 - Online registration was instituted this year and registrants appear to have encountered only minimal difficulties. Dawn encouraged members to let her know if there were unreported problems.
 - Changes for the coming year.
 - Student memberships will constitute only one category, the fee is reduced to \$20, and will include a print copy of the journal.
 - Registration fees for the 2006 meeting (Seattle) will be waived for all students who preregister with a \$50 fee for those students who register on site.

- There will be no increase in regular membership fees and we expect no increase in registration fees for the 2006 meeting.
 - Deadlines for abstract and awards will be slightly earlier this year as the 2006 meeting will be earlier. (The 2005 meeting was later than usual.)
 - 2006 meeting will be held in Seattle, 2007 in Boston.
4. Cande Ananth, outgoing Treasurer (1999-2005) gave the Treasurer's Report.

SPER Annual Ending Balances

2001	\$29,567.56
2002	\$48,633.94
2003	\$49,709.23
2004	\$68,388.67
June 2005	\$53,258.67

SPER 2004 Income Summary

Abstract Fee	\$ 2,424.99
Contribution	215.00
Dues	28,560.00
Grant	5,000.00
Symposium Income	5,074.28
Total	\$41,274.27

SPER 2004 Expense Summary

Advertising	\$ 725.00
Bank/Credit Card Fees	1,040.00
Miscellaneous	976.16
Printing	1,018.85
Support Services	3,000.00
Student Award	250.00
Subscriptions	11,181.00
Symposium Expense	607.59
Tax (Federal & State))	205.00
Telephone	170.27
Travel	60.00
Web Site	3,360.00
Total	\$22,594.83

SPER 2004 Summary

Income	\$41,274.27
Expense	22,494.83
Overall Net	\$18,679.44

SPER Membership

	2004	2005
Foreign	32	27
North America	202	184
Total	234	211
Students	24	36

Discussion began with SPER members regarding declining memberships (see below).

5. Mary Hediger delivered the President's Report.

Mary welcomed new SPER Executive Board Members Deborah Nelson (Member at Large, 2005-2009) and Lucy England (Treasurer 2005-2008). Mary thanked Mary Croughan, outgoing member at large (2001-2005) in absentia. Mary also thanked Ananth for his service and presented him with a plaque commemorating his six years as SPER Treasurer. The duties of the new member at large, Deborah Nelson, will be expanded to include producing the newsletter (3 issues annually). Members may continue to send submissions for the newsletter to the Secretary (Dawn Misra) who will send them on, or directly to the member at large (Deborah Nelson).

The Pediatric and Perinatal Epi list serve will be rejuvenated and all SPER members will automatically be subscribed to the list. The ownership and maintenance of the list will be initially transferred to CDC in the office of the SPER treasurer and then may be moved to Cheryl Prince who manages our website and other matters for the society.

The 2006 SPER meeting will take place in Seattle Washington June 20-21, overlapping with the Second American Congress of Epidemiology June 21-24. Mary announced that SPER will sponsor a joint symposium on asthma with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for the Congress. SPER members who have ideas for additional symposium topics should contact SPER President Mary Hediger.

All SPER members are welcome to suggest speakers for the 2006 SPER meeting. Members are also encouraged to nominate themselves for SPER officer positions. While elections will not be held until next winter, early nominations are most welcome!

An SPER member suggested an email satisfaction survey regarding membership and the annual meeting be sent out to members.

A discussion of potential format changes for the annual meeting then ensued. Possibly lengthening the meeting was suggested but met with mixed responses. This has been discussed in the past and the membership could be queried again by email. A one symposium to open the meeting was suggested, requiring that we start earlier but only a little earlier. Proposals could be solicited for topics and organizing the symposium. This could be broadly advertised and may draw in nonmembers who might then join. This could be added to the abstract announcement. The executive committee will discuss how to make this change. It may not be possible to make any changes to the 2006 meeting but changes could be made for 2007.

We next turned to the topic of declining memberships. An SPER member suggested that we may have lost visibility by ceasing to publish the meeting abstracts in the journal. The estimated cost is ~\$6,000 to publish the abstracts. This will be explored by the executive committee. Publishing the meeting program was suggested as a way to improve visibility. Keeping up a CME program was also suggested as a strategy to attract members. Another suggestion was to “advertise” at other related meetings, such as the MCH Epidemiology meeting. SPER members could bring materials and try to attract new members.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6 pm.