

## **Rodney G. Lym**

Period in office: 2012-2013

The biggest issues during my time on the board and as President of WSSA concerned financial problems, contracts, and changes in the annual program format. The year to year financial data were always presented to us in the accrual accounting format which confused board members and left us wondering if we were doing ok financially or bleeding money. I asked Ian Burke, the then newly elected treasurer, to go back for the last five years and present the board with a summary of income vs expenses. He chose a specific date to take a snapshot of WSSA's financial balance each year. I fully expected the result to show WSSA was spending much more than the society was bringing in, but to my surprise that was not the case. Ian began his summary with 2007, the beginning of a global financial crisis. The Society lost nearly half a million dollars in 2008, but that was entirely due to decreases in the investment portfolio. When the income and expenses were calculated without these investment, WSSA had nearly broken even every year, with slight losses or gains. The overall annual WSSA budget, not counting investments, averaged \$741,000 from 2007-2012. With the increase in stock values during 2012 and beyond, WSSA was actually in very sound financial condition when my time on the board ended. Some of the "excess" funds began to be used to benefit members with additional programs, such as the initiation of a USDA-NIFA subject matter expert, a position similar to the current EPA position.

As President, I oversaw the extension of contract agreements with Allen Press for Society Management (Joyce Lancaster), Meeting Management (Kate Counter), and the Publication Contract for the three Society Journals. Between the Baltimore meeting (2013) when the Society and Management contracts were approved by the board and the Vancouver meeting (2014), Kate Counter left her position with Allen Press and was not replaced. Instead, a meeting management group from Kansas State University was subcontracted to work with hotels and the membership to conduct the annual meetings. The sub-contract was completed by Allen Press prior to notifying the WSSA board and we were skeptical how things would go. The first meeting overseen by the KSU group went very well and all activities were conducted professionally and as requested. In the future, a direct contract with the KSU group may be a good choice for WSSA for meeting management duties.

As program chair for the 2012 meeting in Kona, HI, I made several changes in the program format. The most successful addition was the introduction of the PUFF (President's Uniform Fitness Forum) run/walk on Tuesday morning. During a run with Mike Barrett at the WSWS meetings the previous March, we thought a run/walk event would be welcomed by the membership. We hoped we could get a small group to go with us on an early morning outing, and were pleasantly surprised when nearly 100 people came out to run/walk as the sun rose on the Big Island. This event was continued in Baltimore and Vancouver with fewer people, but has been popular and I hope will continue in the future. I also tried holding poster sessions through-out the meeting day in conjunction with oral sessions, rather than the first thing on Tue and Wed mornings as stand-alone events. This change was driven by a lack of meeting rooms more than anything else and I had hoped that by scheduling specific sections that were not having oral meetings at the same time people would enjoy visiting with poster presenters in one

specific section and subject area. This change was not popular with the members, and was not continued. I also introduced a business breakfast on Thur morning similar to what is done by the WSWs. My goal was to get more members to attend the business meeting than traditionally come on Wed afternoon. Attendance was increased, but mostly from WSWs members who were used to this format. The business meeting went back to Wed pm in Baltimore, mostly due to the costs of the meal WSSA had to cover. The final change was a return to the 15 min talk, rather than 20 min which had been tried in Portland in 2011.

Other highlights:

- WSSA sponsored an accredited on-line CE for herbicide resistance training with Penton Media. Over 1000 people passed the course in the first 7 months which was a record according to Penton. This educational program was started under the leadership of John Jachetta and is paid for by industry sponsorship. The training modules were created by WSSA members.
- In May 2012 a symposium entitled ANational Summit to Manage Herbicide-Resistant Weeds@ was held jointly with the National Research Council in Washington, DC. The symposium was sold-out and was a huge success. Much of the work for this was done by David Shaw and other members of the WSSA Herbicide Resistance Weeds Committee.
- Muthukumar Bagavathiannan (Muthu) was hired to be our first web content editor. He has greatly increased the professional look and usefulness of our web site.
- WSSA reduced the number of Members-at-Large serving on the board from four to two. This was done to reflect the reduction in WSSA membership over time and to reduce board expenses. A new Member-at-Large will now be selected only on even numbered election years.

Finally, I want to point out that the day to day running of the Society is actually done by Joyce Lancaster. She keeps the Presidents and program chairs on point, answers questions from members and non-members, and generally makes sure things get done on time. She keeps WSSA=s best interests and future in mind at all times and is one of our Society=s greatest assets.