The Paleontological Society
Midyear Council Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2012 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
Room 310, Dayton Convention Center, Dayton, Ohio
(Compiled by Mark A. Wilson, Paleontological Society Secretary)

Members present:

Philip Gingerich (President)
Sandy Carlson (President-elect)
Doug Erwin (Past President)
Peter Harries (Treasurer)
Mark Wilson (Secretary)
Linda Ivany (Councilor Unrestricted)
Alycia Stigall (Councilor Under 40)
Steve Hageman (Co-editor, *Journal of Paleontology*)
Bruce MacFadden (Co-editor, *Paleobiology*)
Phil Novack-Gottshall (Editor, *Priscum*)
Sara Marcus (Editor, Special Publications)
Tom Olszewski (Program Coordinator)
Peg Yacobucci (Education Coordinator)
Sarah Tweedt (Student Representative)
Karen Koy (North Central Section Chair)
Tony Martin (Southeast Section Chair)

Non-members:

Dena Smith (Webmaster)
Christa Stratton (Representing GSA)

The following minutes are keyed to the numbered pages in the reports electronically distributed with the agenda. Items in the reports are not repeated in these minutes. All votes were unanimous, with 16 members of Council participating.

1. President’s report and approval of the minutes.

Minutes for the October 11, 2011, Annual Council Meeting were approved by vote with no changes.
President Gingerich reviewed the items in his report (section 1). During his presentation he asked if the Geological Society of America management team might be able to do more work on our Paleontological Society website. He also distributed a printed booklet from the “Transitions” workshop in Washington, D.C., held on October 24-25, 2011. President Gingerich also expressed the view that the mission of the Paleontological Society should focus more on the promotion of our discipline in Washington and other places of public influence.

**Action item:** President Gingerich plans to visit the Paleontological Society archives this spring (if possible) to assess their condition, volume, and transportability.

**Action item:** The President will appoint a delegate to the International Paleontological Association. Kate Bulinski was suggested as a possibility.

**Action item:** During the discussion of the next North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC), Bruce MacFadden expressed some interest in hosting the meeting at his institution. President Gingerich will follow up with Bruce on this. Treasurer Peter Harries added that about $80,000 is currently available for this meeting.

2. **Revision of the Constitution and By-laws of the Paleontological Society.**

President-elect Sandy Carlson reported that she is continuing to collect job descriptions from members of Council and committee chairs. She and President Gingerich said it might be possible to convene a working group in Boulder to assemble a draft of amendments to these documents.

4. **Website Coordinator and Communications Committee proposals.**

Phil Novack-Gottshall (*Priscum* Editor) presented two proposals for a first reading concerning Society communications (sections 4a and 4b). There was considerable discussion of the constitutional implications of the proposals and what changes in future communications media we may see. The consensus of the Council was that these are good ideas that should be combined into a single proposal for consideration at the Annual Meeting in November. The proposals were **tabled** for further action.

**Action item:** Phil Novack-Gottshall will rewrite the proposals, combining them into one, this spring. He will send a draft to the Secretary for review, then a revised draft for the Executive Committee, and finally a draft for the entire Council to read this summer before presentation at the Annual Meeting.

5. **Treasurer’s report.**

Treasurer Peter Harries discussed the financial reports (sections 51, 5b and 5c in the report). Our investments remain productive. There was one correction to the spreadsheets: total assets as of March 31, 2012, were $2,988,647. Peter pointed out that 64.5% of our investments are in stocks.
and that he is seeking advice as to whether we should move more money into bonds. He also noted that “pay-per-views” generated by our journals are a significant source of income for the Society.

**Action item:** Peter Harries will ask GeoScience World (GSW) why the amount paid for conversion of our articles has risen from about $4,500 to almost $10,000.

### 6. Secretary’s report.

Secretary Mark Wilson highlighted those portions of his report (sections 6a-6e) of interest to the Council. He noted that this is the first time the agenda and reports have been distributed in electronic forms only (mostly pdfs), and that this has saved at least $500 in printing costs per year (not to mention schlepping around boxes of paper at the meetings). Mark asked how the print orders for our journals work and received very useful information from the co-editors and others.

**Action item:** Council **voted** to invite Ron Morin and Mary Lane to the 2012 Annual Meeting for recognition as Grand Patrons of the Society. The Secretary will contact them and present this invitation. We will pay for their reception tickets.

**Action item:** The Secretary will henceforth key the print orders for the *Journal of Paleontology* and *Paleobiology* to our current subscriber lists. “Number of copies for mailing to members/subscribers” should be the number of total subscribers (including institutions) plus about 20. The number of copies for inventory stored at Allen Press should be reduced to no more than 20 for each issue.

### 7. Paleobiology report.

*Paleobiology* Co-Editor Bruce MacFadden presented the journal’s report (sections 7a and 7b). He reported that the average acceptance to print time for papers in *Paleobiology* is three to six months.

**Action item:** Council **voted** to add Michal Kowalewski to this year’s ballot as an additional co-editor for a term of one year. The Secretary will add his name to the 2012 slate.


*Journal of Paleontology* Co-Editor Steve Hageman presented the journal’s report (section 8). The main item of discussion was again the lack of a backlog of manuscripts, which puts considerable pressure on production editors to fill issues. Submission to print time for a manuscript in the *Journal of Paleontology* is five to six months.
9. **Special Publications report.**

Special Publications Editor Sara Marcus presented her report (section 9). She asked for additional funds to purchase Adobe Creative Suite and other miscellaneous items necessary for this position. Council reaffirmed that authorization for all printing expenses must go through the Special Publications editor.

**Action item:** An annually recurring $1000 line item is to be added to the budget for the Special Publications editor. (Approved by budget vote at the end of the meeting.)

**Action item:** Sara Marcus will compile copies of various printing and marketing contracts for special publications of the Society and present a report on them at the Annual Meeting this year.

10. **Priscum report and conversation on Paleontological Society communications.**

*Priscum* Editor Phil Novack-Gottshall discussed his report. He reminded us that May 1 is the deadline for contributions to the next issue of *Priscum*.

11. **The Strimple Award.**

President-elect Carlson nominated (for her committee) George H. Junne, Jr., an African Studies faculty member at the University of Northern Colorado, for the 2012 Strimple Award. Council approved by vote.

**Action item:** The Secretary will contact Dr. Junne and start the process of presenting the award. This includes issuing the invitation, engraving the plaque, establishing the citationist, and obtaining a short biography and a photograph for our reception program, website and the *Journal of Paleontology*.

12. **The Schuchert Award.**

Past President Doug Erwin nominated (for his committee) Gene Hunt, Curator of Ostracoda at the Smithsonian Institution, for the 2012 Schuchert Award. (Doug pointed out that he had recused himself from voting on the Schuchert Committee.) Council approved by vote.

**Action item:** The Secretary will contact Dr. Hunt and start the process of presenting the award. This includes issuing the invitation, engraving the plaque, establishing the
citationist, and obtaining a short biography and a photograph for our reception program, website and the *Journal of Paleontology*.

13. **The Paleontological Society Medal.**

Past President Doug Erwin nominated (for his committee) J. William Schopf, a faculty member at UCLA, for the Paleontological Society Medal. Council approved by vote.

*Action item:* The Secretary will contact Dr. Schopf and start the process of presenting the award. This includes issuing the invitation, engraving the medal, establishing the citationist, and obtaining a short biography and a photograph for our reception program, website and the *Journal of Paleontology*.

14. **Nominations for Paleontological Society officers.**

President-elect Carlson and Secretary Wilson presented the 2012 nominations for Council officers received from the Nominations Committee chaired by Steve Rowland. The lists were discussed, augmented and ranked by Council, which then cast approving votes.

Uncontested elections -- Secretary (three-year term): Mark A. Wilson (accepted)
Program Coordinator (three-year term): Tom Olszewski
   (Tom is considering this offer.)
*Journal of Paleontology* co-editors:
   Brian Pratt and Steve Hageman (accepted)

*Action item:* President Gingerich will contact the nominees for the contested elections (President and Councilor Unrestricted) following the lists ranked by Council votes.

*Action item:* As per Council vote above, the Secretary will add Michal Kowalewski to this year’s ballot as an additional co-editor for a term of one year.

*Action item:* The Secretary and Webmaster will work with GSA to see if there are ways to include candidate biographies and photographs with the PS ballot.

15. **Education and Outreach report.**

Education and Outreach Coordinator Peg Yacobucci presented her report (section 15). Additional information was that a proposal to the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent) for a project titled “Learning Evolution from the Fossil Record: K-12 Explorations in Deep Time” was approved. The PS members on this project are Peg Yacobucci, Dena Smith, Roy Plotnick and Pedro Marenco.
16. Program Coordinator’s report.

Program Coordinator Tom Olszewski presented his report (sections 16a, 16b1 and 16b2). Council voted to approve the 2013 Short Course proposal: “Ecosystem Paleobiology and Geobiology” (organized by Andrew Bush, Sarah Pruss, and Jonathan Payne). Tom corrected a typographic error in his report: there are 24 (not 15) topical session proposals for the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Geological Society of America that are sponsored by the Paleontological Society.

Action item: Council asked Tom Olszewski to return a $4000 proposal for funding a symposium at the 2013 International Biogeography Society Conference back to authors Jenny McGuire and Edward Davis for further clarification. The revised proposal will be sent to Council later for an email vote.

Action item: Council asked Tom Olszewski and Sara Marcus to draft a proposal for the future organization and administration of Paleontological Society special publications. They are asked to present this proposal to Council at the Annual Meeting this year.

17. Webmaster report.

Dena Smith presented her webmaster report (section 17). She emphasized the major work done on the Society’s website. She also asked for continued feedback and content.

18. Membership report.

Alycia Stigall presented the latest membership statistics (section 18). There has been an increase in membership, most notably in the student category (up 56% since 2011). Alycia plans to complete the lapsed member survey this spring. She also presented ideas for PS-branded merchandise.


Ron Parsley’s short report (sent through the Secretary; section 19) is that all is going as expected with the Sepkoski Grants Committee and process.

20. Associated Societies report.

President-elect Carlson reported to the Council about her attendance and participation at the GSA Associated Societies Meeting in Boulder, Colorado, on February 10-11, 2012 (section 20). She noted that the Paleontological Society is the most active of the associated societies.
21. **Student representatives report.**

Sarah Tweedt presented the student representatives report (sections 21a and 21b). She noted that a new student representative must be appointed before the Annual Meeting in November. President Gingerich asked her and other students to suggest names to him. The student representatives asked for additional funds to support printing of the student grant highlights for the Annual Meeting. Council voted to add $150 to the budget for this purpose. Sarah presented proposals from her and Andrew Haveles to create a graduate school directory/portal on the Society website and to establish a student member luncheon at the annual GSA meeting. Council discussed these proposals, resulting in the following action items:

**Action item:** President Gingerich will appoint a new student representative before the Annual Meeting with the advice of the current student representatives.

**Action item:** The student representatives will develop the website proposal and present it to Webmaster Dena Smith for discussion and implementation if feasible.

**Action item:** The student representatives will develop a proposal for a student mixer (not a full luncheon) at the annual GSA meeting and send it to the Secretary. This will include the date and time of the event, likely number of students attending, and the kind of refreshments required. The Secretary will work with the students to set this up with GSA. The students will take responsibility for finding speakers and advertising the mixer to students. The Council authorized (by later vote) up to $2000 for this event.

22. **Distinguished Lecturer Program report.**

Councilor Linda Ivany discussed her report (section 22), recommending that funding continue at present levels. She noted that blast emails to the membership through the Secretary’s office appear to be the most effective advertising for the program. Council voted to add Dena Smith to the list of Distinguished Lecturers.

23. **Paleontological Society Section reports.**

Karen Koy presented the North Central Section report (section 23a) and Tony Martin presented the report for the Southeastern Section (section 23b). Ben Dattilo is the new North Central Section Chair and Brad Deline is the new Southeastern Section Chair. Both take office immediately following the Midyear meeting. Gwen Daley will be the Southeastern chair for 2013-2014 following a section vote. Alex Bartholomew (Northeastern Section Chair) was unable to attend the Midyear meeting because of weather.

Peter Harries summarized a proposal from GSW to optimize our journals for access by mobile devices (iPads, iPhones and the like).

25. Best Student Talk Awards.

Peter Harries presented the idea that we could develop a system to judge student oral presentations as well as student posters (as we currently do).

26. Posting of Society journal articles as private pdfs.

President Gingerich and the editors led a discussion of the phenomenon of people posting on the Web unauthorized pdfs of Society-published articles, thereby circumventing one of our important revenue streams. There was also a discussion of whether our fee for the legal posting of a pdf ($500) is too low.

Action item: The journal co-editors, Tom Olszewski and Sara Marcus will discuss this issue and present a proposal (if needed) to the Council at the Annual Meeting in November.

26. Summary of budget items for final vote.

Treasurer Peter Harries summarized the additions to his original budget proposal:

$5,500 for the additional charges from GSW for content conversion. (Peter will first explore whether these charges are excessive.)

$1000 added to the budget for the Special Publications editor.

$2000 added to this year’s budget for the student mixer at the 2012 annual GSA meeting.

$150 added to the budget to further support printing by the student representatives, especially for the student grant highlights distributed at the Annual Meeting.

$500 added to the budget for web management.

Council voted unanimously (16 members of Council) to approve the Midyear Paleontological Society budget with all the above additions.

President Gingerich adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.