

## **Society of Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration, Inc.**

Coal and Energy Division Executive Committee

2021 Meeting Minutes

Thursday, Feb 25, 2021

Virtual Meeting: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

### **Opening:**

The annual meeting of the Coal and Energy Division Executive Board was called to order at 9:00 a.m. (mountain time) on February 25, 2021 via virtual meeting (MS Teams) by Heather Trexler. It was an open meeting to all C&E members.

Heather offered a safety share regarding hazards of winter driving, C&E introductions were made, and then she welcomed some SME Young Leaders including Sam Baker, Sena Cicek, and Vasu Gangrade to the meeting.

### **C&E: Officers, BOD, and members present (open meeting):**

Heather Trexler, Ryan Murray, Susan Bealko, Tathagata Ghosh, Paul Conrad, Sekhar Bhattacharyya, Steven Schafrik, John Gefferth, Brijes Mishra, John Gefferth, Michael Trevits, Robert Kudlawiec, Dan Alexander, Rich Wagner, Ron Parratt, Jim Haughey, Sam Baker, Sena Cicek, and Vasu Gangrade, Karen Rose, Heather Dougherty, Vaibhav Raj, George Luxbacher, Heather Gravning (*SME Staff Liaison*)

#### **A. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the 2020 annual meeting were inadvertently submitted for review prior to the meeting and once the error was identified, Heather G. subsequently sent out the 2020 Mid-Year meeting notes for review during the meeting and then they were approved towards the end of the meeting. Motion by Ghosh, seconded by Michael T.. Motion carried. Minutes accepted as presented.

#### **B. Review of the Division Finances**

Division finances from year-end were presented by Heather G.

Balance as of September 30, 2020:

- C&E General Fund (610): Balance – \$63,336.79
- C&E Endowment Fund (611): Balance - \$927,465.76
- Underground Ventilation Division Scholarship Fun (612): Balance - \$101,799.04

There was some discussion regarding how many and the amount of ventilation scholarships awarded and also the student interest in a coal. Heather D. stated that probably less than 50%

of the applications were focused on coal, but the awardee went to an applicant working in the study of dust. A motion was made by Gosh to accept the finance report and seconded by Michael T. Motion was passed unanimously.

### **C. Visit from SME Leadership**

Dave Kanagy (Executive Director), Bob Schafer (President) and William Edgerton (Incoming President) joined the meeting to give an overview of critical issues, priorities, and programs in the SME.

Bob Schafer spoke about the current status of SME and the 5-year strategic plan. There was also a discussion about the new SME website, joining ICMM, his international travels to SME student chapters, and additional finances from the SME Pick-up truck raffle in 2020 and other financial endeavors. William Edgerton, with a background in underground construction, spoke about the importance of sharing ideas and philosophies with other divisions.

### **D: Report of the Scholarship Committee**

Brian Shaffer reported that ~\$26,000 were given out to US and international applicants and he thanked his committee for the dedication and hard work they offered to complete this task.

There was a concern identified from the scholarship committee regarding the comparison of international and U.S. national funding needs, GPA comparisons, etc. It was difficult to discern a proper scholarship amount for each case. After much discussion with the group, an ad-hoc committee was formed to look at these items and try to standardize the selection process. Steve S. made the motion “the purpose of the ad-hoc committee is to formulate objective guidelines, calculations, and information, to help the Scholarship Committee to understand and decide the scholarship awards for international applicants. Sam Baker took the lead on this and members include George L. and Sena C.

### **E. Report of the Membership Committee**

Heather T. reported that the membership in the Division is down ~ 10%; however, it was not as bad as expected because of the COVID effect on business and professional societies. Some questions raised by meeting participants were the following: did members leave to join other divisions? What was the demographic? etc. For the most part, Heather G. said they were leaving the society altogether, but she did not have all the data to hone in on the details.

### **F. Report of the Program Chair**

Tathagata Ghosh reported that that programming for C&E in 2021 was “interesting.” At first, there were 86 papers and then the decision from SME national was to conduct virtual sessions and the papers were cut down to 46. This information was not provided to Gosh until January. This was very concerning to Gosh and other C&E members because many authors were angry/frustrated that their papers were withdrawn, and the members were concerned about further loss of membership from these actions. There was a discussion on how to find a

remedy for those paper/presenters that were not able to join the conference proceedings; Michael T. and Steve S. offered to look for ways to create webinars and offer presentations at some Southern App meetings (Steve S is chair of SME Central App section).

#### **F. C&E auction items**

Heather G. reported she received a few items for the auction including a mining lamp and a piece of a meteorite. They were currently available for bidding on the web. Dr. Karmis contributed his award monies to the scholarship fund which was very generous and helped the division with finances (Donor recognition of Howard N. Eavenson Award).

#### **G. Update on Division Handbook**

George L. reported that the handbook is ready with the exception about a question on how to distribute the John Sydney Marshall award (per by-laws). The C&E membership commended him on a job well done and committed that it will be a living document and updated each year.

#### **H. Discussion on Open Positions for C&E Committees**

Heather G. reported that many that volunteered for C&E positions; the meeting for selection will be held on Friday, Aug 26 at 1:00.

#### **J. New Business**

Related to new business from 2020, Steve S. reported that although the collegiate mine rescue contest was postponed, the board got creative and developed a new format over Zoom that will progress the skills of the students; hopefully they will be competing in 2021 as originally organized.

Ryan Murray thanked Heather T., Heather G., and all the committed C&E members for their hard work during a very different year regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and ever-changing logistics. Accolades were given all around for a successful 2020 year for SME Coal and Energy Division and we look forward to an ever better 2021.

#### **Adjournment:**

Heather Trexler handed over the chairmanship to Ryan Murray and adjourned the meeting at 11:49 am.

Minutes submitted by: Susan Bealko

Approved by: