

Texas Genetics Society  
Minutes of the Spring Board of Directors Meeting  
April 29, 2016  
Onstead Auditorium, MD Anderson Cancer Center  
Prepared by Joe M. Angel, Secretary/Treasurer

Directors Present:

Clare Gill—President  
Erika Abel—President-elect  
Joe Angel—Secretary/Treasurer  
Trey Fondon—Past President  
Shaye Lewis  
David Threadgill

Sarah Canterberry  
Alex Pertsemlidis  
Jonathan Rios  
Terje Raudsepp  
Tina Gumienny  
Steve Daiger

Also in attendance: David Nelson—Local organizer

1. The meeting was called to order at 12:10 by President Clare Gill
2. Minutes of the October 23, 2015 Board of Directors meeting by teleconference were approved
3. Clare thanked outgoing board members for their service to the Society  
Penny Riggs  
Sarah Canterberry  
Alex Pertsemlidis  
Ramesh Gunaratna
4. Clare welcomed incoming members of the board  
Sarah Canterberry (President-elect)  
Steve Daiger  
David Threadgill
5. Treasurer's Report—Joe Angel  
As of April 25, 2016, the TGS had a balance of \$23,512.52. Expenses for the current meeting are expected to total about \$17,163, leaving a balance of approximately \$6,349.52, an increase over last year's balance. There were 102 registered for the meeting and 119 in attendance. This included 62 trainees, 39 faculty, and 2 Emeritus members. Twenty institutions were represented.
6. Report from the 2016 meeting local organizers—David Nelson
7. Other Business
  - a. Annual membership and meeting registration rates  
The Society has been losing money on meetings over the past several years. The suggestion was made that annual membership dues and meeting registration rates need to be raised. Dues and registration rates have not been raised in some time. In general, the board felt that trainees would not be able to afford to attend the annual meeting if registration rates were raised. Clare moved that next year's meeting organizers provide a budget for the meeting prior to the fall board meeting and that the registration rate be set based on the budget. The motion was seconded and approved 7-4.

Several suggestions were made in regard to increasing participation in the meeting and improving the Society's finances.

The meetings may be too focused on non-human genetics

Become a regional organization of some other organization. David Threadgill offered to contact the Genetics Society of America and David Nelson offered to contact the American Society of Human Genetics to explore this possibility.

Get University sponsorship using undergraduate participation as a selling point

Grant funding to cover student registration fees

Rework mission statement to list strengths

Send out questionnaire to find out why people do not come back

b. Social media

Ramesh Gunaratna submitted a written report updating the board on the TGS Facebook page. The report is appended below.

c. Historian position—Tabled

d. Nominations for Emeritus members

Joe Angel was asked to contact Rob Mosses to determine if he would like to become an Emeritus member

e. 2017 meeting

The 2017 meeting will be held at the George W. Bush Presidential Library in College Station. The date will be set before the fall board meeting. Penny Rigs will be chair of the local organizing committee.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 1:25.

### **Report on the facebook group of Texas Genetics Society**

During the TGS Board Meeting on the 10.23.2015, board of directors of TGS decided to venture into social media to improve the visibility of TGS especially, among young trainees. As a result, Ramesh Gunaratna and Shaye Lewis were given the task of establishing a facebook page/group and a twitter arm. A facebook group was setup since all of the group members receive the posts as opposed to a facebook page where further subscription is required by the members to receive notifications. This could hinder the visibility as suggested by Erika Abel. Further, Tina Gumienny suggested that the frequency of the posts should be limited to a reasonable number to maintain the interest but not to overwhelm the members.

With the introduction of the facebook group, TGS aspire to foster networking among the members of the TGS community. TGS believe this will be a portal where members could continue intriguing dialogue beyond the annual meeting. Group intends to disseminate information on activities of the society, training as well as collaborative opportunities, links to great learning resources including workshops as well as conferences and current news related

to genetics. Further, the group provides a platform where trainees and faculty could engage in interesting scientific discussion related to genetics.

After the initial development of the group, Johnathan Rios pointed out that the posts be restricted to research in Texas and Penny Riggs suggested using BioNewsTX (<https://twitter.com/BioNewsTX>) as a resource to gather genetics-related news in Texas, albeit this resource not being exhaustive. Tina Gumienny suggested addition of news related to conferences and meetings of interest. Currently, the facebook is populated with TGS news – annual TGS meeting dates, interesting research and perspective articles from institutes in Texas and beyond.

The annual TGS meeting presents a great opportunity to introduce the facebook group and its benefits to the membership. As we start a new year in TGS, this presents an opportunity to introduce board members and other distinguished members to the general membership. The introduction could be comprised of a brief description of what his/her research focuses are and a message to young trainees along with relevant details that TGS deems fit to pique interest among young trainees.

While maintenance of the group could be a task of the BOD for the trainees together with a faculty member, active participation of both trainees and faculty members will be instrumental in achieving the goals of this project. Therefore, I kindly request to establish a general mechanism where personnel in-charge of the group be notified of genetics-related news, training opportunities and other valuable resources especially in Texas. Once the mechanism is in-place the personnel in-charge may initiate discussion among the members and also direct questions to faculty members, especially those who are not on social media, for their valuable input. Finally, the Twitter arm could be implemented based upon the response of the membership to the facebook group as the number of Twitter subscribers tends to be limited compared to facebook users. Further, Twitter permits more focused real-time discussions among an interested group of members rather than a continued discussion with a wider visibility. Therefore, the Twitter arm should be implemented after careful consideration of points such as above.

Sincerely,  
Ramesh Gunaratna  
Director for Trainees and Post-docs  
Texas Genetics Society – 2015/16