



**56th North-Central Section Meeting
Minutes of the Management Board Meeting
in Cincinnati, Ohio
7 April 2022, 6:30 am**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 a.m. CDT on Thursday 7 April 2022 in the North Meeting Room 207 of the Duke Energy Convention Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Fifteen people were present and introduced themselves: **Craig Dietsch** (Co-Chair of this 56th Annual Meeting, held jointly Southeastern Section in Cincinnati, Ohio, 2022, and Section Chair); **Doug Gouzie** (Chair of the 55th Annual Meeting held virtually ‘in Springfield, Missouri’ in 2021 and outgoing Past-Section Chair); **Tara Kneeshaw** (Chair of the 57th Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2023, and incoming Section Chair); **Ginny Peterson** (Vice-Chair of the 57th Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 2023, and incoming Section Vice-Chair); **Dan Sturmer** (Co-Vice-Chair of the 56th Annual Meeting, held jointly with Southeastern in Cincinnati, Ohio, 2022 and Section Vice-Chair); **Michael Wolf** (Management Board member at large, 2019-2022); **Melinda Higley** (Management Board member at large, 2020-2023); **Jay Zambito** (nominee for Management Board member at large, 2022-2025); **Donald ‘Zac’ Wormington** (Student Representative, 2021-2023); **Tandis Bidgoli** (North-Central Section Executive Secretary); **Nancy Williams** (outgoing North-Central Section Executive Secretary); **Kevin Mickus** (Organizing Committee Member and Technical Program Chair of the 55th Annual Meeting held virtually ‘in Springfield, Missouri’ in 2021); **Steve Mattox** (Organizing Committee Member of the 57th Annual Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2023); **Vicki McConnell** (GSA Executive Director); and **Debbie Marcinkowski** (GSA Foundation Development Director).

1. Meeting Agenda -

It was moved and seconded that the meeting agenda be accepted, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Minutes from 2021 -

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the Management Board Meeting for the 55th Annual Meeting of the North-Central Section held on 15 April 2021 virtually ‘in Springfield, Missouri’. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

3. Reminders for Section events at the 56th North-Central Section Meeting -

- a. The Section’s All-Member Business Meeting will be held on Thursday, 7 April from 5:00–5:30 p.m. in Room 201/202. Members will vote on recommendations presented by the Management Board, section members who have passed away will be remembered, recommendations from this meeting will be voted on, and Craig Dietsch (Cincinnati 2022) and Tara Kneeshaw/Ginny Peterson (Grand Rapids 2023) and will provide meeting updates.
- b. GSA Campus Representatives Appreciation Breakfast on Friday, 8 April from 7:00-8:00 a.m. in North Meeting Room 207 (this room)

4. Current Meeting Update -

Craig Dietsch thanked the organizing committee and team for their assistance in planning and preparing for the meeting. He extended a special thanks to Rebecca Freeman (University of Kentucky) for her efforts as Co-Chair of the meeting. The registration numbers for the meeting were lower than expected due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The organizing committee had hoped for better meeting attendance prior to the surge in cases associated with the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus. Craig indicated that given some of the challenges with meeting planning and participation, the board and section might consider a virtual option for future meetings, perhaps every three years.

5. **GSA Matters** – Vicki McConnell reported that due to the challenges of the pandemic, all section meetings had lower attendance and participation. She expressed gratitude for the hard efforts of the organizing committees and section membership for making the meetings successful despite the challenges of the past few years. Hybrid meetings placed some additional financial burdens on meeting finances, but GSA was looking into options for hybrid meetings given that there is strong interest in virtual attendance. GSA expects that there will be more virtual options for future sustainability of the organization, but costs and other factors needed to be considered.

Vickie also reported on three major updates for GSA. (1) GSA sold its headquarters facility/space on April 5th but has some time to address challenges of operating without a physical space. (2) Vickie announced that she was retiring and a search is underway for a new Executive Director for the organization. (3) GSA is reorganizing itself based on its decadal strategic plans towards “centers of excellence”. These include creating a center focused on Professional Excellence, headed by Matt Dawson, and another focused on Scientific Integrity. GSA is also working to expand its international partnerships and presence and is hoping to host more international meetings.

6. **GSA Foundation Matters** – Debbie Marcinkowski provided an update on the GSA Foundation balances, which are in excellent shape. Giving increased during the pandemic and the funds transfers to GSA are increasing to ~\$1.5M. With these funds, the foundation was able to provide 30 field camp scholarships. Brunton has increased their sponsorship of GSA, but GSA continues to look for corporate sponsors for additional support. The foundation has also started a mini-campaign to develop a fund for open-access fees for authors.
7. **Section Reports** - The section had 2,841 voting members as of 31 December 2021, an increase of 16 members over the year.

- a. **Financials** – Tandis Bidgoli distributed financial reports showing that at the end of December 2021, the Section operating account had a balance of \$69,251 and the North-Central Section Endowment with the GSAF had a balance of \$545,528.

Previous calendar year end for comparison: the Section operating account had a balance of \$75,168 at the end of December 2020. The North-Central Section Endowment in the GSA Foundation had a balance at the end of December 2020 of \$481,002.

Tandis noted that although the Endowment had grown substantially (\$64,526), present volatility in the markets would likely reduce this gain over the year.

- b. **Travel grants** – Nancy Williams provided an update, indicating that, in general, travel grant applications are down from past years. There were 43 travel grant applications, with 40 applicants eligible for the national meeting. For the current section meeting, only 20 applications were received, and each was provided \$250 in travel support. In total, the section has spent \$12,025 on travel grants for both meetings.

Raised for discussion was removing the requirement for an advisor's signature for travel grant.

- c. **Undergraduate Research grants** – Tandis Bidgoli delivered an update on student research grants provided by Dr. Ashley Burkett, who is in her fifth year as Undergraduate Research Grants administrator. Dr. Burkett reported that in 2021, \$2,100 was awarded to six students in amounts ranging from \$150 to \$500. In 2021, the management board agreed to raise the annual program budget to \$4,000, with up to \$750 for each grant. Only two grant applications were received by the March 15th deadline and the deadline had been extended to April 15th. Awards for 2022 will be finalized in the next few weeks.
- d. **Student Advisory Council (SAC)** – Zac Wormington, North-Central Section representative for SAC, reported on the council's activities. SAC is still working to boost communication with students and encourage participation in GSA events. Discussions with students suggest they want to participate in events but commonly feel uncertain and intimidated about how to do so. SAC is assisting by supporting students and guiding them. They are also developing a Frequently Asked Questions link for meetings, so students may feel less uncertain / uncomfortable.
- e. **Geosciences Congressional Visits Day** – There was none held in 2021, but the program will resume in 2022.
- f. **Geology and Public Policy Committee (GPPC) Report** – Tandis Bidgoli delivered a report provided by Robert 'Robby' Goldman on GPPC major activities. GPPC has discussed and approved revisions to GSA's position statements on: (a) Geoheritage, (b) Value of Geologic Mapping, and (c) Geoscience and Energy Policy. They have also reindorsed the American Meteorological Society's statement on the Freedom of Scientific Expression. The GPPC has been revising GSA's Critical Issues paper on Induced Seismicity; however, progress has been on the paper has been slow due to difficulty receiving timely feedback from various invited experts. The GPPC subcommittee revising this paper will arrange a future meeting to discuss how to proceed with the feedback they currently have. GPPC nominated and unanimously voted to elect Monica Dix as the Chair-Elect for GPPC, which begins on July 1, 2022 and will transition into a full one-year Chair position on July 1, 2023. Mike O'Connor, a past-GSA Congressional Science Fellow (CSF), was nominated and unanimously approved by the GPPC to serve on CSF selection committee.
- g. **The 2021 Annual Report of the Section** – copies of the the Annual Reports to Council and the Minutes of the Management Board meetings were distributed to the board and will be posted on the North-Central Section portion of the Geological Society of America Web site.
- h. **Meetings reports**
 - 57th Annual Meeting, 2023, hosted by Grand Valley State University, represented by Tara Kneeshaw and Ginny Peterson. They reported on the progress being made toward the *Meeting in the Mitten*. The local committee was finalizing the venue contracting for the Eberhard Center at Grand Valley State University, but still identifying chairs for other aspects of the meeting planning.
 - Doug Gouzie confirmed that the 58th Annual Meeting will be back in Springfield, Missouri and held jointly with the South-Central Section. He noted some challenges with the original venue, which went bankrupt. GSA is working to either renegotiate or cancel the contract with this venue. They have also identified an alternative venue, which has a lower cost.

8. Continuation of Student Funding and Transfer to GSA Foundation -

Funding levels were proposed to remain the same as those approved in 2021:

- a. Student Awards, Grants, and Support
 - a. Travel Grants for fiscal year 2022-2023 – allocate up to \$8,000 of Section funds (not counting GSAF match or Annual Meeting matching funds) for the Denver Annual Meeting and Grand Rapids Section meeting.
 - b. Student Presentation Awards for the 2023 Grand Rapids meeting – allocate up to \$2,000
 - c. Undergraduate Research Grants – allocate up to \$4000, with maximum individual grants of \$750
 - d. *On To the Future* (OTF) contribution – allocate up to \$1,500 for fiscal year 2022-2023
 - e. *Congressional Visits Day* student support – allocate up to \$1,000 for fiscal year 2022-2023
2. Allow the Executive Secretary to:
 - a. expend up to \$8,000 from section operating funds in the 2022-2023 fiscal year for Travel Grants (1a)
 - b. expend up to \$8,500 from the Section Endowment in the 2022-2023 fiscal year for Presentation Awards, Undergraduate Research Grants, and OTF (1b, 1c, 1d, & 1e)
3. Allocate up to \$20,000 as a transfer during fiscal year 2022-2023 to the North-Central Endowment Fund at the GSA Foundation if funds are available (if at least \$5,000 is transferred, there is a \$5,000 GSAF match).

It was moved and seconded to approve the spending allocations; the motion passed unanimously. [This item was voted on and approved by voice vote of the membership of the Section at the Annual All Member meeting on All Member meeting on 7 April 2022.]

9. Approval of incoming Member at Large for the term 2022-2025.

Jay Zambito, Beloit College, was nominated to serve as Member at Large to replace Michael Wolff (2019-2022).

It was moved and seconded to approve the nomination; the motion passed unanimously. [This item was voted on and approved by voice vote of the membership of the Section at the Annual All Member meeting on 7 April 2021.]

10. Discussions –

- a. **Travel Grant Forms:** The management board discussed the drawbacks and benefits of require advisor signatures/approvals for travel grant request. The group agreed that this step was unnecessary and created an additional hurdle for students and faculty.
- b. **Improving Membership:** The management board discussed ways to improve membership and explored the benefits and drawbacks of making student membership free. Another option discussed was to roll student membership costs into the meeting costs, as those are more easily paid for by universities. Pricing structures for meetings should also be examined as so as to incentivize membership.
- c. **Future Meetings:** The board discussed locations for future meetings and the challenges and benefits of hosting a meeting in Canada. There was also discussion of a rotating virtual meeting option, which could distribute meeting planning efforts across a broader swath of the membership in those years.

11. Executive Session – None needed

Respectfully submitted by:

Tandis Bidgoli, Executive Secretary, North-Central Section, Geological Society of America