

ASHG Membership Forum & Business Meeting Minutes  
December 8, 2021  
Virtual

Welcome

ASHG President Gail Jarvik welcomed attendees and thanked them for their interest in the Society. This meeting gives members the opportunity to provide feedback to Society leaders, improve member engagement, and ensure that the Society is providing value to members. This year's meeting was presented in a virtual format on Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Approval of Minutes from 2020 meeting

The minutes from the 2020 meeting were approved with 24 attendees voting 'yes' on Zoom.

Moment of Silence

Jarvik asked the group to observe a moment of silence in memory of ASHG members who has died since the 2020 meeting. They were as follows:

- Lissy F. Jarvik
- Stephen Warren
- Sir Peter Harper
- Lee-Jun Wong
- Richard Lewontin
- Walter Nance

Society Updates and Achievements

Jarvik gave a brief update on pandemic. The success of the 2021 Virtual Meeting is a key calendar-year highlight the highlights from this year, when the Society accomplished a great deal during the ongoing

- First year for content on DEI across the field
- Surveyed 4,000 individuals to better understand demographics
- New communication programs: ASHG Connect (Members only forum)
- Maintained a very strong AJHG submission rate
- New report on economic impact on human genetics and genomics

Jarvik encouraged attendees to view the annual report to learn more about the Society's work for you. The annual report can be found [here](#).

Treasurer's Report

ASHG Treasurer Bruce Gelb provided an overview of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). Revenue was approximately \$7.5 million, and expenses were \$6.8 million, producing an increase in net assets of just over \$700,000. Gelb noted that a forgiven Paycheck Protection Program loan and a successful event cancellation insurance claim lent to this success.

For the current fiscal year (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) the Board of Directors had approved a revised budget with a projected loss given the ongoing pandemic and ASHG's continued focus

on maintaining ASHG programming for members and strengthening in crucial areas of member need. Expected revenue totaled \$5.17M and expenses \$6.47M, forecasting a loss of \$1.3M in the fiscal year. The Society's investment portfolio performed well with a twelve-month portfolio gain of over \$2.3M for a reserve total of \$21.2 million at fiscal year-end. ASHG invested approximately \$1M in its strategic programs over the two-year period by deploying its healthy reserve as needed. The Board of Directors was confident in the Society's financial position and saw this loss as an investment in ASHG's members.

For Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023) the Board approved a preliminary budget for an operating loss that could range from \$120,000-560,000, depending on 2022 meeting attendance, plus expected continued Strategic Investments to be determined.

#### AJHG Editorial Report

AJHG Editor-in-Chief Bruce Korf provided a quick update on the Journal's activities, noting an increase in Impact Factor from 10.5 to 11.025 this year. Submission numbers in 2021 were expected to near strong 2019, pre-pandemic levels. Korf highlighted AJHG's work publishing reviews, commentaries, forums, and ASHG Perspectives. Open access articles make up 17% of published articles in 2021. Open access is a double-edged sword. It provides recent science, but costs are incurred. If AJHG became completely open access, something would need to change to bring in revenue.

- Papers transferred to AJHG from *Cell Genomics*: 19 (total offers 80)
- Papers transferred to HGGA from AJHG: 36 (total offers 198)

Korf congratulated the two winners of the Cotterman award: Ian Arriaga-Mackenzie, MS and Xiaoyan Jia, PhD. He also welcomed the new editorial board members and thanked outgoing ones.

Jarvik thanked Korf and the editorial board for their hard work in 2021.

#### Item 7. HGGA Editorial Report

HGGA Editor-in-Chief Mike Bamshad expressed appreciation for those in attendance. In its second year, HGGA is an open access journal designed to communicate high-quality human genetics and genomics research. Its article processing charge (APC) was currently \$3k for non-members and \$2,400 for members, with a variety of discounts offered to certain groups. The rate of submissions for HGGA had nearly doubled in 2021 from the last year. Year to date, 40 articles had been published compared to 9 in 2020. There was no impact factor since it is not yet indexed in PubMed.

Bamshad shared that HGGA was currently looking at ways to improve data sharing and diversity, equity, and inclusion. They had launched a new forum to promote and support dialogue for diverse voices. The journal would also be piloting new guidelines and strategies for data sharing and consent.

He thanked the highly engaged editorial Board and encouraged members to submit their work to *HGG Advances*. Jarvik thanked Bamshad and the editorial board for their hard work in 2021 and iterated Bamshad's request to submit science to *HGG Advances*.

## Realizing the Benefits: A Spotlight on ASHG Membership

Nancy Spinner, the chair of the ASHG Membership Engagement Committee, discussed how members could make the most of the benefits that ASHG membership offered. She highlighted the new members-only forum ASHG Connect. She also mentioned expanded digital programming, an enhanced career center, the *Genetically Speaking* podcast, the new Advocacy Certificate for Human Genetics and Genomics Trainees, and more.

Jarvik thanked Spinner for joining and for the Membership Engagement Committee's work.

## Open Floor and Question and Answer

Jarvik opened the floor for questions and comments from attendees.

A member asked when HGGGA expects to have an impact factor or be indexed PubMed. Bamshad noted that CellPress, ASHG's publishing partner, had been working to apply to other indexes to aide in the effort of being indexed in PubMed. Bamshad hoped HGGGA would be indexed by the second quarter of next year. The impact factor would likely take 3 years.

Multiple members thanked the volunteers and staff of ASHG and noted excitement for a return to in-person meetings.

A member asked if it was possible to pivot to an all-virtual meeting if public health concerns necessitated it in 2022. Bruce Gelb said that it was possible, but the Board and he personally were very optimistic about meeting in-person in 2022. Jarvik noted new developments like rapid Covid testing that would hopefully allow for a safe, in-person meeting.

## Future ASHG Directions Breakout Group Activity

Gelb shared that the Board of Directors has engaged in extensive dialogue around strategic business planning this year and wants to get member input. He broke up the meeting into 8 breakout rooms to discuss the question below:

*As ASHG continues to prioritize discovery science, it is also exploring whether and how it might advance "solution science" – research that helps genomic knowledge move more swiftly into clinical relevance and application and include diverse communities and values. To inform early thinking, which of the following specific opportunities do you think are most beneficial for ASHG to pursue? Please discuss—the answer may be more than one.*

**A. New content offerings, programs and member value focused on implementation research for genomics and precision health to improve prevention, diagnostics and treatment planning.**

**B. New content for and interactions with health systems and payers – deepening understanding of policy and business agendas as well as the need to generate**

*evidence, through research, for the value of genomics and break down barriers to system adoption*

***C. Greater integration with societies serving historically marginalized communities to increase & inform research agendas, enrich patient education strategies and build awareness of therapeutic options***

***D. Greater integration with research/medical specialty fields to inform and enhance genomic research agendas that can increase adoption of relevant specialty-specific genomics-driven prevention, diagnostics, and treatment plans***

***Other ideas to advance genetic and genomic solution science (discuss in your groups)***

Breakout groups reported out on their discussions. Four of eight groups suggested a focus on item *D* in conjunction with one other area or on its own. Two groups suggested a combination of *A* and *D*. Multiple groups noted the importance of educating and creating bridges to ancillary specialties and communities (e.g., general practitioners; health systems and payers) and strengthening integration with trainees and historically marginalized communities. Professional development for clinicians was also discussed by several groups.

Charles Rotimi thanked everyone for participating, expressed excitement for beginning his term in January, and adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m ET.