

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting
CNS/AANS Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and Peripheral
Nerves
San Diego Marriott Hotel, San Diego, CA
Monday, October 1, 2001

Dr. McCormick called the meeting to order.

Members present: Dr. McCormick, Dr. Dickman, Dr. Baldwin,
Dr. Alexander, Dr. Branch, Dr. Midha, Dr. Hurlbert, Dr. Haid,
Dr. Heary, Dr. Gokaslan, Dr. Gerszten, Dr. Benzel,
Dr. Przybylski, Dr. Rodts, Dr. Papadopoulos, Dr. Levi, Dr. Ryken,
Dr. Sonntag.

Guests present: Mr. Ron Engelbreit (AANS accountant) Ms. Susan
Eget (AANS) Dr. Hadley, Dr. Walters.

The minutes of the previous executive committee meeting (4/23/01)
were approved.

Dr. Rodts and Mr. Engelbreit presented the financial report.
Copies were provided to the executive committee members. They
reported the new investment firm is now managing 15% of the 60%
of the Section's assets that are in high-liquidity vehicles. The
strong track record of the firm is felt to warrant this action.
Performance is being closely monitored.

Dr. McCormick added that there are some changes underway at the
AANS office regarding accounting for office time and service
charges. The AANS claims that in the past duties were being done
and not appropriately accounted and that resulted in under
billing of the joint sections for services received. They claim
that the new increases in overall charges do not reflect changes
in service but rather more accurate billing. Dr. McCormick
charged each of the organizers of the upcoming annual meeting to
very closely evaluate costs and to look for ways to generate
additional savings to the organization if opportunities presented
themselves. Dr. Haid offered to be involved with arranging
sponsorship for food and beverage affairs. Dr. Rodts added that
along with other budgetary issues of the past year, two years
worth of fellowship grants were paid out of the budget of the
past year. Apparently the grant from the previous year had not
been paid and so numbers from the preceding year appeared
artificially strong and it added to the overall weak performance
of the Section finances in the past year.

Dr. McCormick then presented issues regarding the Washington
committee. The executive committee, as a whole, voiced strong
support for the efforts of the Washington committee. Dr. Heary
made a motion for a contribution in the amount of \$25,000 to the
Washington committee. The motion passed unanimously.

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Dr. Benzel presented an update on the progress regarding the Decade of the Spine. A logo has been selected and the committee is moving forward in organizing the separate initiative of the World Spine meeting. World Spine II will probably occur late in the summer of 2004. The meeting is planned for Chicago, probably in the month of August.

Dr. Hadley discussed the guidelines on management of spinal injury. This is a spine section initiative and the joint section will retain ownership of copyright. The original budget provided to Dr. Hadley's committee was \$48,000. \$15,000 was earmarked for publication. The operating budget of the committee has maintained a \$3,000 residual balance and in addition to the money budgeted for publication, this leaves \$18,000 available for publication. The guidelines are planned for a publication as a supplement to neurosurgery in early 2002. Dr. Haid rendered a motion to accept the guidelines as proposed. The motion passed. The committee was strongly supportive of the guidelines effort and all feel that this is perhaps the most important effort undertaken by the joint section to date. The motion was then made to allot up to \$100,000 for the publication and distribution of the guidelines. That motion passed as well.

Dr. John Hurlbert was charged by Dr. McCormick to explore the available means to offset costs of publication. The committee rendered a consensus that a sponsor page that would simply list corporate sponsors who have helped to produce the publication would be included. Dr. Haid will assist Dr. Hurlbert in recruiting sponsorship for the guidelines effort. A motion was made to seek unrestricted educational grants and form a committee to oversee the grant recruitment efforts in addition to distribution of the educational document. The motion passed. Dr. Hurlbert will spearhead that effort with Dr. Haid's assistance.

Some discussion was held regarding the accreditation of spine surgery fellowships. Program requirements are reported listed on the senior neurosurgeon society website. In short, it was felt that this was a done deal and that input from the joint section had not been as extensive as was hoped earlier. Specifically the committee voiced objection to approval of fellowship experiences of less than one year. Others voiced objection to the institutional requirement issues. No action was taken on the issue.

Dr. Dickman then reported on the efforts to establish a research endowment. The effort is underway to define how the research endowment will be administered and by what mechanism. Some of these issues will be the subject of some proposed rules changes.

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Dr. Duresio will author the proposed rules change to be voted upon in February at the annual meeting.

Dr. Papadopoulos then gave the future sites report. The 2002 meeting will be held at the Orlando Yacht Club. The 2003 meeting will be at Saddlebrook Resort near Tampa and the 2004 meeting will likely be held at the San Diego Marriott Hotel.

Dr. Sonntag reported on activities of the AANS as they pertain to the joint section. Specifically he discussed the issue of recertification and he is actively seeking questions for the recertification exam.

Dr. Dickman then delivered the nominating committee report. The nominee for member-at-large is Dr. Ron Apfelbaum. The nominee for chairman-elect is Dr. Regis Haid. A motion was made to accept this slate and this passed. Dr. Gerszten then presented the outcomes report. He is in the process of forming a spine outcomes consortium which would incorporate outcomes research into a multicenter trial format. Further information will be presented at the upcoming annual meeting.

Research committee: No report.

Dr. Heary delivered the annual meeting report. The economic concerns remain substantial. In view of the September 11th tragedy, committee members are paying particular attention to their numbers for the upcoming meeting and they will continue to do so.

Dr. Haid delivered the exhibits report. He presented a review of the exhibits budget which appears to be one of the healthy areas of the joint section financial picture. Efforts are also underway as described above to seek sponsorship for food and beverage events.

Dr. Heary then delivered the education committee report. The presentation at the AANS for the joint Section afternoon will include six invited talks and one symposium.

Newsletter: No report.

Dr. Ryken then presented the awards report. The winner of the Cloward award is Langston Holly from UCLA. Dr. Holly will travel to Memphis to work with Drs. Foley and Smith. The probable Mayfield award winner is Keton Bulsara from Duke. There were some issues surrounding Dr. Bulsara's eligibility for the award and these issues were being clarified at the time of the meeting. An update will be presented at the annual meeting.

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Dr. Gokaslan then presented the coordinating committee report. He presented samples of the advertisements he has prepared for the solicitation of proposals and applicants for joint section fellowships and awards. The committee voiced strong approval for the efforts made by Dr. Gokaslan. He will move forward with the placement of the ads.

Dr. Przybylski then presented the CPT report. He reported that on anterior spinal approaches, one can now use the 62 modifier on not only the primary level but when additional levels are operated, the 62 modifier is appropriate for the additional level codes.

Dr. Midha then presented the peripheral nerve task force report. He reported that the initial response to the peripheral nerve survey had been strong and that good data was being collated from the responses. He will report further at the next meeting of the committee.

Dr. Levi then presented the website report. He has revamped the website now to include a job search site. The site offers the ability for members to amend their own data on the website and perform such tasks as address changes and so forth. He is eager to proceed with adding the spinal injury guidelines to the website.

A motion was then made to adjourn. The motion was accepted.