

Meeting of the Executive Committee  
AANS/CNS Joint Section on Disorders of the Spine and the Peripheral Nerves  
Monday April 8th, in McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

Dr. Baldwin Called the meeting to order.

Members present: Dr. Baldwin, Dr. McCormick, Dr. Traynelis, Dr. Branch, Dr. Haid, Dr. Papadopoulos, Dr. Heary, Dr. Fessler, Dr. Lauryssen, Dr. Gokaslan, Dr. Levi, Dr. Benzel, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Gerszten, Dr. Midha, Dr. McLaughlin, Dr. DiRisio, Dr. Resnick, Dr. Kim, Dr. Shaffrey, Dr. Apfelbaum, Dr. Guest, Dr. Paramore, Dr. Choudhri.

Guests included: Mr. Ron Engelbreit, Ms Lori Behncke, Dr. Phil Weinstein and Mr. Noel Perrin.

The minutes from the previous meeting were distributed to the members present. Dr. Benzel made the motion and Dr. Alexander seconded it that the minutes be accepted, this was approved unanimously.

In the absence of Dr. Rodts, Mr. Engelbreit, from the AANS central office presented the treasurers interim report. This information was not available in printed form for the entire group, but was summarized by Mr. Engelbreit. The overall assets of the Section appear to be stable. The long term investment pool had a return that out paced the market. The total assets of the section are currently approximately, 1.4 million dollars.

Dr. Baldwin presented the questions regarding prospective budgeting to the Executive Committee for their consideration. At this time the President, President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, or Meeting Chairman will have the authority to approve expenditures or budgetary changes in physical year 2003. After some discussion the dues for physical year 2003 will remain the same at \$50.00 per year. The Section will conduct a electronic membership drive. The fellowships or grants will remain the same. We anticipate completely funding the fellowships with solicited donations. The Section will continue to distribute information through its news letters. We will also run ads in the Journal of Neurosurgery and Neurosurgery.

There was an indication that the journal Neurosurgery had committed to provide complementary advertizing space for the section. At our annual meeting in 2003 we anticipated soliciting sponsorship or exhibit space sales to pharmaceutical companies in addition to the instrument manufacturers. The rate increases for the registration or exhibitors has already been developed through the AANS office.

Dr. Benzel reported on the Decade of the Spine and World Spine II. The budget is being prepared. There is a verbal commitment to share the risk on an even participation with the North American Spine Society. Some concern was expressed that there's not written documentation reflecting this agreement, and this will be secured by Dr. Benzel and Dr. Baldwin.

Dr. Baldwin solicited suggestions regarding a response to the SPORT Study. Early indications were that there was a mixed feeling about generating an alternative study. A recent publication of the Volvo Award Paper in the Journal of Spine seemed to indicate that surgical treatment was favored in a similar study in Europe. There's still an apparent desire from the parent organizations that a study that more accurately reflects patient selection and treatment groups be conducted by the Joint Section. The Section agreed that we will continue to develop this effort. Jim Guest and Peter Gerszten were charged along with Dr. Baldwin to pursue this effort.

Dr. McCormick reported on the concerns regarding Spine Fellowships. He discussed the concerns raised at the Executive Committee Meeting in February with the leadership of the Senior Society. This resulted in a document published on the SNS web site that verified proposed changes to the fellowship criteria. This appeared to address the concern about a six month fellowship and review of fellowship applications by a committee that did not include spine representation and then intra-residency fellowships. Clarification on the web site published in March 2002 indicated that the norm for a spine fellowship would be twelve months with a six month fellowship being considered an exception. The review committee for fellowship would include two members from the Spine and Peripheral Nerve Section and therefore the Section leadership would have veto power for fellowships. Dr. Phil Winestein representing the SNS Council assured the Section the changes published in the guidelines would be made to the formal web site page. He also assured the section that concerns raised in February were reasonable and were heard by SNS leadership. There's still a concern regarding infolded

fellowships into residency training period. Further discussion led to a motion by Dr. Traynelis and was seconded by Dr. Gokaslan. The motion read that the Spine Section recommends that a fellow meet the requirements for the ABNS or the Canadian equivalent board eligibility at the time he or she begins a Spine Fellowship. This motion was anonymously passed and will be presented to the Senior Society by Dr. Baldwin. The Executive Committee expressed appreciation to the Council of the SNS regarding their sensitivity and willingness to except our recommendations regarding the Spine Fellowships.

The education committee of the Section was charged by Dr. Baldwin to enhance the case reporting documentation that will ultimately be used to assess Spine Fellowships, and to work with the American Board of Neurological Surgery in this area.

Dr. Traynelis reported on the publications committee's effort to continue a wide distribution of the spine trauma guidelines. He indicated that Spine Universe will produce a compact disc of the guidelines for distribution to non-neurosurgeons. There was some discussion regarding the sponsorship and ownership of the content. Since Spine Universe was commercial entity it was decided that doctor's, Traynelis, McCormick and Hadley will review the CD prior to distribution to insure there is no conflict of interest or loss of control with intellectual property.

Dr. Guest reporting from the research committee. He indicated that the grants submitted must meet the minimum criteria for review and that they are developing consensus guideline for spinal cord implantation. The proposed document regarding spinal cord implants will be forwarded to the secretary at least two weeks prior to the next Executive Committee for inclusion in the Agenda Book.

Dr. Alexander reported on the 2002 annual meeting. The final numbers are pending but it appears that there are between 435 and 440 medical attendees bringing the total attendees close to 1000. The evaluations indicate that the overall meeting was quite well received. The final expense and revenue data are not complete but it appears the meeting will be profitable. The 2003 meeting planing is under way with Dr. Resnick and Alexander visiting the Tampa/Settlebrook site. The program committee plans a similar format. The exhibit chairman, Dr. McLaughlin was not

present for his report. The education issues indicated that there will be a change in the format at the Congress Meeting with one plenary type session to increase the profile of spine issues in the evening. The content for this session will come from the Joint Section. Dr. Heary will insure that the content issues will be resolved with Joel McDonald.

Dr. Papadopoloulos reported on the future sites. The Sattlebrook location for 2003 in San Diego, Marriott for 2004 have been confirmed. A location in Phoenix for 2005 is still under evaluation. Some consideration for return to Disney a property in Florida in 2006.

Dr. DiRisio had nothing to report on the rules and regulations. Dr. Gokaslan reported on the co-ordinating committee and detailed the processes for advertising the research opportunities and awards in the various publications.

Dr. Fessler delivered the report for the Washington Committee, this is included in the Agenda Book, but he was unable to present this secondary to the plenary session responsibility. There were no questions or concerns from the Executive Committee regarding the published report in the agenda book.

New Business: Dr. Baldwin discussed a request for indorsement of a Brachial Plexus Course by Dr. Spinner. A collection of Spine and Peripheral Nerve Section faculty are participating in this activity. A motion was made by Dr. Apfelbaum to empower Dr. Baldwin to endorse this activity if its appropriate. This motion was unanimously approved. A discussion of the American College and the American Board of Spine Surgery was entertained. These were identified as boards or activities that were outside of the mainstream of organized Neurosurgery and ACGME or RRC perview. Further discussion indicated that our membership should recognize that the solicitations from these entities should reflect that they are outside the current perview of the ACGME, RRC and the American Board of Medical Specialties approval processes.

Dr. Apfelbaum presented a solicitation for membership in the Cervical Spine Research Society by Joint Section Members. He indicated that the instructional courses and activities of this society were meritorious and suggested that the Joint Section Members participate or apply for membership. There being no further business Dr. Baldwin adjourned the meeting.

Minutes submitted by:

Dr. Charles L. Branch, Jr./ Secretary  
CLB/ mjl