

## **Annual Council Meeting of the Wildlife Disease Association**

**August 13, 2011**

**Quebec City, Quebec, Canada**

### **Council Members Present.**

Lynn Creekmore (President), Dolores Gavier-Widén (Vice President and incoming President), Laurie Baeten (Treasurer), Charles van Riper (Past President), Jim Mills (Editor Journal of Wildlife Diseases), Renee Carleton (Website Editor), Colin Gillin (Member at Large and Chair Wildlife Veterinary Section), Kristin Mansfield (Member at Large), Jane Harms (Student Representative), Christine Kreuder Johnson (Member at Large), Eric Ågren (Nordic Section), Thijs Kuiken (European Section), and Pauline Nol (Secretary; available briefly via Skype).

Others present were Dave Jessup (WDA Executive Manager), Thierry Work (Incoming Vice President), Peregrine Wolfe (Incoming Secretary), Ed Addison, Billy Karesh, Tom Deliberto, Debra Miller, and Josh Dein.

Wildlife Disease Association President Lynn Creekmore welcomed participants to the Annual Wildlife Disease Association (WDA) Council meeting and thanked them for coming.

**Vice President's Report presented by D. Gavier-Widén.** One of the Vice President's tasks is to assist the president in organizing the committees. The President and Vice President worked for several months to formulate targets for each of the committees and then contacted people to populate the committees. The Vice President is also the Chair of the Time and Place Committee, whose task it is to organize the future conferences. That report will be heard later in the meeting. The Vice President also dedicated a significant amount of time to communication, including the December teleconference and email discussion and communication.

**Treasurer's Report presented by Laurie Baeten.** Members of the Budget and Audit Committee (L. Baeten, E. Addison, and Carol Meteyer) had a meeting with Jacobson and Schmitt Associates (JSA), the Association's investment company. It was determined that up to \$40,000 could be taken from the investment funds each year without affecting the principle investment. Current assets are at \$1,397,737 as of June 30, 2011. The WDA budget is on track to be positive this year. The Association's mid-year operating expenditures have come to \$128,884 with \$80,000

attributed to production and distribution of the Journal of Wildlife Diseases (JWD). The investment portfolio is currently at \$1,322,913

The current bank account is at \$200,752. This is higher than what Council has asked the Treasurer to maintain it at, but this balance is a result of the numerous large transactions that occur due to the conference. An account was opened with Everbank. The BAC suggested opening a CD in foreign currencies as a one year \$25,000 CD in Australian funds. L. Baeten emphasized that JSA does an excellent job for WDA and maintains investments over the Standard and Poors Index. They have no suggestions for improvement in investment strategy at this time.

T. Kuiken asked about the current membership numbers and the approximately 10% decline in membership. D. Jessup stated that WDA's subscribing members have declined from 368 to 357 over the last year. Individual membership decreased somewhat over last year. C. Kreuder-Johnson asked about the perceived deficit for 2011 and L. Baeten explained that Council always works conservatively and creates a deficit but ultimately seldom sees an actual deficit. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

### **Secretary's Report and Teller Committee Report presented by Pauline Nol.**

The Teller's report was presented first. In November 2010, Council approved the slate of candidates developed by the Nominations Committee for the 2011-2012 WDA Council. The ballot was made available on the website and on line voting took place from January 31 to March 31, 2011. Members for whom we could not identify email addresses were sent paper ballots via regular post. The new members of Council are as follows:

President: Dolores Gavier-Widén

Vice president: Thierry Work

Secretary: Peregrine Wolff

Treasurer: Laurie Baeten

Council Members at Large: Ignasi Marco, Carol Meteyer

P. Nol congratulated the new members of Council and acknowledged the members of Council stepping down.

The Secretary's Report was presented next. Council Meeting minutes and Business Meeting minutes from 2001-2006 and 2008 have been sent to the website editor for

posting on the website. The remaining years will soon be sent. Minutes from the 2010 Annual and Business Meetings are currently on the website.

P. Nol also presented information on behalf of the Newsletter Editor, Jenny Powers. J. Powers would like to pass on the Newsletter to a new editor. The new editor should be experienced in using Publisher and Layout. J. Powers will be available to assist in transition.

The following are motions passed since the May 30, 2010 Annual Meeting:

**Motion (van Riper/Gavier-Widén):** That Richard Botzler and Charles Hibler be the 2011 recipients of the Wildlife Disease Association Emeritus Award. (June 1, 2011)

**Motion (Baeten/Nol):** That Council directs the Treasurer to allocate up to \$4,000 in fiscal year 2011 for student activities, and the development and maintenance of WDA student chapters. This will be a one-time expenditure that may be reconsidered in subsequent years, but future funds for student chapters and activities should, to the extent possible, be self-generated or from other specific sources. (January 28, 2011)

**Motion (Baeten/Nol):** That Council must approve a yearly report and spending plan for student activities and chapters developed by the Student Activities Committee (SAC), and the SAC may propose use of up to 50% of funds on hand in a given year for support of student activities and chapters. (January 28, 2011)

**Motion (van Riper/Mills):** To pass the WDA 2011 budget with a deficit of \$44,535 as presented by the budget and audit committee. (December 29/30, 2010)

**Motion (van Riper/Baeten):** That beginning January 1, 2011 back issues of JWD will be sold for \$35/copy. (December 29/30, 2010)

**Motion (van Riper/Baeten):** That WDA Council charges the Editor and Executive manager to work with AMM to determine and maintain a sufficient stock of back issues to meet varying levels of demand, but also minimize storage costs for issues that will not be sold. (December 29/30, 2010)

**Motion (Ågren/Nol):** WDA Council approves the renewal of the MOU with the Wildlife Society to run from 1/1/11 to 1/1/16. (December 29/30, 2010)

**Motion (Nol/Baeten):** That, in recognition of Ed Addison's contributions as our Executive Manager and his many other years of volunteer service to the WDA, the Wildlife Disease Association rename the WDA "Distinguished Service Award" the "Edward M. Addison Distinguished Service Award". (December 21, 2010)

**Motion: (Nol/Mills):** That the minutes of the May 30, 2010 Annual Meeting of the Wildlife Disease Association Council be approved as written. (December 14, 2010)

**Motion (Baeten/Nol):** That the Treasurer of the WDA provide assistance to the Student Chapter of the European Section of the WDA (EWDA) in the application for a

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant in support of the 2011 EWDA Student Workshop. This assistance will be in the form of submitting the grant application on behalf of the EWDA Student Chapter and, if granted, dispersing funds to the Student Workshop organizers. Cost to WDA for this support will not exceed \$150. (October 1, 2010)

**Motion (Baeten/Powers):** That Council approves the expenditure of up to \$3,200 from the executive manager's 2010 budget to cover the travel costs for the executive manager to attend the annual Wildlife Society Meeting and the AAWV/AZV/Trilateral Meeting in October 2010. (September 17, 2010)

P. Nol lastly stated that she would be stepping down from Council as of the end of the 2011 Annual meeting and thanked everyone in the WDA for such a positive and meaningful experience.

**Journal of Wildlife Diseases Editor's Report presented by Jim Mills.** Last year, Council voted to significantly decrease the number of pages and much discussion ensued on how to do this. Council and the Editorial Board discussed rejecting more manuscripts, decreasing the size of manuscripts, increasing page charges, introducing a Letters category. The Journal has increased the rejection rate, introduced the Letter category, and is under most circumstances enforcing page limits. For 2011, the JWD will have published 1,062 pages so the goal of less than 1,100 pages has been achieved. The Letter category was introduced in 2010 and utilization of this category has increased in 2011. It is hoped that the Letter category will cause an increase in the Journal's impact factor due to the way it is calculated.

T. Kuiken asked why there was such an increase in articles published between 2007 and 2010. J. Mills explained that the number of manuscripts submitted increased by 27% in 2010 and by even more in 2011. The number of articles being submitted by non-US countries is increasing greatly. The US is first in submissions, but Brazil and China are second and third in submissions, followed by Canada. There are also large increases in Latin American submissions, which are being encouraged, however, the editors need to look at the manuscripts vigilantly and not accept mediocre articles. J. Mills also stressed that author's page charges do not cover all of the publication costs and WDA pays the difference.

L. Creekmore suggested talking about new business practices at this time. D. Jessup agreed to introduce the topic and stated that the Editorial Board discussed the topic that morning and would like Council to move on it.

**Action Item: Reorganization of JWD manuscript submission, elimination of truants, and other items of business with Allen Marketing and Management presented by Dave Jessup.**

This topic began as an investigation of the reasons why the WDA has had problems with author page charge truancy. This amount has ranged from \$6,000-11,000 per year with accumulated totals (some going back 5-6 years) varying month to month but peaking at a high of \$41,595 on December 7, 2010. Substantial progress has been made on collecting on the past due amounts, with approximately \$18,500 paid, about \$18,000 still in collection or pursuit, and approximately \$4,500 written off as uncollectable (mostly from 2003-07). As per Council briefing notes of December 2010, a major contributing factor is the manner in which WDA has traditionally collected page charges from authors.

Briefly, each article's page charges are calculated based on number of journal pages utilized, whether the first or submitting author is a member, and, occasionally, whether color plates are included. Billings have been sent individually by AMM within 30 days after the article was published in JWD. No system is in place to report emails that bounce back. Page charges were not considered truant and reported to WDA Executive Manager until approximately 3-6 months after initial billings were sent. To avoid harassing WDA members, some of whose agencies pay bills slowly, WDA Executive Managers have generally not tried to contact truant authors until 9-12 months after the initial billing dates. This situation has left WDA trying to collect truant page charges a year or more after they were accrued, and often two or more years after the article was submitted or in revision. In some cases contact with the authors had been lost, or authors did not receive billings, but, in others authors had chosen to renege on their obligations. In some cases the grant funds that would have paid for the page charges had lapsed and were no longer available. In other cases the authors had asked for financial support but not been given a definitive answer. In all cases, any funds recovered were years in arrears and their collection difficult, time consuming and a major bookkeeping complication.

Many journals are now going to payment before publication through PayPal and credit card. There has been agreement that this Association can either request payment through credit card or invoice. AMM came up with a system after much negotiation that entails payment before publication via credit card-Pay Pal or invoice, and payment per article depending on article category. There will be

payments to make to both AMM and PayPal. AMM stated that if they are redoing their practices to accommodate WDA, WDA must sign a renewed contract with AMM through 2014. This contract will also deal with advertising in the JWD in which both parties agreed that AMM would receive 20% and WDA would receive 80% of the income from advertising. Advertising will be deemed appropriate and approved by the Editorial Board and Executive Manager. This will not likely be a large source of revenue in the short term but will likely increase gradually as pages of advertisements increase.

This is a reorganization of the way JWD does business with AMM and the bylaws state that Council has to approve such changes. The Editorial Board has submitted three motions reflecting their recommendations to Council regarding the changes in business practices.

T. Kuiken asked about the definition of “appropriate advertising”. D. Jessup explained that the types of advertising will be consistent with what WDA represents, i.e. items applicable to wildlife conservation and disease research. Appropriateness will be decided by the JWD Editor according to previous motions. L. Creekmore did, however, invite suggestions regarding the decision process in this matter.

T. Kuiken then asked for clarification about AMM charging on a “per submitted manuscript” basis. J. Mills explained that previously WDA was being charged per reviewed manuscript and now is going to be charged per submitted manuscript through Allen Track. The cost per submission is much less than cost per reviewed manuscript, however, the overall cost remains the same. An additional question regarding travel costs for AMM employees clarified that AMM cannot charge any travel or other costs without specific approval from Council.

C. Gillin asked about the consequences of pulling a paper at the last minute due to lack of payment. J. Mills responded that if there is enough time to replace it with another article he will, but if not, then there will be fewer pages in that issue. He hopes that this will be an infrequent occurrence.

C. Kreuder-Johnson expressed concern that this will add extra burden to the Editor. J. Mills understands that concern but is willing to try these changes.

**Motion (Ågren/Kreuder-Johnson):** Council approves the implementation of new methods of JWD manuscript submission, page charge calculation and collection outlined in Jeff Mercer and Bill Toffelmeyer’s letter (WDA-AMM agreement -

attachment 1) and as summarized in this Briefing Note #1 of Council's meeting on 8/14/2011. *Passed Unanimously*

**Motion (Gillin/(Ågren):** Council approves signature of the Contract Extension with Allen Marketing and Management signed and dated by AMM June 15, 2011 (attachment 2) which extends the business relationship between WDA and AMM through 2014 and sets potential cost increases for that period. *Passed Unanimously*

D. Jessup added that AMM agreed to forgo a 2% increase in charges in 2012 and 2013 but will make the 2% increase in 2014.

**Motion (Kuiken/Gavier-Widén 3):** Council approves signature of the Advertising Sales and Marketing contract with AMM for appropriate advertising (as determined by JWD Editor) in Journal of Wildlife Disease with responsibilities and revenues to be managed as per that contract signed and dated by AMM 6/15/2011 (attachment 3 ). *Passed Unanimously*

C. van Riper encouraged members to tell friends and colleagues about the opportunities for advertising in the JWD.

**Website Editor's Report presented by Renee Carleton.** The new website was launched on August 1, 2011. Everything has been reorganized and hopefully things will work more smoothly. There were some issues with Google searches due to this reorganization, but Google has been notified and those problems are being resolved. Currently, a Google search on WDA will bring up this organization first. R. Carleton asked Council for any suggestions as the website is still a work in progress. D. Jessup added that there are approximately 200,000 hits per year, therefore emphasizing that the website is a major interface for our organization. There was discussion regarding getting the Council minutes on the website as soon as possible and that they are easy to find.

C. Gillin inquired as to accessibility to the sections and they are very accessible at this time. The status of Facebook and Twitter are an ongoing process. Regarding comments and suggestions for the website, R. Carleton stated that the best method of feedback was via email.

**Executive Manger's Report presented by David Jessup.** D. Jessup officially took over as Executive Manager on August 1, 2010. One of the tasks the Executive Manager took on was press releases. This can be done as time allows but it may be more appropriate for another, more experienced, person to do these types of endeavors. The next task involved changing the business plan, which will now be implemented based on the motions passed earlier in the meeting. Another

accomplishment was an MOU with Ecohealth Alliance. Another initiative the Executive Manager undertook was to change the communication with the membership. The blast email process through AMM is not working very efficiently. D. Jessup developed a Google Groups format that classifies groups by sections and other dividers so that there is an option to send emails to certain people without going through AMM. Another issue is working with AMM to present the Tom Thorne and Beth Williams slide set or publications that WDA would like to offer as value added in being a member. Other issues to be addressed are increasing efficiency in other types of communications and managerial processes. C. van Riper emphasized the importance of the Executive Manager travelling to AMM in order to enhance and improve WDA's business relationship with AMM.

**New Funds and Endowment Committee Report presented by Tom Yuill.** As there is over \$1,000,000 in WDA reserves, does WDA really need an endowment? Flexible capital is indeed needed so that WDA can support important pursuits that strengthens and expands the WDA mission. One immediate goal is to provide the financial base to continue supporting providing the JWD to developing countries. USDA Wildlife Services has offered an amount of money for this purpose. Encouragement of publication of wildlife disease papers from developing countries is another important goal. Page charges are prohibitive for many scientists in these countries, and although there is a small source of funds for this purpose, this committee would like to be able to facilitate greater support for this purpose. T. Yuill emphasized the importance of meeting attendance by members from developing countries and funds may be acquired for that purpose. Develop a fund to contribute to fellowships for wildlife disease professionals to spend time in North America or Europe. Canvassing of various North American wildlife disease centers brought positive feedback, but it is important to be aware of the significant time commitment required for such fellows.

Other sources of monies could be in the form of bequests, charitable remainder trusts, retirement annuities and other such contributions. This organization is not quite prepared to handle such contributions on a large scale but contributions through wills are very realistic sources.

If the organization is considering brochures to encourage donations and if travel will be required to facilitate fund acquisitions, Council needs to consider setting aside funds to support these endeavors.

B. Karesh suggested testing out goals of investment in fundraising starting at perhaps a return on \$10,000 for every \$1,000 invested. Consider investing in Google ads, which may return more money than is invested. It is not as likely that WDA will find a benefactor who will donate millions of dollars, as a university might. L. Creekmore stated that WDA should utilize some legal assistance regarding handling bequests and other donations. Estimates should be obtained for costs of the targets of the case statements as well as cost of legal services. C. Kreuder-Johnson asked what exactly the purpose is for obtaining more money. T. Yuill restated that WDA would like to encourage more members from developing countries through fellowships and other means. This helps these researchers and this promotes membership. E. Addison reminded Council that WDA can no longer rely on institutional subscribers to sustain the organization as it used to. At the time, WDA could keep individual memberships low in cost through this manner, but cannot do this anymore.

D. Jessup stated that retaining three million dollars for investment will support the Journal of Wildlife Diseases in the face of open access. The purpose is to have enough important items for which to ask support so that WDA can support itself and its journal as well as other important projects.

L. Creekmore commended T. Yuill and Anne Fairbrother for their work in this area and looks forward to hearing from the committees regarding specific initiatives.

**Time and Place Committee delivered by D. Gavier-Widén.** D. Gavier-Widén asked Ed Addison to introduce the Time and Place Committee's methods and reasons for considering meeting locations. E. Addison explained that the Committee has been searching for an Eastern North American location for the 2013 meeting. Only one meeting (2006) was in this region in the last eleven years. Meeting sites heavily influence where attendees come from and meetings draw in new members from the site areas. Currently there are more members in eastern North America than in the west. Council and the Time and Place Committee need to be sensitive to the distribution of members. D. Gavier-Widén then announced that the Time and Place Committee received a proposal from Knoxville, Tennessee, USA, to host the WDA 2013 conference. The proposal was very good and fulfills the requirements important for a successful conference: The Committee considers Knoxville a good candidate location, there is an enthusiastic local organizing group, and it is a relatively inexpensive location.

The organizing committee would be Edward Ramsey and Debra Miller. D. Gavier-Widén asked that D. Miller discuss the proposal for Knoxville. A brochure and package put together by the Knoxville Department of Tourism was distributed to Council members. Many positive attributes of Knoxville were discussed, including that the location is accessible by car for many eastern and Midwestern states, Knoxville has a fairly major airport, there are several options for conference centers and also opportunities for inexpensive lodging, including dormitories, as the University of Tennessee is located there. In addition, the Center for Wildlife Health and veterinary school are there, which can provide space for wet labs and workshops, and the school is host to the University of Tennessee student chapter of WDA. Additionally, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Knoxville Zoo, amusement parks, art centers and other attractions are in the area. The Knoxville Department of Tourism is very willing to help with organization.

**Motion (Gavier-Widén/Baeten):** That the WDA 2013 International Conference take place in Knoxville, Tennessee, USA. *Passed Unanimously*

An inquiry was made regarding a total cost estimate. L. Creekmore stated that a cost estimate will be required if the proposal is accepted.

There was some discussion that western North America should be considered for the 2014 meeting.

**Action Item: EcoHealth Alliance Sustaining Membership presented by Lynn Creekmore.**

The EcoHealth Alliance (EHA), formerly the Wildlife Trust, and Wildlife Preservation Trust, has offered to become a sustaining member of WDA in a fashion similar to the Wildlife Conservation Society. They have offered to provide WDA \$1,000 yearly in general support for Journal of Wildlife Diseases, and up to an additional \$2000 yearly to cover page charges to pay for publications of articles selected by the Editor of JWD that have a significant "One Health" or ecosystem health component, and which the authors would otherwise not be able to afford to publish in JWD. J. Mills added that there is already money to support a few papers per year via covering page charges. The funds from EHA will go toward high quality manuscripts that satisfy the organization's criteria and then JWD can use its funds towards good manuscripts covering other subject matter. J. Mills emphasized that all manuscripts accepted under these funds will fall under the same stringent criteria that other accepted manuscripts come under. J. Mills also added that he does not use the

allotted funds every year. Under this proposed MOU, JWD will still receive \$1,000 from EHA regardless of qualifying manuscripts. The additional \$2,000 will only be given to JWD if there are suitable manuscripts. L. Creekmore stated that neither of the organizations will lose anything from this agreement and both organizations have everything to gain.

The WDA Bylaws Article IV Membership, Section 2 states “**Sustaining Members** – Members having particular interest in the objectives of the Association and who wish to make a significant contribution as determined by Council to support those objectives. Sustaining members receive all the rights and privileges accorded regular members and will receive special recognition by the Association”. This is interpreted as WDA Council having the authority to approve sustaining memberships, and/or the level of contribution that qualifies.

The details of EHA’s offer are laid out in the attached contract. Eco Health Alliance’s business practices require a contract to spend organizational funds. They use MOU’s and MOA’s only for delineating working relationships with other organizations.

The Officers and Editor have reviewed the proposed contract with EHA and support it. The Editor is particularly appreciative as the funds designated for support of page charges will double his budget for this item and provide a great deal more flexibility in accepting good articles whose authors must seek financial support.

Some discussion occurred about English language issues. J. Mills said that the majority of the problems with papers are not due to language, but due to quality of science. J. Mills said that he usually makes large efforts to help with English language. It may be advantageous to use some (approximately \$100) of the first \$1,000 from EcoHealth to pay for English language editing. Additionally, if WDA can cover the costs, then the Journal could feasibly increase pages in the JWD.

**Motion (Kuiken/Kreuder-Johnson):** The WDA Council gratefully accepts the offer of Ecohealth Alliance to become a sustaining member and provide WDA with up to \$3,000 yearly, of which \$1,000 is for general support of JWD and up to \$2,000 is to provide page charges for “One Health” and/or ecosystem health articles in need of support, with qualification for this to be determined by the Editor of JWD. WDA also wishes to express its sincere appreciation. *Passed unanimously.*

#### **Action item: Sustaining Member-Discussion**

The WDA Bylaws Article IV Membership, Section 2 states “**Sustaining Members** – Members having particular interest in the objectives of the Association and who

wish to make a significant contribution as determined by Council to support those objectives. Sustaining members receive all the rights and privileges accorded regular members and will receive special recognition by the Association". Some discussion has occurred regarding whether organizations that are sustaining members should have the right to vote and other member privileges. There may be other categories of support other than "sustaining member" that might be as appropriate. Or the bylaws need to be revised defining the rights of sustaining members depending upon whether they are an individual or an organization.

There were many differences in opinion as to whether organizations as sustaining members should have member rights. It was decided that this topic should be tabled for now and addressed further by Council and the Executive Manager.

**Action Item: Latin American Section presented by Lynn Creekmore.**

As a result of the hard work and success that came out of the 2010 International WDA Meeting in Argentina, Council has been presented with a request to form a Latin Section of the WDA. The letter (attached) (available in Association records) was presented to Council by the proposed Latin Section Chair, Marcella Uhart, and provides the information requested in Article IX, Sections 1,2,3,4,6,7,and 10 of WDA's Bylaws.

**Motion (van Riper/Carleton):** The Wildlife Disease Association Council finds that the application for a Latin section is in compliance with all aspects of Article IX of the WDA Bylaws which are pertinent to establishment of a section and approves that application. A Latin Section of WDA established August 14, 2011, will consist of all countries in the Americas south of the United States. *Passed Unanimously*

C. van Riper thanked Marcela Uhart and everyone who participated in the Argentina meeting.

**Information Committee Report presented by Josh Dein.** The Information Committee is currently not functioning within the guidelines as they were revised in 2005. A larger committee should be developed, especially if WDA is going to enter into the social media arena more aggressively. A need for someone to oversee social media activities was brought up. This may be someone in the Information Committee who is assigned to this task or perhaps an actual editor may be appointed. L. Creekmore stated that the establishment of a new social media editor would take an action by Council, therefore perhaps a task assignment should be made within the Committee to address social media at this point and then the

subject can be revisited regarding establishing an official editor. J. Dein did say that this person needs to oversee all the subject matter and the Information Committee would like to ask Council whether they can go ahead and establish these media networks. There was a question regarding the success of the Member's Forum. R. Carleton stated that the Member's Forum has not worked very well up to now. D. Jessup asked if anyone knows how many WDA members use Facebook and Twitter. J. Harms stated that student members do have a Facebook page currently. There are now 35 student members using the page but it is not utilized very much. Suggestions were made by students in other countries that perhaps a LinkedIn group site would be the more professional venue for networking. There has also been discussion with other student chapters to set up a unique WDA student chapter website. T. Kuiken said that the European Section network set up a Google group specifically about wildlife health in Europe. This was set up in February 2010 and has currently 174 users and there have been a total of 69 different discussion topics. This network has also been the initiator of several collaboration efforts and it is working very well. This group is limited to European wildlife health professionals so that it does not become impersonal. D. Jessup said that there is a very similar networking group in Africa. L. Creekmore expressed support for the efforts that the students are making in terms of networking ideas. A request was brought forth for comments on the new guidelines within one month. Council asked the Information Committee to investigate ways to utilize new technologies to reach the membership, for example social networking such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., and to provide a concrete recommendation on ways to utilize at least one new technology to Council. Council also requested feedback from the Information Committee regarding possible questions on a membership survey. There was suggestion that a mirror website be developed and then distributed to Council and/or the membership to obtain feedback.

Another topic J. Dein brought up was regarding RSS feeds, which would be a way to provide a lot of information to WDA members, e.g. Digest, Connotea, Newly Added WDIN Content, and Hidden Gems. Additionally, Reading Assignment items can be cataloged and turned into an RSS feed. Reading Assignments can also be tagged in the Cat Tool so all these items can be grouped together and easily found by the WDIN search tool. A suggestion was made to add an endorsement disclaimer. There are no copyright issues.

D. Jessup brought up the subject of the Tom Thorne and Beth Williams slides, as well as slides that Mark Pokras will make available. These slides should be thought of as value-added for being a member and also access to wildlife disease books.

J. Dein added that WDA has the capacity to bring in wildlife health data to provide awareness of current information. A mirror site will allow Council to review these types of feeds within a certain amount of time.

**Action Item: Scientific Task Force on Wildlife Diseases presented by D. Gavier-Widén.**

Two organizations have worked together to form a Task Force on Wildlife Diseases. Scott Newman, (EMPRES Wildlife Health and Ecology Unit Officer-in-Charge, Animal Production and Health Division United Nations Environment Program) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals {UNEP/CMS} Secretariat, FAO (Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) contacted WDA officers to inform us about the creation of a new Task Force and to invite WDA to join as Core Partner or Partner.

There was a launching meeting in Beijing in June 2011 and D. Gavier-Widén attended, all costs for attending the meeting were paid by the Task Force

The Task Force builds on the successful task force on avian influenza. The vision is to support an integrated approach to manage the health of ecosystem, wildlife, livestock and people within the One Health Framework. The purpose is to facilitate coordination, information sharing, communication and understanding between relevant organizations, networks, administrations and professional disciplines on prioritized diseases to better enable integration of work and decision making by government, agencies, and other stake holders.

Their objectives:

- 1) To support FAO, CMS, and other organizations.
- 2) Encourage One health multi-sectorial and transdisciplinary approaches including science based information sharing among, for examples: government sectors, ministries, tourism; UN agencies (FAO, WHO, UNESCO, UNEP, etc.), international technical bodies (IUCN, OIE, Ecohealth alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society, African Union) and many others (EU, industry, farmers)

3) Provide a mechanism for reporting of wildlife morbidity and mortality events that support the FAO EMPRES Disease Intelligence System and the Global Early Warning System (GLEWS).

4) To promote One Health program development, initiative and projects.

Their philosophy: to encourage connectivity and linkages to ANY organization interested.

Membership categories are as follows:

- Core affiliates (or core partner): determine priority activities and develop and maintain the work plan
- Partners: provide suggestions and input, identify needs, serve as a conduit for information sharing and receive information and products.
- Others (observers, national associates, others)

The task force will have working groups (for specific activities). The main purpose of the task force is to facilitate information. Some of the products they anticipate to deliver are: fact sheets, brochures, technical workshops, online workshop/video presentations, and outreach in social media.

WDA has been invited to join the Task Force preferentially as Core affiliate, or otherwise as partner. Does Council want to provide support to this Task Force?

Joining as **core affiliate** implies a commitment to participate at meetings (not known yet how often and where), teleconferences, electronic communication, act as communication and information sharing focal point, elaborate text and materials for their website, reply to questions such as: list of the most important diseases affecting wildlife health (5 maximum), case study examples of where disease transmission has been tracked from either humans or livestock into wildlife populations, case study or ongoing examples of trans-frontier conservation areas. A few selected key organizations have been invited to join as core affiliate/core partner, there will be 6-10 affiliates. Core affiliates will determine the priority activities and develop and maintain the work plan.

Joining as **partner**: is a lower level of involvement, less decision making (for example on priority topics/diseases). Partners provide suggestions and inputs, identify needs, and serve as conduits for information sharing to the task group, and will receive outputs developed by the task group. For WDA it would mean proving links to the task force in our website and distributing information in the newsletter. The number of partners will be unlimited.

J. Mills expressed the opinion that WDA be a core affiliate. The WDA needs to become involved with this endeavor. D. Gavier-Widén did say that a committee could be established to handle the responsibilities of being a core affiliate. T. Kuiken also thought that this seemed like a very good opportunity; however, an underlying issue with an endeavor such as this is that the participating agencies have their own political agendas and priorities and WDA may be forced to endorse activities that it may not necessarily support as an organization. B. Karesh emphasized that if WDA wanted to be involved as a core affiliate, the Association needs to be very active in order to influence the type of agenda that WDA would be interested in promoting. There are many political issues involved regarding the global jurisdiction of wildlife. This Task Force came out of the idea of the Avian Influenza Task Force, which had very defined goals. The Wildlife Disease Task Force is not quite as defined in its goals. D. Gavier-Widén was not clear on the political issues at this point and that the Task Force is working very hard to define its goals. B. Karesh added that the United Nations Environmental program was not invited to this Task Force and expressed reservations toward that fact that an agricultural organization (FAO) is heading this up. T. Work agreed that this is of concern and suggested WDA wait to see how this Task Force develops.

To be a partner means that WDA only forwards information to members. WDA could provide input but would have no power of decision. There is definitely an opportunity to forward interests of wildlife health but WDA would have to be very active in this task force and be very aware of any initiatives being promoted or endorsed. This opportunity would create many opportunities for WDA to be involved in areas of the world and with different organizations that it previously has not had much experience.

T. Kuiken expressed that the WDA has certain views regarding wildlife diseases within a complex world. Other organizations do not harbor this type of concept. They have not the depth and breadth of knowledge that the WDA has regarding One Health. Those other organizations could tap into the knowledge that WDA possesses in its membership. However, perhaps WDA should not get heavily involved unless we know for sure that this great commitment will be worthwhile and realistic to pursue. Currently, it is not known what kind of time commitment this will entail. A committee would be required to make WDA's participation as a core affiliate possible, and this committee would have to be quite large to be able to deal

with the many issues that may come up. In addition, a commitment with the task force may prevent WDA from being involved in other similar endeavors. L. Creekmore emphasized that the current WDA volunteer framework makes it very difficult to make such large commitments. C. Gillin expressed concern that WDA does not usually make major politically-charged decisions and can a committee assigned to this work represent the WDA in general. E. Addison reminded Council that it is difficult to accomplish our current goals and objectives. This is a large commitment and Council needs to identify WDA's capacity first. K. Mansfield expressed concern regarding the politics. Could WDA participate by nominating certain WDA members to address the strictly scientific side of this effort?

What kind of support does Council want to offer to this project? Current consensus is that WDA could realistically participate as a partner. This way WDA can "test the waters" and perhaps have the option to become more involved or withdraw as deemed appropriate at a later time. This would bring more visibility to WDA. However, not choosing the more involved approach of core affiliate may represent a missed opportunity and we may not have the flexibility to become more involved later.

**Motion (Work/Mills):** The Wildlife Disease Association Council approves WDA joining the CMS/FAO Scientific Task Force on Wildlife Diseases as a partner and directs the incoming President to communicate that to Scott Newman and FAO.  
*Passed Unanimously*

L. Creekmore expressed the opinion that Council should address a few more action items before the annual conference comes to a close. Consensus was that a supplemental meeting should be scheduled during the week.

Before adjournment, there are some awards to present to outgoing WDA Officers and Council members. The first award was presented to C. Kreuder-Johnson as outgoing member at large. The other outgoing member at large is Wayne Boardman who is not present today so the plaque will be sent to him. L. Baeten was appreciated for her efforts as Treasurer this past term and will continue on for the next term. D. Gavier-Widén is the outgoing Vice President and will become President.

L. Creekmore thanked Council and encouraged them to be responsive to the new, incoming officers regarding discussion issues. The membership depends on Council to represent them to make decisions for the WDA.

**Motion to adjourn (Gavier-Widén/Baeten):** *Passed unanimously*