

ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting Minutes – Thursday, February 11, 2021 – 6:00pm
GoToMeeting Videoconference; Dial-in: (866) 899-4679, Access Code: 146-247-629

I. Welcome and Introductions – David Klein.

David Klein opened the meeting at 6:04pm with roll call:

- a. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Present via GoToMeeting Videoconference: David Klein, Nathan Block, Pete Wahl, Mike Dillinger, Erin Chancellor, Susan Maxwell, Kristen Fancher, Lisa Dyar, Aaron Vargas, Buck Benson, Heather Palmer, Ty’Meka Reeves-Sobers, Amber Ahmed, Paul Sarahan, Ashleigh Acevedo, Steve McMillen, Greg Ellis, Mary Mendoza.
- b. ENRLS Council and Committee Co-Chairs Absent: Chris Schlag, Kimberly Kelley, Jon Bull, Walt Shelton.

The business agenda began with the Secretary’s Report.

II. Secretary’s Report – Erin Chancellor.

- a. Approval of minutes of the ENRLS Council Q4 Meeting.

Draft minutes for the ENRLS Council Q4 Meeting, held virtually on October 19, 2020, were circulated prior to the meeting. Edits received prior to the meeting were incorporated. No further corrections or edits were offered at the meeting. Block moved to approve the minutes. Wahl seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Treasurer’s Report – Mike Dillinger.

- a. Review and synopsis of latest financial reports and audit status update.

As of January 1, 2021, ENRLS had \$338k in assets and ~\$5k in liabilities. At that time last year, ENRLS had \$310k in assets and ~\$9k in liabilities. This leaves ENRLS with ~\$32k more this cycle. While hard to do a comparison of 2019 to 2020 in each area because of COVID impacts and doing a virtual Superconference, we are primarily in this good economic position for two reasons.

First, we received over \$50k more in Superconference registrations and sponsorships than we had budgeted for. In the end, we received only \$6k less in sponsorships in 2020 than in 2019, when we had an in-person Superconference. Second, we had over \$50k less in expenses than we budgeted for, due to spending less than expected overall, and especially in the scholarship and internship areas.

We will be reviewing the budget between the Q1 and Q2 meetings. Any potential FY 2020-2021 budget amendments that will be up for consideration at the Q2 meeting will be circulated to the Council beforehand.



ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting Minutes – Thursday, February 11, 2021 – 6:00pm
[GoToMeeting Videoconference](#); Dial-in: (866) 899-4679, Access Code: 146-247-629

IV. Discuss, Consider, and Take Action on the Climate Change Symposium – Nathan Block.

Block reported that he has spoken to multiple subject matter experts that are interested in participating. The event planning committee has expanded, and now includes Wahl and Acevedo. Block will coordinate with Palmer and Reeves-Sobers on fundraising and sponsorships. UT Law is potentially a venue but looking at other options. The projected date is April 2022 and the symposium will be one day long, consisting of four 90-minute sessions and breakout sessions. Themes will include carbon pricing; carbon capture, utilization, and storage; and technology and innovation. Projecting the event will cost ~\$65k. The planners will report back at the May meeting with refined cost estimates and venue options.

V. Committee Updates & Recommendations – Committee Co-Chairs.

a. Education Committee – Lisa Dyar & Greg Ellis, Co-Chairs.

2021 Changing Face of Water Law – Greg Ellis.

Ellis reported that the event had a good turnout this year, with 90 registrants for the night one 101. This is Ellis's last year, and a new ENRLS co-chair needs to be named. Ellis suggested Alia Vinson of Allen, Boone, Humphries, Robinson LLP serve as the ENRLS conference. Maxwell moved to nominate Vinson to serve as the ENRLS designated co-chair for the Changing Face of Water Law conference for years 2022 and 2023, and thus also as the Council's Education Committee co-chair. Dyar seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Council enthusiastically thanks Ellis for his service to ENRLS and the Changing Face of Water Law Conference.

Planning for 2021 Superconference – Lisa Dyar & Mary Mendoza.

Dyar reported that the planning committee met a few weeks ago and there were a lot of ideas and opinion about the conference being in-person or virtual. For in-person, there are limited options. The Four Seasons is holding the 2021 dates and promised flexible terms, but they have not yet provided the contract. At that venue, social distancing would allow for ~150 people. Mendoza is researching onsite testing options. The committee is also exploring joint virtual/in-person options but has challenges. Klein noted that he had reached out to SBOT on this issue and SBOT currently has a moratorium on in-person CLE events. The Superconference Planning Committee is looking to increase the diversity of speakers, and Sarahan reported that the DEI Committee has been working with the Planning Committee.

b. Pro Bono & Community Outreach Committee – Buck Benson & Chris Schlag, Co-Chairs.

Benson reported that the committee may look into partnering with a law school on an environmental law clinic.



ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting Minutes – Thursday, February 11, 2021 – 6:00pm
GoToMeeting Videoconference; Dial-in: (866) 899-4679, Access Code: 146-247-629

- c. Sponsorship & Membership Committee – Heather Palmer & Ty’Meka Reeves-Sobers, Co-Chairs.

Palmer reported that the committee will begin soliciting sponsorships for Superconference once the planning committee determines the format of the conference. In terms of membership, ENRLS membership has been on a steady decline for the past few years. Currently, the Section is down 140 members, putting the total number at 1,247. Would like to explore an assessment of Section membership to determine overall trends and potentially diversity of membership.

- d. Website & Technology Committee – Steve McMillen & Paul Sarahan, Co-Chairs.

McMillen reported that the committee continues to work with Acevedo to incorporate the Texas Environmental Law Journal (TELJ) into the ENRLS website. The TELJ development articles are already on the website. The committee is also working on website aesthetics, which has cost more than expected and will result in being over budget. For the additional work, McMillen projects the committee will need an additional \$800-\$1k. The committee also encouraged the Council to bring any website content ideas to the committee. No action needed for this meeting, but an action may be needed at the Q2 meeting.

- e. Social Media Committee – David Klein & Amber Ahmed, Co-Chairs.

Klein reported that the committee co-chairs met with Workhorse to discuss social media platforms, scope of work, and costs. Workhorse will focus on LinkedIn and Twitter and the cost will be \$805/month. Block moved to approve the \$805/month fee pending SBOT review of the contract. Sarahan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- f. Diversity, Engagement, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee – David Klein.

Sarahan reported that the committee (currently comprised of Ahmed, Klein, Reeves-Sobers, and Sarahan) had a productive first meeting and established four action items:

1. Draft a DEI statement that will be presented to the Council before the Q2 meeting for consideration at the meeting. This statement will define the purpose of the committee.
2. Establish liaisons with other ENRLS committees to obtain input on the DEI statement and establish lines of communication between committees with the ultimate goal of working together to advance DEI issues in ENRLS.
3. Assess the status of DEI issues within ENRLS to determine the Section’s baseline activity. As a starting point, conduct an assessment of Section membership in comparison to other SBOT sections.
4. Work with the Education Committee and Superconference planning committee to increase the diversity of speakers at future conferences.



ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting Minutes – Thursday, February 11, 2021 – 6:00pm
GoToMeeting Videoconference; Dial-in: (866) 899-4679, Access Code: 146-247-629

The committee was created at the 2020 Q4 meeting with the action item to appoint committee chairs at the next meeting. Accordingly, Klein moved to appoint Sarahan as DEI Committee Chair with Ahmed and Reeves-Sobers as DEI Committee Co-Chairs. Block seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

g. Law School Programs Committee – Walt Shelton & Kristen Fancher, Co-Chairs.

Fancher reported that the November law school virtual panel was very successful, drawing ~60 attendees. The next panel will be scheduled for late March 2021. The selections for the 2021 Professor Corwin W. Johnson Memorial Internships are being finalized this week. At the Q2 meeting, the committee will request an increase in the amount paid for each internship, which will likely be \$500/student intern. No action needed at this meeting.

h. Publications & Communications Committee – Ashleigh Acevedo & Aaron Vargas, Co-Chairs.

TELJ updates and recommendations – Ashleigh Acevedo.

Acevedo reported that TELJ selected their new editorial board, and the board will be inducted in late February or early March. Journal student membership is up with close to 50 members. Volume 51-Issue 1 is almost complete and will go out by the end of the month. Volume 51-Issue 2 is coming along, but one more article is needed for the issue.

TELJ is adding practitioners to the TELJ Attorney Editorial Board. Pending employer approval, Chancellor will serve as Solicitations Editor, reaching out to Texas environmental law practitioners to produce lead articles for the publication. Pending employer approval, Jori Reilly-Diakin will serve as Development Articles Editor, running lead to get those timely articles edited and on the website. Acevedo will continue in her current role of Editor-in-Chief, focusing primarily on articles and notes.

Sponsorship of Essentials of Texas Water Resources (7th edition) – Susan Maxwell.

No update.

i. Nominating Committee – Susan Maxwell & David Klein, Co-Chairs.

Maxwell reported that the committee has no update at this time but is beginning the 2021 nominating process.





ENRLS Council Q1 Meeting Minutes – Thursday, February 11, 2021 – 6:00pm
[GoToMeeting Videoconference](#); Dial-in: (866) 899-4679, Access Code: 146-247-629

VI. Other Business.

a. Open Forum.

No comments.

b. 2021 Future Meeting Dates.

Wed., May 19, 2021, 3:00pm. The Q2 meeting will be held virtually or in Houston.

Wed., Aug. 4, 2021, 3:00pm. The Q3 meeting will be held virtually or in Austin, in conjunction with the 33rd Annual Texas Environmental Superconference.

VII. Adjourn.

Klein moved to adjourn the Q1 meeting. Block seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

