

MINUTES OF THE THIRD 2008 COUNCIL MEETING
MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Attending:

Peter Heaney, President
Nancy Ross, Vice President
Barb Dutrow, Past President
John Hughes, Treasurer
Mickey Gunter, Secretary
Peter Burns, Councilor
Carol Frost, Councilor
Jean Morrison, Councilor
Roberta Rudnick, Councilor

Visitors:

J. Alex Speer, MSA Executive Director
Bob Dymek, Editor, *The American Mineralogist*
Dana Griffen, Editor, *The American Mineralogist*
Gordon Nord, MSA Webmaster
John Brady, Vice President elect
Darrell Henry, Treasurer elect
Marc Hirschmann, Councilor elect
Penny King, Councilor elect

Absent:

Klaus Mezger, Councilor
Simon Redfern, Councilor

Note: Motions and Council action items are presented in *italics*; SoC = sense of Council, S = second.

The Third meeting of the 2008 Council of the Mineralogical Society of America (MSA) was held at Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel, Houston, Texas, October 4, 2008

ITEMS

[1] Roll Call and Introductory Remarks by the President.

P. Heaney called the meeting to order at 8:22 am on October 4, 2008. After some brief remarks he asked all those in attendance to introduce themselves.

[2] Additions to and deletions from the Agenda, approval of the Agenda.

R. Rudnick moved to approve the agenda with no additions. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

[3] Accept the following Reports to Council containing no questions or action items as a group. Reports will be acknowledged by Secretary.

Editorial Office and Editors of the *American Mineralogist*, MSA Society News Editor for *Elements*, Editor of the *Handbook of Mineralogy*, MSA Representative on the Executive Committee of *Elements*, MSA Representative to the *GeoScienceWorld* Advisory Council, MSA Representative to the *GeoScienceWorld* Board of Directors, Outreach Committee (on Databases), Bloss Optical Crystallography Fund, Lecture Program Committee, Lecture Program Coordinator, MSA Webmaster, Outreach Committee (Databases), Representatives to the American Crystallographic Association, American Geological Institute, Clay Minerals Society, European Mineralogical Union, Geological Society of America, and the Interest group for Pegmatites, Planetary Materials.

Not heard from: Outreach Committee (K-12), Representative to Friends of Mineralogy, Geochemical Society, Representative to the International Centre for Diffraction Data (ICDD), Society of Mineral Museum Professionals.

J. Hughes moved to accept the reports. S = B. Dutrow. Motion passed unanimously.

[4] Revisions, if any, and approval of the minutes of the 2nd 2008 Council Meeting. The minutes reflect all revisions previously sent to the MSA Secretary.

R. Rudnick moved to approve the minutes. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

[5] Review of Executive Committee actions and President's Report. Any items for action or discussion are taken up under the appropriate sections later in the day. These are detailed in the President's report.

[6] Accept medal, award, grant, and fellow recommendations:

Roebbling Medal: *Alexandra Navrotsky*
Distinguished Public Service Medal: *Robert M. Hazen*
Dana Medal (2010): *Jillian F. Banfield*
MSA Award: *Thomas Patrick Trainor*

Crystallographic Research Grant: *Andrew J. Wall*
Mineralogy/Petrology Research Grant: *Christopher M. Fisher, Dongbo Wang*
MSA Fellows: *Daniele Cherniak, P. Cordier, Herta Effenberger, Kiyoshi Fujino, Robert W. Luth, Masanori Matsui, A. Mottana, Enver Murad, Philip Peter Nabelek and Lidunka Vočadlo*

C. Frost moved to accept the medal winners, grant award, and fellow as recommended. S = J. Morrison. Motion passed unanimously.

[7] Action items dealing with MSA awards from the various committees:

(a) The Distinguished Public Service Committee recommends that Council consider making the next award of the DPS Medal in 2009 instead of waiting until 2010.

It was SoC to not change this award to a yearly basis, but to award it every two years as is currently the practice.

(b) The Committee on Nomination for Fellows recommended that candidates not recommended by the committee should not be left as holdovers, unless new nominations are forwarded to the committee.

A. Speer pointed out this is the current procedure. M. Gunter will remind the committee of this when he acknowledges receiving their report.

The chair of the Committee on Nomination for Fellows is still concerned by the low numbers of nominations each year. He suggests that each spring when the new issue of *The American Mineralogist* is announced on the web that also an announcement of nominations can be forwarded to the Chair of the nomination committee.

A. Speer pointed out this is the current procedure, as well as placing notices in Elements. M. Gunter will remind the committee of this when he acknowledges receiving their report and also remind the committee they should be actively soliciting nominees.

[8] MSA Committee membership and appointed posts for 2009 as recommended by the Committee on Committees. Appoint chairs to committees and fill any outstanding vacancies.

A report was submitted before the meeting containing the recommendations to fill the committees and chair positions. The secretary had already contacted these individuals and they had agreed to serve.

R. Rudnick moved to accept the committee memberships and committee chairs. S = J. Morrison. Motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that several of the special interest groups lacked a chair. N. Ross said she would try and recruit appropriate individuals to fill these positions.

[9] The MSA President, the MSA Representative to IMA, and the *American Mineralogist* Editors have action items relating to appointed posts:

(a) Approve the appointment of Jennifer Thomson as Editor of *American Mineralogist*.

M. Gunter moved to approve Jennifer Thomson as Editor. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

P. Heaney paused the meeting at this point to thank Bob Dymek for 10 years of service as editor of the *American Mineralogist*. This was followed by a much-deserved round of applause for Bob.

(b) Approve Barb Dutrow as the sole MSA representative to the Executive Committee of *Elements*.

J. Morrison moved to approve Barb Dutrow as sole representative. S = J. Hughes. Motion passed unanimously.

(c) Selection of a new US representative for the IMA Commission on Mineral Museums. Carl Francis volunteered to become that representative.

J. Hughes moved to accept Carl Francis as representative. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

(d) Andrew Locock, who has been Technical Editor of Crystal Structure Data for *American Mineralogist*, has resigned as of mid-December 2008. The journal editors ask for suggestions for a replacement.

N. Ross suggested that Dana Griffen take the lead in finding a replacement. *It was SoC that this was the best option.*

[10] The Nominating Committee for Officers presented a list of possible candidates for Vice-President, Secretary, and for Councilor. The list needs to be reviewed, ordered, and approved so that the MSA Secretary can contact those on the list in the sequence decided by Council to invite them to run for office.

A modified list of nominations was prepared the prior evening by the MSA management committee (which consists of the president, vice president, past president, secretary, and treasurer). This was somewhat necessary because the list from the previous year had not been given to the nominating committee (an oversight of the new secretary); thus, they had included individuals who had just the year before stated they would not run (this mistake will not happen again, at least for the next three years). After some additions and refinements of this list, a ranked list was finalized, and the secretary charged with contacting the individuals.

B. Dutrow moved to accept the ordered list. S = R. Rudnick. Motion passed unanimously.

[11] Council considered recommendations of staff evaluations from the Management Committee of the preceding day. Recommendations were reported orally. The

Management Committee is profoundly impressed with the performance of all MSA employees, and we regret that we cannot offer higher merit raises to those who did not achieve the maximum amounts. However, unprecedented economic uncertainty constrains us to balance our desire to award the employees for their outstanding efforts with a duty to ensure the overall financial security of MSA. The recommended salary adjustments will be communicated to the Executive Director for implementation in January 2009.

P. Heaney moved to accept the recommendations. S = M. Gunter. Motion passed unanimously.

[12] There were two recommendations concerning the 2009 Spring MSA Council meeting. The Executive Director asked that Council identify and confirm a date and location whereas the MSA President made the specific recommendation to approve the AGU-GAC-MAC Joint Assembly in Toronto (24-27 May 2009) as the site for the 2009 Spring MSA Council meeting.

After some discussion Council selected our meeting date as May 23, the day before the AGU-GAC-MAC meeting in Toronto, ON, Canada

N. Ross moved to accept the meeting date. S = J. Morrison. Motion passed unanimously.

[13] The Executive Director requested that Council accept the 2008 election results and give permission to destroy the ballots and ballot files upon acceptance.

J. Hughes moved to accept the election results. S = R. Rudnick. Motion passed unanimously.

[14] The Treasurer had no specific action items relating to 2007 finances for the 2008 Council, but the 2009 budget will need to be approved in the First 2009 Council Meeting.

J. Hughes summarized the society's finances and noted that we had just successfully passed an audit. Our investments are currently \$2.2M as compared to \$2.0M when he became treasurer in 2004. He joked that we "made no progress" in that time; however, another way to view this is we have sustainable funding. Our fund transfers remain steady at about \$80k per year, and our inventory of RiMG volumes is approximately \$1.5M. Overall the society's finances are sound.

[15] The Treasurer and MSA Executive Director requested a few moments for any brief updates on MSA membership numbers, subscriptions, and MSA finances, if any.

A. Speer reported that MSA membership is currently 2595, the highest it has been since 1988. We also have the highest number of student members: 741. The increase in student members relates to the membership discount given for the

purchase of the Dyar & Gunter textbook. He also discussed current, ever-changing, situations with MSA's investments. Our investments are handled by Wachovia, which is being acquired by Wells Fargo. There appears to be no negative aspects in this transition. He also shared a table that showed the percent of the members receiving the printed version of the *American Mineralogist* have dropped from 67% in 2002 to 25% in 2008, for the same years the online subscribers went from 12% to 19%, and those not receiving the journal went from 21% to 56%. Clearly these trends are of concern, but overall MSA's finances are stable.

[16] The Financial Advisory and Audit Committee (FAAC) Report had a number of cautions, but no specific action items. However, an addendum to the FAAC report recommended that MSA divest itself of the Campbell Strategic Allocation Fund (CSAF) and that portion of the Roebing Fund be returned to the normal mix of investments.

J. Hughes moved to sell the Campbell fund, but that the timing of such sale be left to the discretion of the Treasurer depending on market conditions. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

[17] The Short Course Committee had two action items:

(a) A recommendation that Council approve the final proposal for "Diffusion in Minerals and Melts" by Youxue Zhang (Univ. Michigan) and Daniele Cherniak (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), projected to coincide with the Fall 2010 AGU meeting. Despite the timing, the revised proposal makes a convincing case for the merits of the short course. It presents a reasonable, if not perfect, budget. The Committee noted that the cost for attendees, particularly students, was a bit high. We have recommended to the organizers to make use of the MSA website to archive related material rather than using an attached CD, given concerns about rapid change in technology and formats of stored information.

A. Speer pointed out that the student registration fee was high. There was also some discussion of how best to provide electronic copies of the database, and a desire to understand if an overview chapter of the databases was going to be in the volume. *M. Gunter was to convey these concerns.*

P. Heaney moved to approve the short course based on the above conditions. S = N. Ross. Motion passed unanimously.

(b) A recommendation that Council approve the preliminary proposal submitted by Eric Oelkers and Jacques Schott "The Thermodynamics and Kinetics of Water-Rock Interaction". The organizers' intention is to have the short course in Davos, Switzerland, in conjunction with the Goldschmidt conference in June 2009. Despite overall enthusiasm for both the topic and the competency of the organizers, the committee had several questions.

- The extremely tight time line for the short course -- needing completion of the RiMG by summer 2009 -- was worrisome.
- We were interested in knowing more about motivation for and the target audience of the short course, which were not clearly illuminated in the initial proposal.
- There were also some issues regarding specifics of content. What is new/exciting/unique about the topics and speakers, many of which are "classical"?

The organizers have not responded to committee's queries to date. In spite of any reservations, Oelkers presented compelling evidence for his capability in making it happen.

It was SoC that M. Gunter should contact E. Oelkers directly and ask him to provide responses to the above concerns.

[18] The Publications Director and Monograph Series Editor made three recommendations for revising the MSA Monograph series:

(a) review, revise, and adopt new guidelines proposed by Jodi Rossi for the MSA Monograph Series and place them on the MSA website.

It was SoC that Jodi should move forward with this.

(b) proceed with publication of S.A. Morse's "*The Kiglapait Layered Intrusion Fifty Years On: An Annotated Collection*" as an MSA monograph.

There was some discussion of this monograph, focused mainly on the need for someone to work with Tony in addressing some of the issues that were brought up in the reviews of the manuscript. Council was grateful that Bob Dymek agreed to take the role of managing editor for this monograph.

N. Ross moved to more forward in publishing this monograph. S = R. Rudnick. Motion passed unanimously.

(c) external reviews be obtained for F. F. Gorbatshevich's proposal on "*Acoustopolarity of Rock-forming Minerals and Crystalline Rocks*" before considering for publication as an MSA Monograph.

There were a couple of concerns in regard to this monograph, mainly the need for reviewers and the total number of copies that might be sold. It was decided to seek external reviews, and suggested that if print-on-demand were available for the monograph, even a small number of copies might be economical.

[19] The MSA President recommended the creation of one new standing and two *ad hoc* committees:

(a) a standing committee to consider MSA involvement with existing and proposed electronic databases. The Committee would be charged with oversight of our current database commitments (RRUFF, the *Handbook*), assessment of databases proposed to MSA, and investigation of existing or developing databases of interest to the MSA membership to determine if MSA's involvement would make sense.

There was some discussion of the desire to not form new committees. However, it seemed necessary that this committee needed to be formed to address, among other things: how database are planned, supported, owned, and maintained.

N. Ross moved to form this committee. S = P. Burns. Motion passed unanimously.

It was SoC that J. Brady should chair the committee, and G. Nord along with M. Hirschmann should be members.

(b) an *ad hoc* committee to write and submit a policy statement on asbestos, specifically "What is asbestos?". One can argue that MSA was derelict in its responsibilities for not addressing this issue 25 years ago. It is not too late for MSA to assert its relevance by defining this term from the vantage of professional scientists. The committee should include perspectives from MSA members who have worked in industrial and health sciences.

It was pointed out by M. Gunter that such a committee was created a year ago with IMA, and that to date, that committee has not convened. After some discussion it was suggested that J. Brady chair the committee. It was suggested that M. Gunter, J. Hughes, and Mac Ross be members.

B. Dutrow moved to establish this ad hoc committee. S = R. Rudnick. Motion passed unanimously.

(c) an *ad hoc* committee to write and submit a policy statement on crystal healing, specifically "Is there a scientific basis for crystal healing?"

It was SoC to not move forward with formation of this ad hoc committee.

[20] Stipulated that eligibility for the Dana Medal be restricted to those who have not previously received the MSA Award.

The formal description of the award has been adjusted over the years for a variety of reasons. When Ron Cohen was chosen as the 2009 awardee at the Third 2007 Council Meeting, then-President Dutrow suggested that the award description be modified to discourage the selection of MSA Award recipients and encourage the seeking candidates from the broad geoscience community

An argument can be made that an individual's award history should have no bearing on

his or her eligibility for a new award, and research excellence should serve as the only criterion. On the other hand, in the absence of language that captures the intent of the creators of the Dana Medal (now viewed as recognizing individuals who blossomed onto the scene after their eligibility for the MSA Award), this award may easily devolve into the second-stage of an MSA-Dana-Roebling triple play, devaluing the Dana Medal. Moreover, the breadth of talent in our Society is poorly served when credit is so narrowly focused.

Council has resisted making the prohibition stipulation explicit; instead, it was the Sense of Council that the Handbook for the Dana Medal committee should only encourage the committee to look widely across the full extent of excellence in the Society, beyond prior award winners.

During our discussion P. Burns expressed concern that making this change might alienate some past MSA Award winners. It was also pointed out that there would need to be a clear and explicit description of the award criteria disallowing MSA Awardees from consideration. N. Ross volunteered to write such a description.

P. Heaney moved to disallow any previous winners of the MSA Award for the Dana Medal. S = M. Gunter. Motion passed 7 in favor, 2 opposed.

[21] The MSA President wanted to discuss the activities and direction of the IMA Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature, and Classification (CNMNC) as described in the recent MSA-Talk messages. The exchange was initiated by Anton Chakmouradian's comment on the Commission's alarmingly recurrent practice of implementing drastic revisions to the nomenclature of previously described minerals without proper and inclusive consultation with the mineralogical community at large (i.e. the community that these changes will most directly and immediately affect). The MSA President recommends Council approve a letter to be sent to the President of IMA proposing that the IMA Commission on New Minerals, Nomenclature, and Classification (CNMNC) develop a protocol for soliciting input from the community of professional mineralogists and petrologists when the CNMNC wishes to change pre-existing mineral names.

P. Heaney provided the letter he had written to council. After a brief discussion, council supported the letter.

P. Heaney moved to send letter to President of IMA. S = B. Dutrow. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mickey Gunter, MSA Secretary