



American Fisheries Society

April 5 and May 10, 2024

Management Committee Minutes and Governing Board Briefing on Publisher Contract

Special Explanatory Note:

Due to non-disclosure agreements binding participants in all publisher contract discussions, the details of the contract proposals are not included in these minutes of the Management Committee (MC) meeting or the Governing Board (GB) Briefing. Detailed information on the bid proposals and final contract terms can be obtained from the Executive Director or the Director of Publications but are only available to Governing Board members, the Financial Planning and Procedures Committee, the Publisher Selection Committee, relevant AFS staff, and others with a defined responsibility or elected or appointed position in AFS that oversees this selection process. Unlike other meetings of the MC and GB, the meeting and briefing documented below were not recorded.

April 5, 2024, Management Committee Meeting

Participants:

Management Committee Members:

Cecil Jennings, Miguel Garcia-Bermudez, Gary Whelan, Margaret Murphy, April Croxton, Lynn Quattro, Julie Carter, Jeff Kopaska, Heather Stewart, Dan Iserman, Randy Schultz (Constitutional Consultant, non-voting), Doug Austen (Executive Director, non-voting)

ELMA: Matt Wipf, Drew Holloway

AFS Publisher Contract Review Committee: Steve Midway (Chair), Dan Daugherty

AFS Financial Planning and Procedures Committee: Troy Brandt (Chair), Mike Celestino

AFS Staff: Dan Cassidy, Laura Hendee

- 1. Greetings, Recognition of Proxies, and Determination of Quorum** – Meeting called to order by Cecil Jennings at about noon EDT and quorum established by Randy Schultz.
Recognition of proxies: None
- 2. Approval of Agenda-** Meeting agenda addressed the singular item of review and approval of the bid by Oxford University Press to be the AFS publisher effective January 1, 2025.
Approved by unanimous consent.
- 3. Review of publisher bids**

- a. Director of Publications Laura Hendee, Executive Director Doug Austen and members of the Special Committee reviewed the process of establishment and workings of the Special Committee to Develop a New Publications Contract as appointed by AFS President April Croxton (Attachment A) and summary of process provided in Attachment B.
 - b. The committee presented the full comparison table of bid specifications from the two finalists, Wiley and Oxford University Press (OUP). The committee also provided their recommendation to accept the bid from OUP.
 - c. Motion to accept the OUP bid was made by Gary Whelan. A second to the motion was provided by Margaret Murphy. A vote of the Management Committee was unanimous in favor of accepting the OUP bid.
4. As a result of the accepted motion, Hendee and Austen will work with Clarke and Esposito to develop a full contract with OUP and, when acceptable, proceed with signing of the contract. This is expected to take place in mid to late May.
5. **Adjournment at 1:29 p.m. EDT**

May 10, 2024, Briefing of the AFS Governing Board

Participants:

Governing Board Members:

Cecil Jennings, Gary Whelan, Margaret Murphy, Daniel Wesley, Fielding Montgomery, Garrett McKinney, Jesse Trushenski, Andrew Bade, Wade Cavender, Patrick Cooney, Eric Fetherman, Patrick O'Rourke, Wade Cavender, Eric Fetherman, Julie Carter, Carrie Pershyn, Jeff Kopaska, Dan Mosier, Randy Schultz (Constitutional Consultant, non-voting), Doug Austen (Executive Director, non-voting)

ELMA: Kyler Hecke

AFS Publisher Contract Committee: Steve Midway, Dan Daugherty

AFS Staff: Jenna Hanks, Lauren Maza, Laura Hendee, Beth Beard, Caroline Davis, Ashley Berniche, Debby Lehman, Mia Ferguson, Kelly Kotche

1. **Greeting and Call to Order** – Meeting called to order by Cecil Jennings at 11:02 a.m. EDT. Since this is not a decision meeting (information briefing only), there was no need to establish a quorum.
2. **Briefing** – Publications Director Laura Hendee and Executive Director Doug Austen reviewed the establishment of the special committee to develop a new publications contract and the OUP proposal. They provided a briefing on the discussions and approved motion by the Management Committee to approve the selection of OUP as the publisher for AFS.
3. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Attachment A - Establishment of Special Committee to Develop a New Publications Contract

Executive Director Douglas Austen and Publications Director Laura Hendee request that President April Croxton put forth a motion to proceed with the formation of a Special Committee charged with handling the Journals Program contract renewal process.

The existing contract with Wiley began January 1, 2018, and will expire December 31, 2024.

Since 2018, the publishing landscape has evolved rapidly. The Special Committee will

- develop criteria for evaluating publishers and request proposals from key targets;
- Work with partner science societies to benefit from their experiences and lessons-learned from publishing contract efforts.
- brief and seek guidance from the Governing Board and Financial Planning and Procedures Committee; and
- Special committee will brief AFS leadership on a regular basis regarding status of publishing contract progress.
- Final report will be to make a recommendation to the Management Committee regarding the future contract.

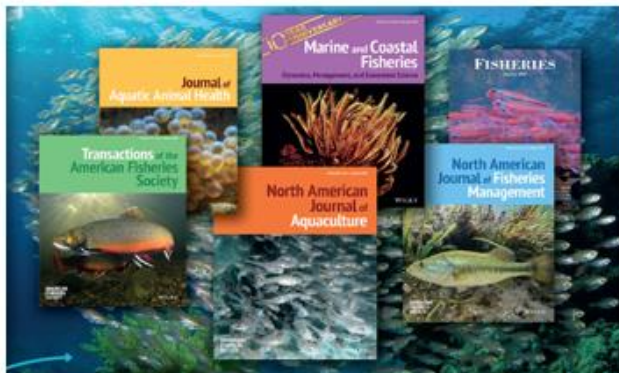
Committee membership is expected include:

Doug Austen, AFS Executive Director
Laura Hendee, AFS Publications Director
Stephen Midway, POC Chair
Daniel Daugherty, Editor-in-Chief NAJFM
Steve Cooke, Editor-in-Chief Fisheries
April Croxton, AFS Past President

Additional staff support on financial aspects of the contract will be provided by Dan Cassidy.

Attachment B – Review of the work and process of the Special Committee on Publisher Contract

Publisher Selection Process – Introduction, Background and Timeline



Publisher history

- Current contract with Wiley is for 7 years and expires 12/31/24
- Previous contract was with Taylor and Francis and was also for 7 years.
- Prior publish was Allen Press.



Background and Preparation

- **Future of Publication retreats – two completed**
 - May 2017 in Reno, NV
 - March 2023 in Alexandria, VA
- **CASS Journals Working Group**
 - Convened several calls of all publishing leads for the 10 CASS members societies.
 - Individual interviews with several partners



Background and Preparation

- **CASS Journals Working Group**
 - Discussions on publishers (6 different publishers), challenges, opportunities, future directions.
 - Continued dialogue on key issues such as OA, finding editors, etc.
- **Conference call on OA in Federal Government**
 - Focus on White House OSTP memo



Background and Preparation

- **Special Committee Established by President Jennings and approved by MC (October 2023)**
 - Develop criteria for evaluating publishers and request proposals from key targets;
 - Work with partner science societies to benefit from their experiences and lessons-learned from publishing contract efforts.
 - Brief and seek guidance from the Governing Board and Financial Planning and Procedures Committee; and
 - Special committee will brief AFS leadership on a regular basis regarding status of publishing contract progress.
 - Final report will be to make a recommendation to the Management Committee regarding the future contract.



Background and Preparation

- **Special Committee Established by President Croxton**
 - Chair, Steve Midway
 - Co-Chair, Laura Hendee
 - April Croxton
 - Steve Cooke
 - Dan Daugherty
 - Doug Austen
- **Committee Authorized to hire contractor (October 2023)**
 - Approve \$50,000 from PEF



Consultant Search and Contract

- **Developed list of potential contractors through search in CESSE and ASAE and conversation with partners.**
- **After initial assessment, we interviewed two and received proposals.**
- **Clarke and Esposito chosen unanimously by committee**
 - Extensive experience
 - Willing to work on the expedited schedule
 - Depth of staff was attractive compared to other smaller shops



Consultant tasks

- **Work with AFS to develop RFP**
- **Act as primary contact with publishers**
- **Work with AFS committee, develop decision-making criteria and align strategies**
- **Provided expert guidance and support**
- **Develop publisher candidate pool**
- **Coordinate Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA)**
- **RFP issuance, Q&A, clarification of terms, etc.**
- **Proposal analysis and comparison**
- **Finalist determination discussion**
- **Notification of selected publisher**
- **Review of contract to ensure compliance with terms**



Publisher Pool

- Wiley
- Oxford
- Elsevier
- Taylor and Francis
- MIT
- Springer
- Sage
- Mary Ann Liebert
- University of Chicago
- Cambridge University



Shortening the candidates

- **Decided not to participate**
 - Mary Ann Liebert
 - University of Chicago
 - Cambridge University
- **Evaluated but not moved forward or declined**
 - MIT
 - Taylor and Francis
 - Springer
- **Final Four**
 - Wiley
 - Oxford
 - Elsevier
 - Sage



Full Proposals

1. Proposals received from:
Wiley, Oxford, Elsevier, Sage
2. Financial analysis, publication philosophy agreement, portfolio, vision, and other factors analyzed.
3. Finalist selected for interview – Wiley and Oxford
4. Team interviews and finalist selected
5. AFS Management Committee presentation and approval
6. Contract development with Oxford; Wiley notified that we will not be continuing with them

