

Secretary Report of American Branch-WRSA business meeting in Toluca, September 10, 2014

S.D. Lukefahr on the behalf of J.I. McNitt

Meeting called to order at 19:15 by Gabriela Gonzalez-Mariscal who kindly agreed to conduct meeting in the absence of Maria Laura Cossu. There were sixteen persons attending, ten of which were active members. Steven Lukefahr was first asked to read the secretary/treasurer's report that was prepared by James McNitt. There was a lengthy discussion about the handling of check for the balance of \$1,176.53 and the payment of €170 that was owed to the WRSA. Later, in the meeting the new secretary/treasurer, Luis Carlos Machado, mentioned that a new AB-WRSA bank account would be established in Brazil after he receives an authorization letter from McNitt. Then the check could hopefully be deposited. Then later it would be decided how best to pay the €170 sum to the mother organization - Perhaps as late as 2016 in person at the WRSA congress in China. The group enthusiastically passed the motion proposed by McNitt to donate \$500 from the \$1,176.53 balance to the organizers of the 5th Rabbit Congress of the Americas (RCA) in Toluca to help cover conference cost. This donation was much appreciated by Yazmin Felipe-Perez and Jose Mendoza. Next, the reports from the president (Maria Elena Cossu) and vice president (Maria Laura Cumini) were read by Gaby Quagliarello. These reports related to problems that were encountered over the past four years, such as poor communications concerning the hosting of the 5th RCA, weak membership activity, the resignation of Mark Grobner resulting from inactive service as secretary/treasurer and webmaster, failure of the government in Argentina grant monies to have the book, Recent Advances in Rabbit Sciences, translated into English, and economic problems in Argentina that affected their ability to travel to rabbit conferences. Both officers strongly proposed new strategies to reactivate the American branch. Possible new strategies discussed by Machado, for example, included creating a Blog site, expanding the AB website, making on-line downloadable books available, holding regional conferences (e.g., Central America) to form collaborations between scientists, and developing a newsletter of interest to scientists and producers. Yazmin agreed to explore the possibility of translating the book from English into Spanish. There was also a discussion over the weak support of FAO in not providing support to sponsor the RCA event. A letter of complaint may soon be sent to Rome over this matter as suggested by Jose Mendoza. Election of new officers followed these discussions after nominations were made. Elected to 4-year terms as president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer were Yazmin Felipe-Perez (Mexico), Teresita del Nino Jesus Gonzalez Carrasco (Mexico), and Luis Machado (Brazil). The last item discussed was the location of the next RCA in 2018. Before the meeting, Lukefahr discussed this matter with Ms. Andrea Brenes who is with the Universidad de Costa Rica in San Jose. Brenes informed Lukefahr that her institution has the resources necessary to hold the congress and she would seriously entertain this matter. Lukefahr relayed this information at the meeting. Members agreed that Costa Rica would be a great location, but that Brazil would be the alternate location. The meeting was adjourned.