

# Plenary Session of the 42nd Annual Sea Turtle Symposium

March 29, 2024  
Time: 10.00 am

Meeting called by:  
Steve Dunbar

Type of meeting: ~ 111 people  
Plenary Session

Secretary:  
Manjula Tiwari

## Agenda

ISTS Restructuring  
Student Committee Report  
Travel Committee Report  
Treasurer's Report  
2024 ISTS Election results  
2025 Symposium Overview

Kellie Pendoley & Nick Blume  
Gabriela Arango  
Alex Gaos  
Nicholas Blume  
Jeanette Wyneken  
Andy Agyekumhene

## Additional Information

Special notes:

Pendoley and Blume presented the following information:

<b>Process</b>	<b>ISTS Cash Flow Forecast</b>	<b>Forecast &amp; Exec. Director</b>																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Katherine Turner, Global Citizen LLC, Professional facilitator and trainer, August 2023 West Virginia retreat.</li> <li>Katherine surveyed a representative sampling of past and present members on Society identity and structure.</li> <li>Day 1: Board training, responsibilities and governance</li> <li>Day 2: Strategic Planning - Society Structure change.</li> <li>Three committees convened:</li> <li>Leadership restructure - Investigate and report back to the full board on recommendations</li> <li>Finance - Investigate financial aspects of Symposium frequency and ED costs</li> <li>Member Offerings/Benefits committee - ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous 6 years of the ISTS financial data were used to project the cash flow implications based on the proposed alternates to the Symposium frequency.</li> <li>The alternatives reviewed were:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>In-person only (no change to the current frequency)</b></li> <li><b>Alternating each year between in-person &amp; online</b></li> <li><b>Skip year &amp; in-person (skip year means no online or in-person)</b></li> <li><b>In-person, skip year, online</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee reviewed 2 additional summaries:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full-Time Executive Director role</li> <li>Part-Time Executive Director role</li> </ul> </li> <li>Current feasible Symposium frequency option with an E.D. role is:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>In-person only with an E.D. Part-time*</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>*The committee notes that these projections do not include any additional revenue and/or cost-savings projections</p>																					
<b>Society Leadership Structure Committee</b>	<b>Current Society structure</b>	<b>Proposed Structure</b>																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee Co-Chairs: Kellie Pendoley, Amanda Southwood Williard</li> <li>Committee members: Nick Blume, Steve Dunbar, Daniela Freggi, Sandra Hochscheid, Joe Pfaller, Andrea Phillott, Itzel Sifuentes, Manjula Tiwari</li> <li>Met online between August 2023 and March 2024</li> <li>Recognise that the Society ran a trial with a paid MD in the past, learnings from which were the starting point for the SLSC to develop a new model</li> </ul>	<p>International Sea Turtle Society President:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairs the Board</li> <li>Organises a Symposium</li> </ul> <p>Limitations of current model. Presidents do not have time/experience to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the Society, increase membership, fundraise, develop offerings for members, market the Society etc.</li> <li>Develop or implement a Strategic plan for the Society</li> </ul> <p>Presidency is a one-year term, which lacks continuity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sub-committee took a final proposal to the Board in Feb 2024.</li> <li>Concluded a paid ED best option, benefits are:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on the needs and work of the <b>Society</b></li> <li>Provide continuity and institutional memory</li> <li>Bring professional experience and focus on fundraising, member recruitment, program development, marketing etc</li> <li>Meet the requests of membership for increased offerings from the Society</li> <li>Takes the pressure off the (Symposium) President who can then focus 100% on running their Symposium</li> </ul> </li> </ul>																					
<b>Proposed Structure</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>Future ED roles</b>																					
	<p><b>Table 1: Summary of proposed roles and duties for Executive Director (ED), Symposium President, and Board of Directors. Roles/ligts may also be shared but will be owned by the Symposium President and Board of Directors unless a part-time ED contract, but could be taken on by the Board of Directors.</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Executive Director (ED)</th> <th>Symposium President</th> <th>Board of Directors</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide and manage membership</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's financial and operational aspects of future program</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's marketing and public relations</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's fundraising and donor relations</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's membership and retention</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's website and digital presence</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's social media and public relations</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's membership and retention</li> <li>Develop and manage the Society's website and digital 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Executive Director (ED)	Symposium President	Board of Directors																					

Discussion:

Jeanette Wyneken: Thank you for the summary. In the first year of the Executive Director (ED) it would be tough to do all those tasks.

Board: It will be a phased-in responsibility.

Roldan Valverde: How will you assess ED performance?

Board: ToR/KPIs will be evaluated annually. We will incorporate a developmental process. This is a professional role, potentially recruited from outside the Society; they will be experienced in these responsibilities.

Nick Pilcher: Need Terms of Reference for the ED; they can be translated into KPIs.

Joanna Alfaro: The President has to raise money for Society and Symposium. How will this work with the ED? Strategic plan still on the President?

Nick Pilcher: ED and President will collectively fundraise or individually? As of now, President raises for both.

Board: President and ED will both fundraise for the Symposium and Society as a collective approach. Strategic plan remains with the Board at present if the ED is part-time, but with the ED if they are full-time.

Joanna Alfaro: Suggest a separation: ED- Society matters; President- Symposium matters.

ALan Rees: Any limit on who can take on the role of ED? Will it be limited to the USA?

Board: Anyone from anywhere in world can apply.

Frank Paladino: Potential conflict/competition between President and ED going to same donors,

organizations etc. Also, we will have to raise our prices and it will change the Society.

Board: ED and President will collectively fundraise, and will not be in competition. Funds generated/raised by ED will help support more people, not fewer. We have benchmarked with other Societies to see their models of operating. If we don't do this, it will get worse and worse. The world is changing.

Alex Gaos: Salary for the first year of the ED is US\$45K- where does that come from?

Board: President and Board raise funds. No overhead.

Alex Gaos: Lot of money for incoming President to be faced with. Suggest use more volunteers for ED role/responsibilities. ISTS will be competing for conservation funding with other turtle NGOs for ED funding.

Board: Volunteers don't always respond. We can use the interest generated from investments.

Kartik Shanker: A lot of younger people enthused by this idea- why? Are we really reflecting on this as a Society on whether we need to change? This is an experiment. It may fail. Some people can pay more fees to offset those who can't.

Roldan Valverde: Registration fees should cover the cost of the Symposium. Board approves registration fees to do this. ED raises funds to cover other Society needs and to build more reserve.

Jeff Seminoff: Members vote for a Board to do Society business. The narrative of fundraising needs to change. Looking for long-term development person, developing relationships with long-term donors not just applying for grants. Part-time ED can't do this job. Part time is half-baked idea; go full time.

Board: We thought the cost of a full-time ED would be too intimidating for members straight-up. We propose a phased-in approach.

Jeff Seminoff: ED needs to be the right individual. Loves wildlife. We need to look at Board terms and expertise. ED would expand this. Voting is popularity contest, should focus on skills more than turtle history.

Pendoley: International Dark-Sky Association has a matrix of skills needed for their Board and targeted recruitment. Maybe we do the same in our future. Need people with diverse backgrounds.

Dunbar: A one-year President can't establish long-term relationships with donors.

Kathy Zagzebski: I'm part of the ISTS because of the Society of people. ISTS needs to be more than an annual Symposium. I'm a professional ED. Not afraid of a proposal for a full-time ED. Consistency over time is important for the Society. Corporate body of knowledge needed and more than what the current structure can provide.

Richard Reina: History of Symposium- started with a small base as meetings and workshops, and now a full Symposium. The Society adapted to that and needs to continue to adapt. The ISTS Society is very unusual; doesn't have continuing President, and the Society has no voice in the broader community, influence on policy, etc. We should be doing that. ED will give us a strategic development and bigger voice.

Jarina Mohd Jani: Wasn't going to come to this meeting as I thought it wasn't my business. I was encouraged to come. I am a Travel Grant recipient so supposed to come. Feel bad for incoming ED if it is a reception like this. Everyone who asks questions has been told in response that the ED will do it. Going to the Symposium is very important. Trust people who have been going to the Symposium for many years. Change doesn't have to be big; can be low key. Have to support people who want bigger change.

Annette Broderick: What about the forecast of finances with different formats; will we come back to these in the future?

Board: Used previous 6 years to model cash forecast using different Symposia formats. Some negative. Some positive or neutral.

Annette Broderick: Does this mean a Symposium every alternative year is not feasible for the Society?

Board: Board has to look at eliminating other format of offerings.

Aliki Panagopoulou: Who authorized the Board to do this proposal for an ED and restructuring?

Frank Paladino: Board has the right to make this proposal according to the ISTS Constitution. Might annoy a lot of people, but the Board is elected to do things like this.

Jesus Tomas: Need help for the Board, then ask for more volunteers from among Members to help the President, to help the Society. Team effort.

Aliki Panagopoulou: Not opposed to the idea of an ED. A study is required about the needs of the Society. Frank Paladino says it's the prerogative of the Society to meet the needs of the Society; my prerogative is to ask questions and give advice. The proposed re-organization chart has 3 centers of power- ED, Symposium President, Executive Committee. This makes many committees, with no one person in charge and nothing gets done. Who is the one person who is answerable to the Membership?

Board: Chair of the Board

Aliki Panagopoulou: So, the President is a figurehead?

Board: Symposium President is an important figurehead.

Aliki Panagopoulou: Who signs contracts?

Board: Chair of Board and ED.

Aliki Panagopoulou: Symposium President can't even decide on who helps them. (Referring to Symposium Organizing Committee.)

Board: Same roles as previously, everyone works together. Some of the questions about who is ultimately responsible will be addressed in the Bylaws.

Adriana Cortes: More money will be raised to cover the ED. Salary is US equivalent. Cheaper if ED is someone outside the USA. That salary is a full-time position in many countries.

Ray Carthy: SE USA regional group has developed a strategic plan, Bylaws, and an ED position over the last few years. I wouldn't have been President of SE meeting recently without the ED. We have lived with an ED over the last few years, and it has been highly successful.

Stephen Dunbar: Send us your comments and suggestions. Everything will be considered. Proposal will be adjusted according to Members' input.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

## Student Committee Report

Gabriela Arango

11.40 am

### ISTS 42 Student Committee Report

*Aileen Lavelle, Retno Kusuma Ningrum, Adela Hemeikova, Martina Bartolini, Chandana Puspasari, Darek Aoki, Merope, Holly Stokes, Sophia Coveney, Nupur Kale, Jenna Contuchio, Melissa Staines, Chialing Fong, Riko Kimura, Ruslan bin Abdul Rahman, Kayla Burgher, Syamsyahidah Samsol, Rangsimia Sujittosakul, Janie Reavis, B. Gabriela Arango*



### Student Workshop

**Title:** ISTS42 Student Workshop: Career Paths in Sea Turtle Conservation

**Date:** Sunday, March 29th 1pm-5pm

**4 Speakers:**

- Dr. Bryan P. Wallace
- Dr. Kartik Shanker
- Dr. Jarina Mohd Jani
- Noor Azariyah Mohtar

**Attendees:** 27



### Speed Chatting

The overall aim is to enhance participation of students in our society, and let them know that they are important for all of us, because after all, students are a fundamental part of the society.

**Experts:** 8

- Mohd Uzair Rasli, PhD
- Jesse Scanlon, Ph.D.
- Enas Mohamed Riyaz (Tent)
- Juanita Joseph, PhD
- Gavin John, M.Sc. (Marine Science)
- Sean Williamson, PhD
- Kimberly Finlayson, PhD
- Dr. John H. Wang

**Student Participants:** 35 signed in so far - signing board at the student table

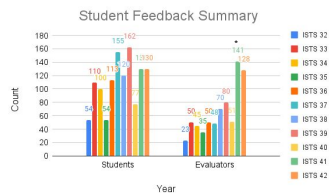
### Student Social

- Had a great turnout. 100% better than last year.  
Students loved it !!!!!
- **Pros:** music, games, mixing, complimentary drink ticket
- **Cons:** change of location was a bit confusing for students, thus showed late and had less time to mingle

### Evaluations

- 130 students
- 128 evaluators, evaluating two presentations each

- Changed the name to not be confused with student evaluations for awards, but rather to denote presentation feedback



### Discussion:

Hector Barrios-Garrido: If members cannot attend the Symposium, could we still use them as student presentation evaluators?

Arango: If sessions are recorded, evaluations could be expanded to non-attendees.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

**Travel Committee Report**

**Alex Gaos**

**11.47 am**

Gaos goes through the Travel Committee allocations below:

Region	Regional TG Chair	Applications received		Awards provided	
		# ISTS42 applicants	% of applicants	# ISTS42 Awards	% of awards
Africa	Angela Formia	9	6.3%	7	5.9%
US/Canada	Kelly Stewart	28	19.4%	19	16.0%
Caribbean	Karen Eckert	5	3.5%	3	2.5%
Asia	Andrea Phillott	50	34.7%	47	39.5%
Oceania/Polynesia	Mark Hamman	5	3.5%	5	4.2%
Middle East/No. Africa	ALan Rees	4	2.8%	3	2.5%
So. America	Alejandro Fallabrino	12	8.3%	10	8.4%
Europe	Daniela Freggi	18	12.5%	10	8.4%
MX/CA America	Jose Urteaga	13	9.0%	10	8.4%
Presidential requests				5	4.2%
		<b>144</b>		<b>119</b>	

\*Includes 5 presidential requests

	ISTS31 San Diego USA	ISTS32 Huatulco Mexico	ISTS33 Baltimore USA	ISTS34 New Orleans Louisiana	ISTS35 Dalaman Turkey	ISTS36 Lima Peru	ISTS37 Las Vegas USA	ISTS38 Kobe Japan	ISTS39 Charleston USA	ISTS40 Perth Australia	ISTS41 Cartagena Colombia	ISTS42 Pattaya Thailand
Bed costs	\$49,240	\$61,053	\$56,654	\$25,280	\$85,055	\$21,535	\$26,712	\$33,305	\$34,242	N/A	\$39,324	\$42,000
Cash grants	\$42,398	\$32,359	\$41,057	\$0	\$9,760	\$16,650	\$0	\$7,890	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0
Total TG support	<b>\$91,638</b>	<b>\$93,412</b>	<b>\$97,711</b>	<b>\$25,280</b>	<b>\$94,815</b>	<b>\$38,185</b>	<b>\$26,712</b>	<b>\$41,195</b>	<b>\$34,242</b>		<b>\$39,324</b>	<b>\$43,778</b>
Beds provided	169	127	171	104	101	195	120	127	127		74	119

Andrew Maurer will be taking over as the Travel Committee Chair.

Motion to accept Travel Chair's report: Frank Paladino

Second: Richard Reina

Motion passes unanimously.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

**Treasurer's Report**

**Nick Blume**

**11.51 am**

	2023 Actual	Budget 2023
<b>Revenues</b>		
Registration and membership	195,507.22	182,100.00
Donations	43,500.00	32,700.00
Auction Income	24,267.63	20,000.00
Grants Temporary Restricted	6,000.00	6,000.00
Other Income - 2020 Reg to donation	5,577.67	0.00
Interest Income	2,384.27	0.00
Realized Gains/Losses	554.60	0.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>277,791.39</b>	<b>240,800.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Accommodations & Facility Exp	9,896.64	4,300.00
Accommodations - Room Grants	43,858.64	42,275.00
Food and Beverage	60,019.87	45,530.00
Audio Visual Expense	16,511.28	6,749.00
Poster Displays	14,622.72	5,000.00
Translation Services	7,779.00	6,800.00
Registration Materials, Gifts, T-shirts	6,961.56	3,850.00
Symposium Coordination	4,560.00	5,000.00
Student Awards	3,750.00	3,700.00
Entertainment	3,733.71	0.00
Technology Expense	966.03	0.00
Conferences Expense	2,214.16	4,200.00
Travel Expense	1,732.94	3,200.00
Speaker Fees/gift	100.00	100.00
Credit Card Fees	11,848.58	10,000.00
Unforeseen Expenses	0.00	6,210.00
<b>SUB TOTAL SYMPOSIUM EXPENSES</b>	<b>188,555.13</b>	<b>146,914.00</b>
U.S. Tax Return and Audit	22,000.00	9,000.00
BOD Retreat	36,766.86	25,000.00
Grants Issued	11,944.50	0.00
Insurance - Directors and Officers	1,026.00	2,500.00
Support - Secretary	7,500.00	2,500.00
Support - Bookkeeping	5,000.00	5,000.00
Support Fundraising Officer	2,000.00	2,000.00
Support - IT	0.00	2,000.00
Support - Registrar	0.00	2,000.00
Office Expense	299.91	400.00
Web Site Expense	961.83	0.00
Bank Fees & Loss on Foreign Exchange	681.77	0.00
Cost of Refunds	335.26	0.00
<b>SUBTOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>88,516.13</b>	<b>50,400.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENSES Budgeted</b>	<b>277,071.26</b>	<b>197,314.00</b>
<b>Net Annual Income and Expense Budgeted</b>	<b>720.13</b>	<b>43,486.00</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Professional Consultant Fee	17,510.32	0.00
<b>Net Cash Flow 2023</b>	<b>(16,790.19)</b>	<b>43,486.00</b>

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Petty Cash	141.55
Money Market - BOA	40,941.79
Bank of America Checking Acct	245,555.47
Merrill Lynch MM	<u>252,322.42</u>
Total Current Assets	538,961.23
Other Assets	
Prepaid Exp - Next Year Symp	4,586.28
Prepaid or Deposits	58,923.61
Deferred Expense	<u>1,662.71</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>65,172.60</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>604,133.83</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	2,000.00
Deferred Income - Next Year Grants	18,700.00
Deferred Income - Next Year Registration	157,358.95
Accrued Expenses	<u>11,000.00</u>
Total Current Liabilities	189,058.95
Long-Term Liabilities	
Deferred Registration 2020	<u>36,648.99</u>
Total Long-Term Liabilities	<u>36,648.99</u>
Total Liabilities	225,707.94
Capital	
Reserves - Operating	50,000.00
Reserves - General	200,000.00
Retained Earnings	145,216.08
Net Income	<u>(16,790.19)</u>
Total Capital	<u>378,425.89</u>
Total Liabilities & Capital	<u><u>604,133.83</u></u>



Motion to accept Treasurer’s report: Jeanette Wyneken  
 Second: Nick Pilcher  
 Motion passes unanimously.

Conclusions:

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:

**2024 ISTS Election Results**

**Jeanette Wyneken**

**11.58 am**

The Nominations Committee (NC) was composed of Mustapha Aksissou (chair), Ryan Welsh, Imed Jribi, Nicholas Pilcher, and Jeanette Wyneken.

The committee was tasked with advertising the need to fill out the following upcoming vacancies in the ISTS leadership structure:

- President-Elect: 1 Position
- Board of Directors: 2 positions
- Nominations Committee regular member: 1 position
- Nominations Committee ex-BoD member: 1 position
- Awards Committee Regular member: 2 positions
- Awards Committee —Lifetime Achievement Awardee member: 2 positions

Candidates nominated:

- President-Elect (1): Alexander Gaos
- Board of Directors (6): Maribel Escobedo, Andres Estrades, Alexandre Girard, Seh Ling Long, Richard Reina, George Shillinger
- Nominations Committee regular member (1): Connie Ka Yan
- Nominations Committee ex-BoD member (1): Kellie Pendoley
- Awards Committee Regular member (2): Ryan Welsh, Rod Mast
- Awards Committee —Lifetime Achievement Awardee member (2): Earl Possardt, Jacques Fretey

Results: (A total of 176 votes received)

- President-Elect: Alexander Gaos
- Board of Directors: Seh Ling Long, Richard Reina
- Nominations Committee regular member: Connie Ka Yan
- Nominations Committee ex-BoD member: Kellie Pendoley
- Awards Committee Regular member: Ryan Welsh, Rod Mast
- Awards Committee —Lifetime Achievement Awardee member: Earl Possardt, Jacques Fretey

Wyneken encourages the membership to nominate.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

**2025 Symposium**

**Andy Agyekumhene**

**12.05 pm**

Agyekumhene presents an overview of the 2025 Symposium and the location: Accra, Ghana.

Conclusions:

Action items:

Person responsible:

Deadline:

**Additional Information**

Ray Carthy: Motion to adjourn  
Jeanette Wyneken: Second  
Motion passes unanimously.  
Adjourned at 12.23 pm