

2023 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

These minutes record the proceedings of the ASTA business meeting held on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at the Hilton Bayfront San Diego, San Diego, California.

1. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

President Pontus Mattsson, Silva International, called the Annual Business Meeting to order at 11:10 AM PT. A quorum was present.

2. ADOPTION OF THE 2022 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

The 2022 Business Meeting minutes were adopted without amendment.

3. 2023 MARTY MITCHELL OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

ASTA Past President Larry Lichter announced the recipient of the Marty Mitchell Outstanding Service Award, Tim Sonntag of Wixon. This award acknowledges an ASTA volunteer who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to volunteerism and to the success of the association.

4. SUSAN L. ABBOTT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

The ASTA Scholarship Committee announced that this year ASTA increased the scholarship amount from \$1000 to \$3000 given the rising costs of education this year. David Lessans, Scholarship Committee Chair, thanked the companies and individuals who generously donated to support the scholarship fund, and announced the four recipients of the 2023 Susan L. Abbott Memorial Scholarship:

- An Hua, daughter of Thuyhuong Hua with Wixon
- Aliana Lazcano, daughter of Ruben Lazcano with Penzeys Spices
- Reagan Russell, daughter of Jill Russell with ofi
- Daniel Vlassov, son of Irina Vlassov with Griffith Foods

Then David Lessans solicited additional donations for future scholarships from the audience.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Pontus Mattsson provided an overview of ASTA's accomplishments and activities over the past year, including an update on ASTA educational opportunities, advocacy and communications initiatives, website redesign, and an overview of recent ASTA events.

6. TREASURER REPORT & MEMBER DUES CAP VOTE

Peter Sayia, A.A. Sayia & Co., reviewed the current financial status of ASTA. Next, he reviewed the 2021-2022 fiscal year audit, which concluded that the association is financially healthy. The audit, annual report, and financial policies and procedures can be found on the ASTA website.

He then reviewed the proposal to increase the member dues cap to \$100,000 annually, not to be increased for at least the next five years (2028). A motion was made and seconded to vote on the proposed dues adjustment. The motion was unanimously carried.

7. ELECTION OF 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ARBITRATION BOARD

Past President and Nominating Committee Chair Larry Lichter, McCormick & Company, presented the 2023-2024 Board of Directors slate. The nominees were:

Board of Directors

Directors to serve one year:

Kerri Goad-Berrios, Kalustyan

Bob Cloney, Elite Spice

Nikhil Joseph, Nedspice

Carol Kitchen, B&G Foods

Brijesh Krishnaswamy, olam food ingredients (ofi)

Lynda Lathrop, Griffith Foods

Pontus Mattsson, Silva International

John Minardi, Accurate Ingredients

Donald Pratt, McCormick Global Ingredients

Manoj Ruparelia, Mincing Spice

Peter Sayia, A.A. Sayia & Co.

Suvan Sharma, Jain Fresh Farms

Dave Musson, Certified Laboratories, Inc., will serve the first year of a two-year term as the non-voting representative of the Associate membership.

Larry Lichter presented the slate for the Arbitration Board. The nominees were:

Arbitration Board

Kerri Goad-Berries, Kalustyan, to serve the second year of a two-year term as Chair.
Zev Golombeck, Schiff Foods, to serve the first year of a two-year term as a Board member.
Nikhil Joseph, Nedspice, to serve the first year of a two-year term as a Board member.

Alternates to serve one-year terms:

Neil Dickens, McCormick & Company
Greg Hanks, Advanced Spice & Trading
Jonathan Raju, High Quality Organics
Gina Riekhof, Riega Foods, LLC

A motion was made and seconded to elect the Board of Directors and Arbitration Board. The Board of Directors and Arbitration Board were duly elected. In accordance with the Bylaws, the ASTA Board of Directors will elect officers at their next meeting.

8. INCOMING PRESIDENT REMARKS

Suvan Sharma, ASTA's Incoming President, thanked Pontus Mattsson for completing his term as president and acknowledged the following outgoing members of the Board of Directors: Larry Lichter, Mostafa Bedair, and Suzanne Munson. Furthermore, he provided an overview of the association's strategic priorities over the upcoming year, including strengthening relationships with our global partners on sustainability, promoting the positive aspects of spices, and effectively advocating on contaminants issues.

9. ARBITRATION CONTRACT CLAUSE UPDATE

Kerri Goad-Berrios, Arbitration Board Chair, outlined ASTA's proposal to develop a clause transferring the execution of the ASTA Arbitration Program to the American Arbitration Administration (AAA) International Center for Dispute Resolution while ensuring the use of experienced ASTA arbitrators. She noted that the new approach will improve arbitrations arising out of ASTA contracts while alleviating the demand for staff to execute arbitrations within the ASTA office. New education and training will be forthcoming to ASTA members on the arbitration program.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the new arbitration clause. The new clause was duly adopted. The new clause will go into effect on July 1, 2023.

10. INDUSTRY ISSUES DISCUSSION

Executive Director Laura Shumow outlined ASTA's 2023-2024 strategic priorities, which include building on ASTA's advocacy and communications platform, expanding global partnerships for sustainability, and efficiently managing the association's resources. She invited participants to discuss how to promote productivity and engagement among the association's volunteers and how ASTA should engage on the topic of sustainability.

11. NEW BUSINESS

The meeting was opened for questions and new business, and (none were raised).

12. ADJOURNMENT

The 2023 Annual Business Meeting adjourned at 12:26 PM PT.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shannen Kelly