



Minutes of the Boston Surgical Society Executive Council Meeting January 9, 2023

The Boston Surgical Society Executive Council met on January 9, 2023, under the leadership of Dr. Mark Rubin. The meeting included the following attendees: Drs. Marc Rubin, Jason Hall, Dana Fugelso, Bill Kastrinakis, Nelya Melnitchouk, Pardon Kenney, Kristin Ellen Raven, Davie McAneny, Thurston Drake, Alik Farber, Mark Callery, and Amram Demirjian.

Dr. Rubin opened the meeting by sharing announcements about upcoming society events. The schedule includes a Colorectal Emergencies Debate on February 6, a session on Ergonomics for Surgeons on March 13, and the Case of the Year Competition on April 10. Additionally, a Tripartite Northeast Surgical Meeting is planned, with the date still to be determined.

In his remarks, Dr. Rubin addressed several challenges currently facing the society. Membership has been declining, with only 11 new members recruited between 2019 and 2021. Revenue has also fallen, despite an increase in dues from \$175 to \$295. Rising costs have compounded these difficulties, with member dinners incurring a loss of \$13,000 per event, a deficit currently covered by dues. Drs. Hall and Raven noted that the increase in dual-career medical couples has made it more difficult for members to leave their families to attend events, highlighting an important barrier to engagement.

The discussion also explored broader trends contributing to the society's challenges, including an aging membership, shifts away from general surgery, and evolving concerns such as burnout, work-life balance, and generational changes. Despite these issues, Dr. Rubin emphasized that the Boston Surgical Society remains the premier surgical organization in the region and is well-positioned to adapt.

Council members engaged in a lively discussion about strategies to address these challenges. Dr. Kenney proposed reaching out directly to members to encourage dues payment, while Dr. Demirjian suggested creating incentives for existing members to recruit new colleagues. Drs. Kenney and McAneny emphasized the value of forming partnerships with industry leaders, such as Takeda, to provide financial support. Dr. Kastrinakis added that securing buy-in from department chairs would be essential for long-term success.

Dr. Drake underscored the importance of articulating a clear value proposition to ensure members see tangible benefits from their participation. Drs. Rubin and Raven proposed efforts to better understand the needs and interests of younger surgeons, allowing the society to tailor its programming to this demographic. To further strengthen the society's membership base, the council discussed adding two resident members to the Executive Council and creating a candidate membership category to engage emerging surgical talent.

Dr. Hall raised concerns about the high cost of hosting events at the Harvard Club, suggesting that revisiting event cost structures could improve financial sustainability. Dr. Rubin highlighted the society's opportunity to celebrate surgical excellence by awarding the Bigelow Medal to distinguished individuals. Proposed honorees included Drs. Julie Freischlag, Barbara Bass,

Nancy Asher, David Schoetz, Pat Roberts, LD Britt, Angelita Habr Gama, and Monica Bertignoli.

In closing, the council recognized the urgency of addressing these challenges while leveraging the society's strengths. Immediate next steps include refining plans for upcoming events, implementing strategies to enhance membership engagement, and pursuing partnerships with industry to stabilize the society's finances. Dr. Rubin thanked attendees for their insights and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Hall MD MPH
Secretary, Boston Surgical Society



The Boston Surgical Society convened on February 5, 2024, for a productive and engaging meeting attended by an impressive roster of members, including Mohammed Bawazeer, David Berger, Jordan Bohnen, David Brooks, Claire Cronin, Aram Demirjian, Michael Dombek, Robert Driscoll, Lisa Ferzoco, John Froio, Denise Gee, Jordan Gutweiler, Richard Erlich, Richard Hodin, Jason Hall, Lauren Henderson, William Kastrinakis, Omar Kudsi, Dmitry Nepomnashy, Chaitan Narsule, Ali Tavakkoli, Kristin Raven, Mark Rubin, Nari Sabeti, and Kathryn Schlosser.

Dr. Claire Cronin, President of the Boston Surgical Society, opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and setting the stage for the evening's program. She began by expressing heartfelt gratitude to Kristen Boyer for her many years of dedicated service to the society. Her contributions were acknowledged with warm appreciation. Dr. Cronin then introduced Lauren Henderson, who was warmly welcomed as a new addition to the society.

The introduction of the current officers followed. Dr. Cronin named the leadership team, including Dmitry Nepomnashy as President-Elect, Dana Fugelso as Vice-President, F. Thurston Drake as Treasurer, Jason Hall as Secretary, and Alik Farber as Dinner Chair. The councilors for the society were also introduced: Kristen Raven, Neyla Melnitchouk, Aram Demirjian, Andrea Merrill, Sharukh Jalisi, and Nicole Gibran.

Dr. Cronin proceeded to announce the society's upcoming meetings. On March 4, 2024, Dr. Carrie Cunningham will present at the next gathering. On April 1, 2024, the society will hold its annual Resident Case Competition. Additionally, the Tripartite Meeting is scheduled for May, promising to be another excellent opportunity for collaboration and learning.

The educational portion of the evening focused on hernia repair techniques and featured a series of compelling presentations and discussions. Dr. David Berger began by discussing open versus minimally invasive inguinal hernia repair. He referenced a 2021 study by Glasgow et al. published in *Annals of Surgery*, which found that laparoscopic repair is associated with shorter operative times and only slightly higher costs. Despite these findings, Dr. Berger emphasized his preference for the open technique, based on his own clinical experience.

Dr. Denise Gee followed with her perspective on laparoscopic inguinal hernia repair. She stated confidently that laparoscopic repair is "clearly superior," citing its advantages in patient outcomes and recovery times. Dr. Nari Sabeti expanded the conversation by discussing robotic inguinal hernia repair, which he described as an acceptable and potentially superior alternative to both open and laparoscopic methods.

Dr. Omar Kudsi shifted the focus to robotic ventral hernia repair. He noted the excellent results achievable with this technique but emphasized its technical complexity and the steep learning curve required for mastery. Dr. Kathryn Schlosser concluded the series of presentations with a discussion of open ventral hernia repair. She acknowledged the mixed opinions surrounding this approach and stressed the importance of tailoring the technique to the specific needs of the patient.

The meeting concluded with a lively and thought-provoking discussion about the role of component separation in the setting of intra-abdominal disasters. Members debated the potential application of Botox in facilitating component separation, with diverse opinions enriching the dialogue.

Dr. Cronin closed the meeting by thanking all presenters for their valuable contributions and acknowledging the active participation of attendees. Members left the session energized by the discussions and eager for the upcoming meetings and events planned by the society.

Jason Hall MD MPH



The Boston Surgical Society convened its March 4, 2024, meeting at The Doubletree Inn, 400 Soldiers Field Road, Boston, MA. The evening began with a lively social hour at 6:00 PM, providing an opportunity for members and guests to connect and network in a collegial atmosphere.

At 7:00 PM, Dr. Claire Cronin, President of the Boston Surgical Society, formally called the meeting to order. Dr. Cronin warmly welcomed attendees and extended a special acknowledgment to those who brought residents to participate, emphasizing the value of their involvement in the evening's discussion.

Following the business session, Dr. Cronin introduced the distinguished guest speaker, Dr. Carrie Cunningham of Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Cunningham, a leader in endocrine surgery and mental health advocacy, presented her talk, "*Removing the Mask 2.0.*" Drawing on her personal experiences and professional insights, Dr. Cunningham underscored the critical need for mental health awareness and support within the surgical community. Her address resonated deeply with the audience, sparking meaningful discussions about reducing stigma and enhancing resources for those in need.

Dr. Cronin closed the evening with heartfelt thanks to Dr. Cunningham for her compelling presentation and to all attendees for their engagement. She encouraged members to RSVP for upcoming events through the Society's website and adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

The March 4th meeting exemplified the Boston Surgical Society's commitment to fostering professional growth and addressing critical issues impacting the surgical community.

Jason Hall MD MPH



Minutes of the Boston Surgical Society Case Competition

Date: Monday, April 1, 2024

Event: Annual Case of the Year Competition

Location: DoubleTree Suites, 400 Soldiers Field Road, Boston, MA 02134

The Boston Surgical Society, hosted its much-anticipated Annual Case of the Year Competition on Monday, April 1, 2024, at the DoubleTree Suites in Boston. The event brought together surgical residency programs from across Massachusetts for a vibrant showcase of clinical expertise, creativity, and innovation.

The evening commenced at 6:00 PM with a cocktail hour. Dinner and the case presentations followed at 6:30 PM, beginning an engaging program that highlighted the exceptional talent of Massachusetts' surgical community. Dr. Fugelso welcomed attendees emphasized the importance of collaboration and the celebration of surgical excellence. Seven institutions presented cases which included; Leiomyosarcoma of the Inferior Vena Cava, Getting Our Ducts in a Tow: A Tale of Disruptor Duct Syndrome, My Side Hurts and Now I Can't Poop, Hiding in Plain Situs, Raiders of the Lost Limb, Thighs the Limit, and Cyst and Punishment.

The standout presentation of the evening, Don't Cut That Cord! by Children's Hospital, was celebrated for its originality, clarity, and clinical significance, earning it the first-place award. This case involved the innovative, multidisciplinary, peripartum management of an infant with airway mass. Raiders of the Lost Limb by Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center earned second place for describing the management of small bowel obstruction in the excluded limb of a patient with a distant jejunoileal bypass. Cyst and Punishment by Brigham and Women's Hospital secured third place.

The event concluded with heartfelt remarks from Dr. Fugelso, who expressed his gratitude to all participants, judges, and attendees. She commended the surgical residents and fellows for their exceptional efforts and contributions, highlighting the competition as a testament to the talent, creativity, and dedication within the Massachusetts surgical community.

Attendees departed inspired and invigorated by the evening's display of clinical expertise and innovative thinking, looking forward to future events hosted by the Boston Surgical Society.

Jason Hall MD MPH



The Executive Council of the Boston Surgical Society met on June 5, 2024, at Davio's restaurant in the Back Bay. There was an excellent turnout with eleven members in attendance: Drs Claire Cronin (president), Dmitry Nepomnayshy (president-elect), Dana Fugelso (vice-president), Thurston Drake (treasurer), Jason Hall (secretary), Marc Rubin (immediate past-president), David McAneny (past president), Rich Ehrlichman (chair of nominating committee), Kristen Raven (council member), Sharukh Jalisi (council member), and Lauren Henderson (executive administrator).

After a lovely dinner of crab cakes, caesar salad, meatballs, filet mignon, fusilli with prawns, and bolognese, the meeting commenced. Dr. Cronin provided organizational updates. Outstanding annual 990 tax forms were filed for 2021 and 2022. There may be a fine for late filing, and Dr. Cronin has asked the IRS for an appeal due to COVID. The Boston Surgical Society is a 501c(6) organization and a request for the official status has been filed now that the 990's were submitted. Annual Business Filings with the state were submitted for 2021 and 2022. The old Boston Surgical Society bank account with Bank of America was closed and a new account with a 1.8% money market account was opened with Brookline Bank. The Paypal account used to collect dues and dinner fees was retired due to unpopular demand and high fees. An account with Donorbox and Stripe was opened which allows us to collect dues with credit cards. A request to ask members to cover the fees will be included on the website.

Dr. Millham, a former BSS president, and Dr. Cronin met with the Countway Library at Harvard, home to the original archives of the Boston Surgical Society, and they have agreed to digitize the records at no cost to the Society.

Dr. Cronin presented a proposal to bring back Boston Surgical ties, silk scarves, scrub hats and pins for purchase for members. A proforma was discussed and the council voted to invest in 250 ties, 100 scarves, 250 scrub hats and 250 pins. The Tripartite Meeting will be held in Boston in 2025 under the leadership of Dr. Dmitry Nepomnayshy. An outline for preparation was shared with the group.

The financial status of the Society was reviewed. Dr. Rubin had changed the bylaws to move to an October fiscal year instead of July-June. As of June 5, 2024, the Boston Surgical Society had \$90,864 in assets, down from the previous year of \$100,890. Revenue was up due to an aggressive campaign to collect dues, but so were expenses due to the hosting of the Bigelow Medal the previous November.

The meeting was adjourned after coffee and dessert.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Cronin MD, MBA



Minutes of the Boston Surgical Society Meeting

Date: Monday, November 4, 2024

Location: The Harvard Club, 374 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02115

On Monday, November 4, 2024, the Boston Surgical Society convened at the Harvard Club, located at 374 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston, for an evening filled with camaraderie, learning, and professional engagement. The event commenced at 6:00 PM with a lively social hour, during which members and guests enjoyed the opportunity to network and reconnect in an elegant and welcoming atmosphere.

The program transitioned at 7:00 PM to a formal dinner, followed by an insightful and highly anticipated presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Pomfret. Dr. Claire Cronin, President of the Boston Surgical Society, opened the evening's proceedings by welcoming the attendees and introducing the guest speaker.

Dr. Pomfret, an eminent figure in transplantation surgery, delivered an inspiring lecture titled "The Evolution of Living Donor Liver Transplantation." She recounted her professional journey, starting from her training at the New England Deaconess Hospital, where she contributed to Massachusetts' first living related liver transplant in 1998. Dr. Pomfret went on to build the nation's largest living related liver donor program at the Lahey Clinic before advancing her career as the Igal Kam MD Endowed Chair in Transplant Surgery and a Professor of Surgery at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

During her presentation, Dr. Pomfret shared valuable insights into advancements in transplantation and the ongoing challenges within the field. She also reflected on the influence of medicolegal events on the careers of surgeons, contextualizing these experiences through themes drawn from Dr. Kent M. Keith's "The Paradoxical Commandments." These timeless principles, as detailed by Dr. Pomfret, inspired

attendees with their profound relevance to both personal and professional life. The commandments include:

- People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love them anyway.
- If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.
- If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.
- The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.
- Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.
- The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.
- People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
- What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.
- People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway.
- Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.
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These principles struck a chord with the attendees, serving as a reminder of the importance of persistence, purpose, and compassion in the face of life's challenges. The evening concluded on a high note, with attendees expressing their gratitude to Dr. Pomfret for her enlightening presentation. The meeting left participants inspired and eager for future opportunities to gather and learn.

Jason Hall MD MPH
Secretary, Boston Surgical Society



Boston Surgical Society Secretary's Report

December 2, 2024



It was a very cold December evening that saw the Annual Business Meeting of the Boston Surgical Society at the Harvard Club. The reception in the Harvard Hall Foyer was very well attended with most of the city's surgical departments well represented. After drinks and cheese, surgeons and trainees filed into Harvard Hall and quickly took their seats. A most delicious Caesar salad and chicken with mashed potatoes were served while guests made conversation across their respective tables. The first order of events was to start the Business Meeting. Accomplishments for 2023-2024 were reviewed and included the Bigelow Medal awarded to Dr. Angelita Habr-Gama. Twenty new members were inducted, and a list of meetings for 2024-2025 was reviewed. Members who had passed away, including Drs. Vincent Russo, Frank Vittimberga, and Anthony Whittemore, were honored with a moment of silence. The Treasurer's Report described net assets of \$76,702, as of 9/31/24. The nominating slate was approved for the following: Drs. Dmitry Nepomnayshy as President, Steve Fishman as President-Elect, Ben James as Vice-President, Alik Farber as Secretary, F. Thurston Drake as Treasurer, and Dana Fugelso as Dinner Chair.

As desert was served, Dr. Richard Ehrlichman introduced our president, Dr. Claire T. Cronin MD, FACS, MBA, whose Presidential Address was entitled "In a ~~New York~~ Boston Minute". Dr. Cronin reviewed the Archives of the Society and told the story of these precious records that Dr. Joseph Murray donated to the Boston Medical Library in 1975. With the closure of the Boston Medical Library, the collection was moved to the Countway Library, with which Dr. Millham has negotiated for our records to be digitized. After hearing the origins of our Society, founded as a Surgical Club by Drs. Lahey, Kimpton and Brant in 1911, we learned about Drs. Scudder, Stone

and Cotton, who petitioned for it to be expanded and incorporated as the Boston Surgical Society in 1914. Dr. Cronin recounted how the Society met at surgeons' homes, the Boston Medical Library and, of course, the Harvard Club. We learned of early meeting content such as discussions about tuberculous peritonitis, ptosis and therapeutic uses of sugar. Scientific presentations were supplemented by clinical presentations, including one patient who underwent a total thyroidectomy under rectal anesthesia. Dr. Cronin also told the story of Henry Jacob Bigelow and the creation of our Bigelow Medal. We then saw the first Treasurer's Report and learned that, in 1954, Society dues were raised from \$5 to \$10. Women were not officially admitted to the Society until 1972, and Dr. Cronin was the 3rd woman to serve as President. All in all, the rich history of the Boston Surgical Society came to life, and I felt as if I had just travelled through the past 123 years in a time machine. I suspect others felt the same. Dr. Cronin earned a standing ovation and the meeting disbanded into the cold December night.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alik Farber". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Alik Farber