COMMISSION ON STRATIGRAPHIC NOMENCLATURE OF THE AMERICAS

Report 17—Revisions to the Articles of Organization and Procedure of the Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature of the Americas

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INTRODUCTION

Several revisions to the *Articles of Organization and Procedure* for the North American Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature have been adopted following the 75th, 79th, and 80th annual meetings of the Commission in 2020, 2024 and 2025, respectively. Of these, the most substantial change was revision of Article III regarding membership composition of the Commission and the addition of new member organizations from Central and South America and the Caribbean region. As a result, the Commission also voted to change its name to be more inclusive of the expanding membership, with approval of the name: Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature of the Americas. A corresponding change to the Commission's fundamental publication was also approved at the 2025 meeting as the *Stratigraphic Code of the Americas* (formerly the North American Stratigraphic Code). Additional revisions to the Articles include those aimed at ensuring gender neutrality of titles, permission to hold virtual meetings, and processes for designating new Commissioners. Article V was also modified to define quorum for meetings and the nature of a two-thirds majority vote, with the process for making amendments to the Articles modified to specify that a two-thirds majority vote is required. These revisions are reflected in the following bylaws, which otherwise are as adopted by the Commission under its former name (North American Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature) at its 62nd annual meeting in 2007, amended by mail ballot, and published by Owen et al. (2009). The amended bylaws printed below became effective at the close of the 80th annual meeting in 2025 and supersede all previous versions (Moore 1947; Hutchinson 1953; Owen et al. 1985; 2009).

ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE OF COMMISSION ON STRATIGRAPHIC NOMENCLATURE OF THE AMERICAS

I. Name

The name of the Commission shall be the Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature of the Americas.

II. Purposes

The purposes of the Commission are to develop statements of stratigraphic principles, to recommend procedures applicable to classification and nomenclature of stratigraphic and related units, to review problems in classifying and naming stratigraphic and related units, and to formulate expressions of judgment thereon.

III. Members

1. The Commission shall be composed of members chosen as follows: three representatives each as designated by the

American Association of Petroleum Geologists
Association of American State Geologists
Geological Society of America
Geological Survey of Canada
United States Geological Survey

two representatives each as designated by the
Canadian Energy Geoscience Association
Geological Association of Canada
SEPM Society for Sedimentary Geology
Servicio Geológico Mexicano

and one representative each as designated by the
Asociación Colombiana de Geólogos y Geofísicos de la Energía (Colombian Association of Energy Geologists and Geophysicists)
Asociación Mexicana de Geólogos Petroleros (Mexican Association of Petroleum Geologists)
Colegio de Geólogos de Bolivia (Bolivian Guild of Geologists)
Colegio de Geólogos de Costa Rica (Costa Rican Guild of Geologists)
Instituto de Geología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Institute of Geology, National Autonomous University of Mexico)
Instituto de Geociencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Institute of Geosciences, National Autonomous University of Mexico)
Instituto de Geología y Paleontología/Servicio Geológico de Cuba (Institute of Geology and Paleontology/ Geological Service of Cuba)
Instituto de Geociencias, Universidad de Panamá (Institute of Geosciences, University of Panama)
Instituto Hondureño de Geología y Minas (Honduran National Institute of Geology and Mines)
Asociación de Geólogos del Paraguay (Association of Geologists of Paraguay)
Sociedad Geológica del Perú (Geological Society of Peru)
Sociedad Geológica Mexicana (Mexican Geological Society)
Sociedad Uruguaya de Geología (Uruguayan Geological Society)
Sociedad Venezolana de Geólogos (Venezuelan Society of Geologists)
Facultad de Ciencias Agronómicas, Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Medio Ambiente, Universidad de El Salvador (Faculty of Agronomy, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, University of El Salvador)

Organizations may request additional representatives to a maximum of three Commissioners. The Commission, by a two-thirds majority vote of current Commissioners, also may invite participation by additional organizations that may designate a potential Commissioner. At the following annual meeting, representation by the new organization can be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of current Commissioners. The Commission, by a two-thirds majority vote of current Commissioners may also add Commissioners-at-large to serve a three (3) year term, with possibility of renewal.

2. The terms of designated Commissioners within each organization shall be three (3) years, with staggered terms. Commissioners may be reappointed. In case of a vacancy, the agency that designated a Commissioner shall make a new designation to complete the unexpired term. For the purpose of determining the terms of Commissioners, a year shall be construed as the period from the end of one annual meeting of the Commission to the next.

3. Organizations represented by members of the Commission shall be requested to designate the successor of a Commissioner whose term will expire at least 60 days before the date of such expiration, either by reappointment of the Commissioner or by selection of a new Commissioner. Organizations are encouraged to appoint individuals in an early career stage. A letter or e-mail correspondence outlining the reappointment or appointment of a new Commissioner must be provided to the Commission.

IV. Officers

1. The officers of the Commission shall be a Chair and a Vice Chair, who shall be elected annually by the Commissioners from their number. A Nominating Committee to be composed of three members in the third year of their terms, reasonably representing constituent organizations of the Commission, shall be selected by the current Chair and Vice Chair at the end of the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee, through its elected Chair, shall provide the Commission Chair, at least 90 days before the next annual meeting, with nominees for office. With the agenda for the annual meeting, the Commission Chair shall submit to all Commissioners the names of all nominees. In the case of a sole nominee for an office, the Commission Chair shall ask the current Commissioners to approve that nominee for that office. Should the sole nominee not be approved, the Commission Chair shall request additional nominees from the Nominating Committee until one is approved. If there is more than one nominee for an office, the Commission Chair shall conduct a secret ballot among the current Commissioners and shall declare the nominee receiving the highest number of votes to be elected. Officers may be re-elected. The election of officers shall be held following adjournment of the annual meeting by reconvening of all Commissioners whose terms extend through the ensuing year and all newly appointed Commissioners whose terms begin at close of the annual meeting just adjourned. Each such Commissioner is entitled to cast a ballot for officers who are to serve in the year next following each annual meeting, but Commissioners whose terms expire at close of the annual meeting shall not vote on selection of officers for the ensuing year.

2. The Chair or in the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair, shall preside at meetings of the Commission and shall have responsibility of maintaining records, supervising presentation of matters to the Commission, organizing actions and opinions expressed by the Commission for publication, and generally guiding the work of the Commission in accordance with procedures adopted by the Commission.

3. The Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, shall remain in office until relieved and replaced by newly elected officers, and in case the term of either as Commissioner is expired at adjournment of the annual meeting, either or both shall hold status as Commissioner-at-large until new officers are elected.

4. The Nominating Committee shall have responsibility of notifying organizations represented in the Commission of membership provisions stated in Article III-3 in ample time to permit compliance. The Vice Chair shall perform functions of a secretary and treasurer in addition to other duties.

5. In the event of vacancy in the office of Chair, which for any reason occurs when an annual meeting is not in session, the Vice Chair shall succeed to the office of Chair, unless unwilling to accept the office, and in such case, a new Vice Chair shall be selected in accordance with Article IV-6.

6. In the event of vacancy in the office of Chair, to which the Vice Chair is unwilling to succeed, or in the office of Vice Chair, which for any reason occurs when an annual meeting is not in session, the remaining officer, if such exists, shall have responsibility and authority to designate a Commissioner to fill the vacancy, or at the officer's option, to conduct an online ballot for election to fill the vacancy. If both offices should become vacant when an annual meeting is not in session, the Commissioner or Commissioners having most years of service on the Commission shall have responsibility and authority to select a Chair and a Vice Chair in whatever manner the Commissioner or Commissioners elect.

V. Actions

1. The Commission shall specify and establish procedures, including provision for obtaining statements of problems or cases in desired form and completeness, determination of steps in handling these matters by the Commission, and formulation of the Commission's opinions, declarations, and recommendations. The Commission shall exercise the option of accepting or rejecting consideration of questions that may be brought before it. Opportunity shall be given for recording minority as well as majority judgments.

2. The Commission shall have an annual meeting for the election of officers and for transaction of other business that it may choose to consider, such meetings ordinarily being scheduled to occur at or around the time and place of the annual meetings of the Geological Society of America. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair of the Commission. Meetings may be held in person, online, or as a combination of the two. Quorum for the Annual Meeting is set to one more than half the members of the Commission, with Commissioners-at-large included in the membership. A Commissioner should seek to designate an alternate to act in their stead at meetings the Commissioner is unable to attend.

3. Much of the Commission's work may be carried on by correspondence between times of meetings.

4. A two-thirds majority vote of the Commission is necessary for adoption of opinions, declarations, and recommendations concerning classification and nomenclature of stratigraphic units. A two-thirds majority vote is reached if two-thirds of the votes cast are in favor. Voting can be conducted at the Annual Meeting if quorum is reached, or through online ballots.

5. Commissioners-elect shall be invited to attend annual meetings as observers.

6. Except as specified in these Articles of Organization and Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order shall guide the actions of the Commission.

VI. Publication of Actions

The Commission shall prepare and offer for publication such record of its actions, including minority opinions, as it may deem significant. These statements may be issued either in the form of abstracts or full presentations. In cases where full statements are not published, manuscript file copies of such statements shall be provided and preserved in a repository designated by the Commission for consultation by interested workers in such manner as the Commission may arrange. Published opinions, declarations, recommendations, or other actions of the Commission shall be numbered and dated in such manner as to provide a suitable basis for ready reference and indexing. Commission publications shall include Codes, consisting of recommended procedures for classifying and naming stratigraphic and related units; Notes, consisting of records of annual meetings or preliminary statements on a given topic to encourage comment by interested workers; Reports, consisting of statements formally accepted by the Commission on a given topic; and Discussions, consisting of freely contributed comments on Codes, Notes, and Reports.

VII. Responsibility for Actions

An organization making designation of representatives to serve as Commissioners shall not be bound in any way to observe procedures or follow judgments expressed by the Commission. Actions by the Commission shall be advisory and involve no commitments by other agencies, either expressed or implied. However, the Commission welcomes formal adoption or endorsement of its actions.

VIII. Finances

The Commission is authorized to solicit and disburse such funds as may be needed for proper transaction of its functions.

IX. Amendments

Amendments to these articles of organization and procedure may be made at the Annual Meeting or through online ballots by a two-thirds majority vote of the current Commissioners.

REFERENCES

HUTCHINSON, R. D., 1953. Note 15—Records of the Stratigraphic Commission for 1951-1952. *AAPG Bulletin*, 37: 1078–1080.

MOORE, R. C., 1947. Note 1—Organization and objectives of the Stratigraphic Commission. *AAPG Bulletin*, 31: 513–528.

OWEN, D. E., LASCA, N. P. and SCHULTZ, E. A., 1985. Report 10—New Articles of Organization and Procedure of the North American Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature. *AAPG Bulletin*, 69: 872–873.

OWEN, D. E., LASCA, N. P. and EDWARDS, L. E., 2009. Report 11—Revised Articles of Organization and Procedure of the North American Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature. *Stratigraphy*, 6 (2): 183–184.

APPENDIX A: Duties of the Officers

CHAIR

Throughout the year

- Handle all correspondence to/from the Commission, including correspondence regarding appointments to the Commission. If required, defer actions to the next meeting or delegate tasks to the Commission.
- Maintain a complete record of all actions and correspondence and send copies of everything, by e-mail, to the Archivist and the Vice Chair.
- Ask the Vice Chair for assistance as needed.
- Notify all Commissioners of the date and time of all meetings; send an agenda and relevant documents prior to the meeting date and invite interested guests.
- Set up logistics for any meetings outside of the Annual Meeting.
- Work with webmaster to keep website up to date.
- Ensure tasks delegated to subcommittees or others are completed and results reported.
- Submit any documents requested by AGI.
- Attend any AGI member society meetings or find an alternate representative. Report results to the Commission and undertake or delegate any necessary work.
- If stratigraphic nomenclature has been abused in the literature, write the editor of the journal.
- Submit proposed amendments to the Code to *Stratigraphy*, after they are approved by the Commission. This applies for volunteered amendments, but those submitted by ad hoc committees of the Commission can be delegated to the committee.

Fall (after Annual Meeting)

- Compile Minutes of the Annual Meeting taken as Vice Chair and have the new Vice Chair proof-read before distributing to the Commission as soon as possible after meeting adjournment.
- Provide updated list of Commissioners to webmaster for posting on the CSNA website, as well as any other relevant information.
- Follow up with designates of all actions identified at the Annual Meeting, to ensure that they are undertaken.
- In alternate years, submit two-years' worth of abridged Minutes to *Stratigraphy* to be published as a Note. The Note should be authored by the outgoing Chair and the Vice Chair, with order of authorship determined by their consensus.

Spring

- Set up logistics for the Commission's Annual Meeting, held at or around the time of the GSA Annual Meeting
  - Select date/time (typically set for Monday afternoon, 1:00-5:00 PM)
  - Schedule room, discuss payment with GSA if held at their Annual Meeting (potentially paid by the Chair's supporting organization)
- Ensure that the Nominating Committee completes their slate of executive nominations, including Chair and Vice Chair. Remind Nominating Committee to contact member organizations to designate Commissioners for any expiring terms and ensure all vacancies are filled.

Summer

- Identify volunteers for the incoming Nominating Committee.
- At least one month in advance of the meeting, notify all Commissioners of the date/time of the Annual Meeting; including an agenda, relevant documents, and a virtual meeting link. See the minutes of a recent meeting for the usual organization of topics. Note that incoming Commissioners should be invited to the Annual Meeting but would not be able to vote or be considered part of the quorum; however, their term begins at the very end of the Annual Meeting.
- Invite interested guests to the Annual Meeting (e.g. ISSC).
- Assume responsibility for the scrolls for Commissioners whose terms expire.

Annual Meeting

- Chair the Annual Meeting, including introduction of guests and new Commissioners. Hold a moment of silence for Commissioners or previous Commissioners who have passed.
- Appoint a new Nominating Committee.
- Ensure scrolls for Commissioners whose terms expire are printed and available at the meeting to be handed out or if virtual, emailed.

VICE CHAIR

- Assist Chair throughout the year as needed.
- Record meeting minutes at the Annual Meeting (either on paper or digitally).
- Provide remarks at the end of the Annual Meeting (i.e. following the call to order of the subsequent annual meeting).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Spring

- Compile a slate of executive nominations, including the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Fill all vacancies on the Commission for Commissioners whose terms are expiring in the coming fall. Organizations should be encouraged to nominate early career Commissioners. Formal letters (or email correspondence) should be received from the member organizations, compiled for the upcoming Annual Meeting, and circulated to the Archivist and Chair.
- Revise the list of Commissioners with the slate of new nominations and their email addresses for circulation at the Annual Meeting.

APPENDIX B: Updating Publications of the Commission (Code, Reports, Notes)

There are three kinds of publications produced by the Commission, all of which are published through *Stratigraphy.* These are the Stratigraphic Code of the Americas (the Code), Reports of the CSNA, and Notes of the CSNA. As amendments and revisions occur, periodically new editions of the Code are published. Amendments to the Code are first proposed for a one-year period for public comment as a Note of the Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature of the Americas. After the amendments and revisions are accepted by the Commission, they are published as a Report of the Commission on Stratigraphic Nomenclature of the Americas and will be included in future editions of the Code. All records, including abridged meeting minutes, of the CSNA are published as Notes while articles of organization are published as Reports.

In brief:

Proposals to amend the Code – Note

Accepted revisions to the Code – Report

Records of the Commission – Note

Articles of organization – Report