

**NSSA Executive Committee  
Conference Call Minutes, 7/26/2011**

**Chris Leighton (Secretary), 7/26/2011**

**Present:** Jaime Fernandez-Baca (JFB)  
Julie Borchers (JB)  
Chris Leighton (CL)  
Thomas Proffen (TP)  
Flora Meilleur (FM)  
Bruce Gaulin (BG)  
John Tranquada (JT)  
Norm Wagner (NW)

**Absent:** Tonya Kuhl (TK)

**Agenda:**

1. Approval of minutes from 6/13/2011 (BG/CL).
2. Set date for next conf. call (BG/CL).
3. Plan for NSSA website (All/TP).
4. Neutron News for NSSA members (BG/CL).
5. NSSA Student Prizes (BG).
6. Advocacy efforts (contacts to potential candidates for DC visits/Al Hurd/MRS) (TK).
7. ACNS 2012 progress (JB).
8. Rosenkranz and Walker for ACNS Program Chairs (BG).
9. AOB.

**Discussion Minutes (by agenda item number):**

**1. Approval of minutes**

After the committee examined the minutes BG moved to accept them, seconded by CL. All in favor; minutes from 6/13/2011 approved.

**2. Date for next conference call**

The committee agreed to Tuesday August 30th at noon (central). CL will send an email reminder on 8/26/11.

**3. Plan for NSSA website**

TP summarized the responses he received from the Exec. Comm. regarding the content we believe should be added to the website. These were:

1. Information (regular updates)
  - a. Job posting board
  - b. Facility deadlines
  - c. Links to facilities (we have that - somewhat hidden)
  - d. Schools, workshops, conferences postings
  - e. List to past/future ACNS content
2. Outreach (somewhat static information)
  - a. General public (neutrons why, what - links, own content ?)
  - b. Potential neutron scatterers (more details, neutron impact by science discipline)

TP posed the question of whether additional items should be included. NW mentioned that he has a full set of pdf files from prior years ACNS tutorials and it was agreed that this would be good content to include. The issue of storage capacity was raised and TP agreed to check on it, although he suspected this is no problem. TP and BG discussed the issue of postings to the site and how they would be monitored. It was agreed that this could be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, if and when problems were encountered. TP resolved to begin changes in the "Information" category. There followed a more in-depth discussion regarding the "Outreach" category. JT voiced the opinion that the facilities web content should be used as much as possible, where appropriate. JFB pointed out that it is a significant effort to keep such a site current and that the content developed should be shared between the NSSA and the facilities. He also mentioned that he had discussed this with Al Ekkebus of the SNS who was enthusiastic about the idea. It was commented that the same holds for shared exhibit materials. TP agreed with these points and commented on a recent crystallographic meeting that had a successful exhibit along these lines. TP also raised the possibility of surveying the members for comments and suggestions.

The discussion then turned to the issue from the June conference call of possibly hiring a student to further develop outreach content for the website. BG commented that he felt that the right person could be very effective in this role and that doing better than a "collection" of facility information could be a dramatic improvement. BG stated that using his own institution as an example, a ½ TA appointment as an external consultant would amount to just over \$5k for 130 hrs of effort. BG advanced xxxxx as a possibility for this effort. JT agreed to this action provided that this was revisited after assessing the efficacy of the effort, and that the initial allocation of funds was for a one time trial. JFB confirmed that this should be done on a trial basis, to the agreement of the committee. A sub-committee consisting of BG, JT and TP was formed to oversee this work. JFB pointed out that the scope of the work should include development of materials for exhibits and meetings too, an opinion that was seconded by CL. The allocation of \$5k for this effort was unanimously via by a vote of the Exec. Comm.

#### **4. Neutron news for NSSA members**

BG resolved to pass on the required information for CL to pursue this.

#### **5. NSSA student prizes**

BG reported that he completed the description of the prizes as follows:

### **NSSA Student Prizes**

Beginning at ACNS 2012, the NSSA will present two sets of prizes recognizing outstanding accomplishment in the general area of neutron scattering by graduate or undergraduate students who have performed much of their work at North American neutron facilities.

#### **The NSSA Prize for Outstanding Student Research**

This prize will be awarded every two years, at the American Conference on Neutron Scattering (ACNS).

A call for nominations will be made in advance of the ACNS meeting, at which the prize will be presented, on a schedule consistent with that of the nominations for the other NSSA prizes. Nominations for this prize will be adjudicated by a selection committee set up by the NSSA executive. The selection committee will make the award on the basis of outstanding contributions to neutron science, with a significant portion of the relevant research carried out at North American neutron scattering facilities.

The nomination would consist of one nominating and one supporting letter, a CV listing publications and relevant experience, and copies of up to three representative publications. Eligible candidates are either current PhD students or scientists within two years of receiving their PhD by the end of the appropriate ACNS meeting. The onus is on the nominator to show that the nominee qualifies for the prize.

The prize will consist of an appropriate certificate or plaque, \$1000 in cash, and an invitation to give an oral presentation at the ACNS meeting at which the prize is awarded.

The following selection committee is recommended for 2012 The NSSA Prize for Outstanding Student Research:

**[removed]**

#### **ACNS Outstanding Student Poster Presentation Prizes**

Up to 3 prizes for outstanding poster presentations by graduate or undergraduate students at the ACNS meeting will be made. These prizes would normally be made to recipients whose work spans a range of specializations within neutron science (such as hard matter, soft matter, instrumentation etc.) and the work to be presented and considered would have a significant portion carried out at North American neutron scattering facilities. Eligibility requires that candidates either be current students, or be within two years of receiving their PhD, by the end of the ACNS meeting at which they wish to be considered. Candidates who wish to be considered for these prizes will self-identify at the time at which they submit their abstract for their poster at the relevant ACNS meeting, and the onus is on the candidate to show that they qualify for the prize.

An ad-hoc evaluation committee will be set up by the Conference Chair (the NSSA VP) and the Program Co-chairs for the relevant ACNS meeting. They will evaluate the competing poster presentations at the ACNS meeting, and discuss the posters with the authors and candidates, if possible.

Prize winners will be recognized at the ACNS conference, presented with a certificate and a \$100 cash award.

BG mentioned that although this action was previously approved, we needed to agree on the cash amounts for the prizes. The issue of the 2 or 3 year eligibility period (beyond PhD graduation) was also discussed by BG and NW. BG commented that the current

wording puts the onus on the nominator to determine eligibility. BG also pointed out that the prize selection committee for the outstanding research award was deliberately weighted towards university faculty. CL and JT discussed the origins and availability of the funds, which was not perceived to be a problem. TP and JT stated that they believed the award amounts to be reasonable. BG moved to approve the prizes as described above, seconded by TP. The committee voted in unanimous favor of the motion. Parenthetically, TP commented that this information would need to be posted to the website in due course while BG mentioned that selection committees for the various prizes would need to be set shortly.

#### **6. Advocacy efforts (contacts to potential candidates for DC visits/Al Hurd/MRS**

This item was not discussed due to TKs absence. It will be returned to during the next conference call.

#### **7. ACNS 2012 update**

JB reported that negotiations between the conference site management and MRS were well underway and that progress on the rates for the meeting rooms had already been made. A competitive rate for sleeping rooms was already in place but MRS are negotiating for a rate of \$145 per night with a room block requirement of 80 % of the 140 available rooms. This was considered very competitive by the committee. JB pointed out that dorm rooms are also available at Georgetown, at rates between \$32 and \$62 per night, the latter costs being for double rooms with a private bathroom. These rooms must be reserved in advance and pre-paid however. CL, BG and JFB discussed the expected attendance and it was commented that there would likely be little issue with achieving the room block commitment. JFB commented on the disappointing number of students at the last conference and discussed the possibility of DOE funding for student travel subsidies. CL enquired about the student registration fee and it was concluded that this is also usually modest. Opening these rooms to post-docs was suggested by TP, which was met with approval. JB raised the possibility of pre-paying for 100 students as a strong incentive for student involvement. JB resolved to look further into this issue, which will require a closer examination of the budget from prior conferences.

#### **8. Finalization of ACNS program chairs**

BG revealed that xxxxx had agreed via voicemail to serve as program chair, pending some discussions regarding the scope of the position. Walker responded that she was over-committed in the relevant time period and wouldn't be able to serve in this capacity. Discussion lead by NW resulted in the formation of a second shortlist of potential candidates; [removed] It was resolved that CL would circulate an email template for voting on these candidates. NW agreed to send information on their affiliations and websites for inclusion in this email.

## 9. AOB

As a continuation of the discussions from the last call, BG sought the Exec Comm's approval for travel expenses to attend the AONSA meeting in Tsukuba, at their invitation. A motion was proposed by BG and seconded by JB. The motion was passed unanimously.

### Action items

Item Number	Person Responsible	Action item	Agenda date (mo/yr)	Agenda Item # for next meeting
1	TP	Updates to the "Information" aspects to the website content	07/11	3
2	BG/TP/JT	Pursue the hiring of a grad student as a consultant for outreach content development for website	07/11	4
3	BG	Pass on Neutron News contacts to CL	06/11	5
4	CL	Talk to Neutron News about a deal with them to have Neutron News for free, or at a reduced rate, for our membership.	07/11	6
5	All	Formation of selection committees for prizes fro ACNS 2012	07/11	7
6	BG	Follow up with facilities with respect to them adding a NSSA checkbox to their proposal submission forms. The checkbox would trigger information about NSSA being sent to the proposer.	9/09	-
7	JFB & TP	JFB will manually start making changes to the membership database to either delete or correct information there. TP will provide the necessary instructions on how to do this.	11/10	-
8	JT	Addressing the issue of signing authority for the NSSA checking and savings accounts.	1/11	-
9	TK	Advocacy efforts. TK will contact potential candidates for DC visits	6/11	8

		and continue discussions with Al Hurd / MRS		
10	BG	Additional discussion of conference booths, proposed scope	3/11	-
11	JB	ACNS 2012 progress / Student rooms	7/11	9
12	CL	ACNS final program chair voting	7/11	10