

**NSSA Executive Committee  
Conference Call Minutes, 3/28/2011**

**Chris Leighton (Secretary), 3/28/2011**

**Present:**      Bruce Gaulin (BG)  
                  John Tranquada (JT)  
                  Jaime Fernandez-Baca (JFB)  
                  Julie Borchers (JB)  
                  Chris Leighton (CL)  
                  Norman Wagner (NW)  
                  Thomas Proffen (TP)  
                  Tonya Kuhl (TK)

**Absent:**      Flora Meilleur (FM)

**Agenda:**

1. Approval of minutes from 2/28/2011 (BG/CL)
2. Set date for next conference call (BG/CL)
3. NSSA's role in advocacy (BG)
4. Exec. Comm. photos for website (CL)
5. NSSA student thesis prize (BG)
6. Fellow certificates (JFB)
7. Membership database (JFB/TP)
8. APS booth report (JFB/all in attendance at APS)
9. ACNS 2010 books (JT)
10. Signing authority on accounts (JT)
11. Member at large position/Tonya Kuhl (BG)
12. ACNS 2010 (JB)
13. Beamtime proposal deadlines/NSSA website (TP/JB)
14. AOB

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

BG welcomed TK to the NSSA Exec Comm (see item 11 below)

**1. Approval of last minutes**

NW pointed out some typos in the last minutes, which were corrected. JT moved to approve the minutes, seconded by CL. All in agreement; minutes approved.

## **2. Time and date for next call**

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2pm EST was agreed upon for the next conference call.

## **3. NSSA's role in advocacy**

BG reported the result of informal discussions with several facility directors (Jim Rhyne (LANSCE), Alex Lacerda (LANL), Rob Dimeo (NIST), and Ian Anderson (ORNL)) at the APS meeting in Dallas, regarding the potential role to be played by the NSSA in advocacy for the neutron scattering community. He also reported that a conference call has been set up between BG, JB, and the main US facility directors to discuss this issue. A subsequent conference call involving the entire NSSA Exec Comm will be organized at a later date. The informal discussions centered on the need for advocacy at this time due to uncertainty in funding for the DoE Office of Science, and the important issue of relative funding for neutron and synchrotron sources. It was remarked that NIST were not involved in these discussions in Dallas but that they will be in the abovementioned conference call. BG commented on the need to develop a strategy and a list of action items from these upcoming discussions, and that it must be targeted at senior DoE management and those in political office. JT mentioned that Dimeo has significant experience in this regard.

TK remarked that she has been involved in such advocacy work before, through a group known as "SNUG" (the Synchrotron and Neutron Users Group). She pointed out the need for preparation in this regard and noted that MRS had played a very helpful role in those activities. BG agreed that the active involvement of Dimeo and MRS was a fine idea. JB added that she had recently met with Jim Rhyne and they had discussed the general issue with the funding situation and the need to communicate with key DoE individuals such as Pat Dahmer and Bill Brinkman. Letter writing campaigns, the need to target politicians with allocations responsibilities, and the role of NUFO (National User Facilities Organization) were discussed by JB, TK and JT. CL enquired as to the means by which MRS were involved in the SNUG activities and TK responded by mentioning the efforts of Al Hurd. BG pointed out that the facilities are able to offer significant help in this advocacy effort, while TK and CL observed that ACS and APS may be able to offer additional support. JFB reported on discussions with MRS staff in Ottawa that suggested that MRS support would be available. BG pointed out that this could be appropriate use of NSSA funds. JT commented on the fact that expenses for lobbying must be declared on the NSSA tax return.

JFB discussed the situation with the booth at APS and pointed out that we could do a better job with the available materials for the booth, and with coordinating with the facilities. ACS and MRS were cited as other meetings that we could target and it was resolved that such activities should be placed on the agenda for the next conference call. TP noted that staffing becomes an issue at such meetings. TK commented on the kinds of scientific issues that resonate with policy makers. BG resolved to contact Pat Hastings at MRS to make the first step in collaboration with MRS on this issue.

#### **4. Exec Comm photos for website**

CL reported that he had collected the required files and forwarded them to TP. TP plans to upload them once the website domain issue has been corrected.

#### **5. NSSA student thesis prize**

CL circulated a document on this issue shortly prior to the meeting, at BG's request. BG pointed out that the document outlines a plan for 2 poster prizes and a young researcher award, to be presented at the biannual ACNS conference. The nomination for the young research award will take the form of a CV, some critical publications, and letters of support. The intention is to specify an age limit (e.g. 30) or a limit on the number of years since award of a Ph.D. The Exec Comm were in unanimous agreement that this was an idea that should be pursued. BG suggested a September 2011 call for nominations, in preparation for the ACNS in 2012. A proposed selection committee was drafted by BG. The committee resolved to examine this document prior to the next conference call, in preparation for approving the idea. JFB and JT remarked on the IRS complications for prizes. JT concluded that this is little different from the paperwork required for the other NSSA prizes and that the additional work was relatively minor.

#### **6. NSSA fellow certificates**

JFB reported that this task has been completed.

#### **7. Membership database**

JFB and TP summarized the work to be done and remarked that this remains work in progress.

#### **8. APS booth report**

JFB reported the success of the APS booth in Dallas which generated 30 new members. The booth was manned from volunteers from NIST, ORNL, LANL, U of Minnesota and Brookhaven. JFB mentioned that the majority of questions regarded summer schools, programs at the major facilities, and job opportunities. CL remarked that cooperating with the sources to arrange contiguous booths would be beneficial. JT mentioned that having such information on hand (e.g. in the form of flyers) would suffice. TK floated the idea of listing job opportunities on the NSSA website and several committee members agreed that this was a good idea. TP raised the issue of implementation. JB voiced the possibility of using similar software to that used to gather beamtime proposal deadlines for this purpose (see item 13 below). It was resolved to revisit this issue at the next conference call.

#### **9. ACNS 2010 books**

JT reported that he has received no invoices or bills from MRS and that they may do so as part of the financial planning for the next ACNS in 2012. It was agreed that there is no need to continue listing this as an agenda or action item.

**10. Signing authority on accounts**

JT pointed out that this should be listed as an action item but does not need to be listed on the agenda any longer.

JT left the call at this juncture.

**11. Member at large position/Tonya Kuhl**

See above. BG explained that he had approached TK about this position and she accepted on 3/28/11.

**12. ACNS 2012**

JB reported on the results of continued discussion between Mark Green of NIST and the Georgetown University conference center staff. A summary, including price estimates, was reported including \$179/169/159 room rates for June/July/August, a \$4000 meeting space rental (for a total of \$16,000), AV fees of \$15-20,000, and beverage costs of \$12-15,000. JB further noted that the meeting space is of very high quality, but that the AV fees were atypically high. A rough estimate of the required registration fees yielded \$450 for regular attendees and \$200 for students. TP commented that this seemed slightly higher than previous years. JB mentioned that the months of June-August were relatively available, although fast action would be wise. BG pointed out that these costs do not include direct contributions from facilities which would be expected to further lower registration costs. JB resolved to contact Pat Hastings at MRS presently, and BG agreed. Finally, the committee discussed the ideal timing, concluding that the week of June 27<sup>th</sup> was a strong possibility. BG urged the committee to consider potential names for program co-chairs.

**13. Beamtime proposal deadlines/NSSA website**

TP pointed out that he has the required information from JB and that this will be taken care of. It was mentioned that a general discussion of what should be added to the NSSA website should be scheduled for the future.

**14. AOB**

Progress with action items (see below) was reviewed.

## 15. Action items

Item Number	Person Responsible	Action item	Agenda date (mo/yr)	Agenda Item # for next meeting
1	TP	Survey existing websites & make plan for NSSA website.	04/10	3
2	CL/BG	Get NSSA boxes from RP.	4/09	4
3	BG	Talk to Neutron News about a deal with them to have Neutron News for free for our membership or at a reduced rate.	7/09	-
4	All	Review BGs proposal for the NSSA student prizes	10/09	5
5	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	-
6	BG	Send email to Pat Hastings to see what MRS could do regarding preparing material we could use for education or promotion at our booths, and at what cost. -Check with facility management if would be willing to provide material.	7/10 10/10	-
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	BG	Further discussion and action on the issue of NSSA advocacy. BG will contact Pat Hastings at MRS.	3/11	6
10	JFB/BG	Additional discussion of conference booths (related to action item 9)	3/11	7
11	JB	ACNS 2012 progress	3/11	8

12	All	Identification of potential program chairs for ACNS 2012	3/11	9
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