

## NSSA Executive Committee

Minutes of the conference phone call 11:00am ET, 01/21/04

(**action items in bold red**)

### Present on the conference call:

Shenda Baker  
Dave Belanger  
Simon Billinge  
Rob Briber  
Jim Jorgensen  
Susan Krueger  
Greg Smith  
Franz Trouw

### Missing:

## Agenda

### 1.) **Shull Prize Announcement** (Rob Briber)

NSSA e-mail sent out (did you receive it?)

Announcement (e-mail and pdf) sent to:

All facility directors

Neutron News (receipt confirmed; Joel Mesot <neutron.news@psi.ch>)

MRS Bulletin (receipt confirmed; Judy Meiksin <Meiksin@mrs.org>)

ACA for news letter (receipt confirmed; Connie Chidester

<conniechidester@earthlink.net>)

APS/AIP (sent to Phil Schewe; no confirmation; Phil Schewe <pschewe@aip.org>)

NIST is preparing an 1/2 page for the NIST TechBeat publication (Scott Nance <scott.nance@nist.gov>)

### 2.) **Tax free status in MD** (Rob Briber, Dave Belanger)

Working with lawyer on MD tax free status (application materials should be sent to RMB shortly)

Mischa Buford

Shook, Hardy & Bacon, L.L.P

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### 3.) **Budget cut at NIST** (Rob Briber)

(from Paul Sokol e-mail)

>We are writing to inform you of a serious budget shortfall for the NIST Center for

>Neutron Research. A combination of budget cuts in committee, increased reactor fuel

>costs and unfunded mandated raises has resulted in an effective reduction of 10-15%

>In the NCNR operating budget. As a result of this budget shortfall NCNR will need to

>take several actions to reduce operating costs that directly impact the neutron user

>community. These include a drastic reduction of the time available to users on the

>reflectometers, removal of support for the Fermi Chopper Spectrometer and 8 m

>SANS and delays in bringing triple axis instruments into the user program. This is an  
>evolving situation so additional measures may be necessary if these actions do not  
>provide sufficient savings.

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>These cost reduction measures will impact the entire US neutron scattering  
>community, either directly through the reduced instrument availability at NCNR or  
>indirectly through increased demand for beam time at other facilities. It is important  
>that our representatives realize the impact that such budget reductions have on the US  
>neutron scattering community if we are to avoid such problems in the future. We  
>would like to encourage you to write to your representatives to emphasize the impacts  
>of these budget cuts on the neutron scattering community. To assist you in this we  
>have placed a template of a letter on the APS public affairs web site

(<http://www.congressweb.com/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=APSPA&hotissue=25>)

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#### Some options for the NSSA:

- 1.) We can send out the same e-mail to the NSSA mailing list, though this will probably duplicate many of the same recipients.
- 2.) We can write a letter from the NSSA executive committee to appropriate government officials, beyond local congressional representatives, do you know who this might be?
- 3.) We can coordinate a program of letter writing and/or possible congressional visits on the Friday before or the Thursday afternoon/Friday after the ACNS meeting in June 2004. This would require substantial planning

I'd like some input on suggestions/ideas.

**4.) plaques, glass sculptures, etc.** (Shenda Baker/Dave Belanger)

**6.) ACNS Update** (Jim Jorgensen, Dave Belanger, Rob Briber)

**7.) Other business**

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#### **Discussions:**

**1.) Shull Prize Announcement** (Rob Briber)

Everyone received the announcement? Did it look OK? Yes! List of places where it was sent are above. Neutron news is ok, MRS/ACA/ all confirmed receipt. APS/AIP didn't respond. How should we follow up? No suggestions, **RB will follow up with Shu (?) at AIP/APS.** These additional places were listed last-time so should be contacted: Nature, Science, IUCr, ANL mailing list. **JJ will send IUCr contacts to RB. RB will do ANL neutron list, Nature and Science.**

**2.) Tax free status in MD** (Rob Briber, Dave Belanger)

Main officers have to put social security numbers.

**3.) Budget cut at NIST** (Rob Briber)

Email from Paul Sokol on this issue (see above). RB responded to Paul Sokol about how NSSA could respond. RB thinks we should send an email to our mailing list encouraging people to send letters. Letter: it should be general outlining the threat to *all* facilities. JJ: IPNS

perspective is different. Don't want to stir the water because operating budgets have been maintained. SJB: really this letter would be to raise awareness in Congress about this issue, the importance of neutron scattering. General: yep, make it general with a national perspective. **RB and SJB will draft something and then it will be distributed to the committee for comments.** FT: talk to someone at APS about how to handle this, use available expertise: congressional fellow? **RB will find out who at APS knows how best to do this kind of thing.**

RB: APS arranges congressional visits for officers. We could do it but it would be a lot of work.

RB: Could also have a computer station set up at ACNS for people to send letters easily. SB: to get a good response, use a default letter. RB: yep, we will be able to use the APS web-page that is exactly set up this way and we can use this. You enter your zip code, it finds the right representatives, etc.. SJB: don't use NIST computers for this. RB: no, Jeff Lynn is sensitive to issues like that. It should be handled ok.

#### **4.) plaques, glass sculptures, etc.** (Shenda Baker/Greg Smith)

Greg sent out ppt file showing the crystal. Crystal shape is good for us. GS: it costs \$400. FT: I know a glass artist. Can I pitch the idea to him? General: yep, see what he can do. **FT will contact the artist. Deadline for decision, next call. Deadline for delivery: ACNS meeting.** Student award things are cheap: \$30. General: looks ok, lets do it. Consensus is to engrave it ahead of time and give it at the meeting; therefore no name on there. SB, another nice thing which combines glass and marble for the former excom members. More expensive, but nicer. **SB and GS will get quotes from the company for all three options by next call.**

#### **6.) ACNS Update** (Jim Jorgensen, Dave Belanger, Rob Briber)

Previously ACNS had a large user-group meeting + panel discussion. Not well received. Instead this time there is a proposal from Paul Sokol: have a reception with four quadrants addressing different user issues:

At 10:49 PM -0500 1/14/04, Paul Sokol wrote:

>Hi All:

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>I wanted to set out a tentative agenda for our  
>teleconference tomorrow. The items I would like  
>to discuss are:

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>1) How do we structure the reception. In  
>the initial discussions with the various user  
>groups we had viewed this as a hosted reception  
>with refreshments and snacks. Various focus  
>areas would be located around the periphery of  
>the room.

>Is this a reasonable way to set things up?

>How many of these areas should we have? The  
>original idea was to have four - one for each  
>corner of the room.

>How should information be presented in these areas - posters, ·?

>2) What topics should the focus areas cover? A preliminary list is:

>1 - Source news - recent developments and future plans

- > Should we include funding issues?
- > Should we use this as an opportunity to promote lobbying efforts?
- >2 - Instruments - New and upgraded instruments
- >3 - User services such as sample environment and data analysis programs. (We might want to give this one extra space.)
- >4 - Administrative issues
  - > User group policies
  - > Source policies
  - > Proposal process and timing
  - > User support
  - > Lodging, etc.
- >3) How do we focus discussion in these areas?
- >4) How do we obtain feedback from the users?
- >5) What results do we report? And to whom? User groups? Sources? Funding agencies?
- >
- >I look forward to talking with you tomorrow.
- >
- >Regards
- >
- >Paul
- >
- >
- >
- >The ACNS meeting is only six months away and I would like to start organizing this users meeting soon. Towards that end I would like to begin discussing the organization of this meeting. There are several questions that we must address such as:
  - >
  - >1) How should the facilities present their future plans (booths, short talks, etc)
  - >2) What other topics should be covered (sample environment, data analysis, ·)
  - >3) Should we include administrative issues (proposal process, instrument support, ·)
  - >4) How do we effectively obtain feedback from the users on these issues?
  - >5) How do we report, and to whom, the results of this session.
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  - >It would be useful to have an initial discussion (brainstorming sessions) soon so that we can begin to define how we are going to structure

>this session and what topics we will cover.

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DB: we have to be careful since ACNS is supposed to be a national user meeting. SB: Paul Sokol is working very hard to involve user groups.

RB: ACNS will have to pay for this reception too. Could be cash bar to keep costs down.

Other issues: posters went out? Some received, some not. Invited speaker list will be finalized today and invitations sent out soon. Total number is 35-40.

#### 7.) Other business

GS: should we have our own independent email site that is not lab-based? Same issue for web-site hosting. Right now it is some freebee thing that Jim Rhyne arranged. Should we formalize these arrangements? General, yes we should look into this. **GS will research some different options.**

GS: North American facilities meeting. User groups' money comes from facilities hence have problems asking members to write letters. Would the NSSA be interested in sponsoring a working-group of user-group chairs to give feedback on user issues. RB: sounds like a good idea. General: throw it back to the user groups to come up with a proposal. **GS will draft an email, send it round to the excom, then send it to the user-group chairmen.**

**Call ended 12:15pm**

**Respectfully submitted, Simon Billinge, 1/21/04**