

**NSSA Executive Committee
Conference Call Minutes, 8/30/2011**

Chris Leighton (Secretary), 9/1/2011

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)
Tonya Kuhl (TK)

Absent: None

Agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from 7/26/2011 (BG/CL).
2. Set date for next conf. call (BG/CL).
3. Updates to NSSA website (TP).
4. Grad student hiring for website development (TP/BG).
- 5,6. Neutron News for NSSA members (BG/CL).
7. Selection committees for NSSA prizes (for ACNS 2012) (All).
8. Advocacy efforts (TK).
9. ACNS 2012 progress (JB).
10. AOB.

Discussion Minutes (by agenda item number):

1. Approval of minutes

After the committee examined the minutes CL moved to accept them, seconded by JB. All in favor; minutes from 7/26/2011 approved.

2. Date for next conference call

The committee agreed to Tuesday September 20th at noon (central). CL will send an email reminder on 8/19/11.

8. Advocacy efforts (discussed out of order)

TK reported that she spoke with Al Hurd (MRS), who also spoke with BG and JB, and expressed support from MRS. BG communicated that he also spoke with Ian Anderson who was equally supportive of this effort. Anderson indicated he was available for a conference call on Sep 12th or later, or even the week starting Sep 5th if he could be represented by some of his staff. It was noted that Al Hurd plans to step down as LANSCE director on Oct 1st but that he remains a good point of contact for MRS. BG and TK expressed the need to get everyone together for a conference call as soon as possible. The plan discussed involved meeting at NIST for a ½ day of preparations followed by DC visits. JB, BG and TK discussed the purpose of the preceding conference call. It was concluded that this would be an opportunity to discuss who should be visited in DC, division of labor for the materials preparation, and decisions on dates for the trip. It was noted that Frank Bates would be unavailable at such short notice and BG raised the possibility of Roger Pynn as an alternative. CL pointed out that Roger has in fact been discussed at an earlier juncture and enthusiastically agreed that he would be a suitable choice. BG resolved to contact him for this purpose. BG and TK plan to update the committee on the progress in this regard at the next teleconference.

3. Plan for NSSA website

TP communicated that he is aware of what needs to be done and has plans to begin this work.

4. Grad student hiring for website content development

BG reported that the student considered in previous discussions would not be available due to other commitments. BG and TP plan to work on this off-line and report back to the committee. TP discussed the obvious things to improve regarding website design and layout and appealed to the rest of the committee to pass on any potential names of suitable students.

5,6. Neutron news for NSSA members

CL pointed out that he received the required contact information from JFB. The Taylor and Francis contact appears to have moved on but CL has contacted the editor of the magazine and will continue with this.

7. Selection committees for NSSA prizes (prep. For ACNS 2012)

BG summarized that student prize committees were established at our last teleconference and that we now need to decide on committees for the Shull Prize, and for the Sustained Research and Science Prizes (same committee for both). BG pointed out that the “one representative from outside the US” policy should be continued. JB and BG agreed, between them, to come up with a list of suitable candidates for the conference call on Sep 20th 2011. The Exec Comm were invited to make suggestions via

email to CL. The timing for this was discussed and it was noted that we need to receive nominations by the beginning of December and thus we need a call by early October. TP noted that there is an email address on the website which can be used to collect nominations. NW pointed out the value of putting the prize acceptance talks on the website and TP indicated that this could be done.

9. ACNS 2012 update

BG first reported that Rosenkranz was locked in as program chair while he had made preliminary contact with Balsara but needed to talk to him in person. NW resolved to call him as he knows him well.

JB provided a full report on the progress with the ACNS venue. She intimated the need to move quickly at this stage, urged by the MRS. One immediate issue raised was the unfortunate overlap between the planned dates for the ANL/ORNL summer school and the NIST summer school. The NIST summer school is being planned for immediately prior to the ACNS to improve student participation and leverage travel funds. JFB pointed out that Suzanne te Velthuis and Brian Chakoumakos would be the relevant contacts to address this conflict. Brian Chakoumakos was asked to join the conference call in real time and the issue was discussed. He resolved to seek alternative dates for the APS/ORNL school and he suggested that such alternatives were likely possible. Moving forward one week, or moving to May were suggested as possibilities, the obvious constraint being that APS, HIFR and SNS must be running simultaneously.

JB then pointed out that BG must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MRS and NSSA in order to finalize the contract. JB discussed the proposed conference layout in the Georgetown Conference Center in some detail. One issue is the absence of an appropriate room for the usual conference banquet unless the meeting is brought to a halt earlier than usual on Tuesday to allow time to repurpose the room. An offsite location for the banquet was discussed but the price (likely around \$100 per head) was considered prohibitive. The alternative of having poster sessions with substantial drinks and appetizers was discussed. BG and CL remarked that this sounded like a reasonable alternative, although TP preferred a conference banquet as in prior years. NW agreed. BG pointed out that prize awards and such matters can be done in a plenary session rather than at a banquet. CL enquired about scheduling problems for the reception on Sunday evening and JB confirmed that this was no problem. The committee resolved to defer the decision until some input is received from the program co-chairs.

JB moved on to a description of the final negotiated offer for the conference space. It was noted that the space rental was down to \$2700 cf. \$16,000 and that the room rates were down to \$149 but with a food and beverage (F&B) minimum of \$65,000. The latter issue obviously relates to the banquet issue, as noted by JB. NW raised the issue of

sponsorship but it was pointed out by several members of the committee that the sponsorship is typically tied to such things as student travel.

After some discussion the committee unanimously agreed to commit to the Georgetown site to enable additional finalization of the plans. TP noted that it may be possible to encourage the conference center to reduce the reorganization time for the banquet facility once an agreement is formally reached. JB remarked that reduction of the F&B minimum may also be possible after the space is booked. The issue of sponsorship was also discussed in detail. JB took the initiative to secure an informal agreement for \$30k from NIST. Additional proposals were discussed for \$10k from Chalk River, \$50k from ORNL, and \$25k from DOE. These projected numbers will be used in the conference budget. JFB pointed out that Simon Billinge wrote the required proposals last time but JB has been unable to get copied of the proposals from him. Jb agreed to take charge of NIST and LANL, TP agreed for ORNL and CL agreed for DOE.

The issue of how the conference could reimburse students for travel was also raised by JB. It was noted that the Georgetown dorm rooms need to be paid for up-front by NSSA. MRS are unable to handle this. TP suggested simply giving the student grants in the form of a free dorm room, which was viewed as an excellent solution. JT noted that additional complication of having to avoid DOE funded students being reimbursed for travel by any DOE conference grant. He also pointed out the need for an unbiased selection committee for selection of student travel grants. JB resolved to discuss all of the above issues with the local organizing committee, and the program chairs, and report back to the executive committee. JB also pointed out the need, with agreement from BG, to begin some conference calls for the ACNS organizing committee as soon as possible. JFB volunteered to pass on the reviews from the DOE proposal from the last ACNS to CL.

10. AOB

None.

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 | CL | Talk to Neutron News about a deal with them to have Neutron News | 07/11 | 5 |

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| | | for free, or at a reduced rate, for our membership. | | |
| 4 | TK, BG | Progress report on advocacy efforts | 07/11 | 6 |
| 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 | 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 | - |
| 7 | JT | Addressing the issue of signing authority for the NSSA checking and savings accounts. | 1/11 | - |
| 8 | BG, JB | Preliminary prize selection committees | 8/11 | 7 |
| 9 | BG | Additional discussion of conference booths, proposed scope | 3/11 | - |
| 10 | JB/BG | ACNS 2012 progress (inc. confirmation of Balsara as program co-chair) | 7/11 | 8 |