

**NSSA Executive Committee Meeting  
12/03/18**

**Katharine Page (Secretary), 01/07/19**

**Present:** Alannah Hallas (AH)  
Despina Louca (DL)  
Matthew Helgeson (MH)  
Brian Josey (BJ)  
Brad Olsen (BO)  
Katharine Page (KP)  
Kate Ross (KR)  
Patrick Woodward (PW)

**Absent:** Megan Robertson (MR)  
Nancy Ross (NR)  
Chris Wiebe (CW)

**Agenda:**

- 1) Adoption of minutes (KP/DL/All)
- 2) Date for next call (DL/KP/All)
- 3) New members-at-large (DL)
- 4) ACNS 2018 closeout reports for DOE BES and from MRS (PW)
- 5) ACNS 2020 location and conference management service (DL)
- 6) Gordon Research Conference on neutron scattering at Hong Kong (DL)
- 7) Treasury/Communications/Membership officer updates (BO/KR/NR)
- 8) AOB

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

**1. Adoption of minutes (KP/DL/All)**

The minutes from 11/02/18 were presented and were adopted.

**2. Date for next conference call (DL/KP/All)**

The next NSSA Executive Committee Meeting will be selected via a Doodle Poll and announced by email. KP will send a poll out that includes a series of possible times in the week of January 7.

**3. New members-at-large (DL)**

Members-at-large are selected at the discretion of the NSSA president, who attempts to balance the elected committee with members who represent different regional areas, academic/national laboratory/industry interests, a diversity of science focus areas, and other demographic categories. A review of the NSSA bylaws and the terms of our current members-at-large indicated we have become out-of-sync with originally intended service terms. The current NSSA bylaws state that two members-at-

large should serve four-year terms, and one member-at-large should serve a three-year term. It was noted that MH, MR, and CW should all be rotating off the executive committee according to the four-year term limits, and we do not have a current member serving a three-year term. It was discussed that we historically have had a designated Canadian member-at-large, and had recently discussed adding an Argentinian (or other South American) member-at-large. It was also noted that we had appointed student and a postdoc members-at-large for two-year terms beginning in 2017, as a trial change to the make-up of the NSSA executive committee. The committee feels positively about this inclusion.

The following resolutions were discussed and proposed: there shall be three or four regular member-at-large positions. The member-at-large terms will each cover four-years, with two new members-at-large designated every two years (in sync with the NSSA officer-election schedule). The student/postdoc member-at-large roles shall be officially added to the executive committee, for two-year terms, with selection also at the discretion of the NSSA president. To initiate this new schedule of membership, the following is proposed: MR and CW will cycle off the NSSA executive committee this year. AH's postdoctoral member-at-large term ends in September. She will be starting a faculty position in Canada in July, and thus she will transition to a Canadian/faculty member-at-large position, beginning a 2-year term that will end in 2021. MH's member-at-large term will be extended two more years, to also end in 2021. One or two additional members-at-large will be identified this year for four-year terms ending in 2023. It was agreed that one of these members-at-large could be an Argentinian ex-officio member. Ex-officio status could be re-evaluated in future years.

It was noted the procedural and term-limit changes will require an amendment of the NSSA bylaws. MH will review the bylaws and draft suggested changes by the end of the month. We will aim to send out a proposed bylaw amendment for voting after our next committee meeting and select/confirm the new members-at-large in early 2019. Adoption will require unanimous agreement among the committee and a two-thirds vote of the NSSA membership (with at least 5% of membership voting).

It was noted that additional soft condensed matter, industry, and US west coast members would help broaden the current committee make-up. Several names were offered as suggestions. DL will write up a proposed set of new members to approach, to be discussed during the next NSSA call.

#### **4. ACNS 2018 closeout reports for DOE BES and from MRS (PW)**

The conference report for the American Conference on Neutron Scattering (ACNS) 2018 was received from the Materials Research Society (MRS). PW presented several highlights. There were 331 registered participants, placing the meeting attendance somewhere between the larger Knoxville ACNS in 2014 and the smaller Long Beach ACNS in 2016. The model for funding the meeting has changed. It was noted that the registration fee of \$595 constitutes an increase of \$50 for each of the past few ACNS meetings. It was also noted that grant amounts have decreased in recent years. Much of the grant money this year could only be used to cover registration and travel costs of speakers and students. \$13,586 was not used and was returned to the DOE Office of Basic Energy Sciences Program. Overall, the 2018 meeting cleared a profit of ~\$59K. This falls between the net profit of the last two meetings, which cleared ~\$42K and ~\$69K, respectively. This time around the Memorandum of Understanding with MRS was negotiated to state a 60/40 MRS/NSSA split for meeting profit shares (it was set at 70/30

for prior meetings). Thus \$12.5K will be turned over to NSSA as meeting revenue. It was noted that we pay out \$11K in prize money at the ACNS, leaving a very narrow margin for the NSSA budget. Related treasury concerns are noted below in item 7.

#### **5. ACNS 2020 location and conference management service (DL)**

The location for the ACNS 2020 meeting has been selected as Boulder, Colorado. NSSA's vice president-elect, Peter Gehring, has agreed with this meeting location selection. The ACNS 2020 local organizing committee will be formed after he begins his duties next month. Dmitry Resnik has provided several suggestions for conference venues in the Boulder area. It was noted that the meeting should not be scheduled in early June 2020 (there will be a quasi-elastic neutron scattering meeting in Spain June 8-12), in addition to the list of previously noted scheduling considerations.

#### **6. Gordon Research Conference on neutron scattering at Hong Kong (DL)**

DL received a request to fund the Gordon Research Conferences on neutron scattering in Hong Kong this summer from one of the conference organizers. In the past, NSSA provided \$5K for student and early career travel of American participants. Concern was expressed in continuing this and related sponsorship activities given the limited revenue stream of the NSSA in recent years (see items 7 and 8 below). Some members supported the idea of continuing sponsorship, while others suggested reducing the amount of funds or declining to offer them. DL will decide on a plan for this specific request and communicate it to the executive committee.

#### **7. Treasury/Communications/Membership officer updates (BO/KR/NR)**

BO provided a treasury update. NSSA's current budget is ~\$215K. The society currently has no source of revenue beyond the profit shares from the ACNS. Back in the days when NSSA managed the conference organization the profits from meetings were at least \$65K and for each two-year period. Since MRS has managed the meeting, NSSA profit shares have fallen below \$20K for each meeting. BO stressed we need to be more conservative in spending money on booths and session sponsorships at conferences if we keep the same operating model (~75% of NSSA expenses have come from these activities in the last few years). The other NSSA expenses include fees for the website support company (~\$1K per year), fees for running online elections (\$300 per election), and society prizes (\$11K every two years). At the current earning and spending rates, we will run out of funds in approximately 8 years. Our current income model provides enough funds to award society prizes, but no more. It was discussed that we should consider strategies to increase revenue, such as re-negotiating the profit-sharing in the ACNS contract, running the conference with a less expensive organization assisting us, bumping up registration fees for the conference, or having a membership fee for the society. This should be worked on in earnest in the coming year. It was generally agreed that we should attempt to be conservative in the interim.

KR provided an update on communication activities. She has placed 2018 NSSA meeting minutes and letters written to DOE and congress on the society webpages. She also has a student working on website news stories and content of the site is thus growing.

## **8. AOB**

The topic of hosting the annual NSSA booth at the American Physical Society Meeting was brought up in relation to reducing society expenses. MR organized the effort last year and reiterated that NSSA can spend less money and achieve similar outcomes. She suggested avoiding a corner booth, and electing to skip any extras (chairs/carpets) not required. It was suggested that booth space might be shared with NIST and ORNL facilities further lower costs and workload. NSSA could offer to organize the staffing of the joint booth, reaching out to all members and facility users. KR will approach NIST/ORNL about sharing a booth at the APS March meeting and splitting fees.

It was noted that NR may be able to use the list of ACNS participants to cross-check against the NSSA membership list and update outdated email addresses. Additionally, invitations could be sent out to any conference participants who are not current members of the NSSA.

## Action items

Item Number	Person Responsible	Action item	Agenda date (mo/yr)	Agenda Item # for next meeting
1	KP/All	Select next meeting date/time by Doodle Poll.	10/2018	2
2	DL	Propose new Executive Committee members-at-large for January 2019.	10/2018	4
3	PW/KP	Work offline with PG and FM to ensure a smooth transition of officer duties.	10/2018	7
4	MH	Review the bylaws and draft suggested changes for member-at-large selections and terms.	12/2018	3
5	DL	Communicate a decision to GRC on Neutron Scattering regarding NSSA sponsorship.	12/2018	6
6	KR	Contact NIST and ORNL to suggest a joint NIST/ORNL/NSSA booth at the APS March Meeting.	12/2018	6
7	KR/KP	Neutron News article on NSSA prizes and 2018 ACNS.	7/2018	NA