

Users Executive Committee Minutes, December 14, 2002

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GSA Officers Attending: Reid Mumford (reid@pha.jhu.edu)
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UEC Absent: Rob Plunkett (plunk@fnal.gov)
Sherry Towers (smjt@fnal.gov)

Guests: Greg Snow (Board of Overseers/University of Nebraska)
Marj Corcoran (Board of Overseers/Rice University)

Scribe: John Conway

1. Lab Status (report by Chris White on meeting with the Director)

Security: No big changes in the present security status at the lab are foreseen. Access to the arts series and films runs smoothly now, and attendance is good, so the public is aware that they can get on site for these events.

Reviews, meetings: The NuMI review went well with no flags raised. At the DOE meeting at Forrestal on 17 December, approval for the baseline plan, cost, schedule and near-term funding for the Run 2 upgrades will be considered by the Energy Systems Acquisition Advisory Board (ESAAB) headed by Dr. Peter Rosen, Assoc. Director of the DOE Office of Science for High Energy and Nuclear Physics.

Retirement: Twenty-eight people so far have accepted early retirement, which is close to the number expected. The laboratory expects to meet its goals for reducing staff size with this number and the effects of normal attrition. No forced terminations necessary will be needed, assuming the budget number does not change.

Accelerator: Roger Dixon has been appointed head of the Beams Division, and

Steve Holmes will resume his position as Associate Director for Accelerator, supervising both accelerator operations and associated technology development. For MiniBooNE and NuMI, the lab is committed to making improvements designed to increase the number of protons on target, in addition to carrying out the upgrade program for collider luminosity.

Luminosity: While the number of antiprotons getting to the start of collisions has increased substantially, the transverse emittance is 30% larger than it was two months ago. As a result the peak luminosities have leveled off short of $4E31$. The integrated luminosity per week is somewhat higher due to greater reliability for keeping stores.

2. News from Benn Tannenbaum in Washington

For the UEC trip to Washington in spring the message has to be crafted carefully. We need to discuss small and medium size experiments and R&D for accelerators. We need a road map from where experimental HEP is now to where we want to be in the next 10 to 15 years.

Benn also mentioned that the time has come for scientists to take a public stand on public policy issues turning on scientific results, and demand that policy be based on sound science.

3. Quality of Life Issues (visit from Greg Snow and Marj Corcoran)

Members of the QL committee (Sherry Towers, John Conway, Amber Jenkins, and Martin Hennecke) met in November with Bruce Chrisman on several issues including health coverage, bank accounts for non-U.S. scientists, and bicycling at Fermilab.

For health coverage, the problem is that many visitors, especially students from foreign institutions, are not covered or are under-covered. The QL committee proposed that one way to deal with the problem is at the point where visitors register with the Users' Office, changing the part of the registration form dealing with health coverage. It is clear that it is difficult to demand that visitors have private coverage, and there may be resistance from some group leaders. Often students even at U.S. universities have minimal insurance with access to local health clinics. For some information on health insurance plans for individuals in Illinois, see the UEC Quality of Life web page:

http://www.fnal.gov/orgs/fermilab_users_org/ql.html

Greg pointed out that the ES&H subcommittee of the BOO, though it might not be the right subcommittee, may consider at a future meeting the extent of the problem and its effects on the community. UEC

members could attend such a meeting (most likely Feb 7) and provide some quantitative information on the problem.

For bank accounts, there has been an agreement between Fermilab and a local bank that people with Fermi IDs can get accounts, even without Social Security numbers.

At the meeting with Bruce Chrisman, John presented the proposal for improving the situation for bicycling at the lab. The highest priority in this area is bike access to D0 along Eola Road, which is narrow, un-lighted, and in need of paving.

The lab is building a road on the outside of the main ring berm, which would allow better bicycle access to Wilson Hall, etc. But this would not be adequate to connect D0 to the Fermilab Village. John proposed that in any future resurfacing of Eola, it be widened slightly to allow bike lanes in each direction. Bruce Chrisman agreed to look into this possibility. Greg and Marj reiterated the safety concerns for biking on Eola, and suggested it might be possible to approach URA to assist in finding an appropriate solution.

4. Washington trip

April Burke described the role of her firm in helping URA, and the UEC, in getting the right message to Congress and the agencies in Washington. The date of the next trip to Washington was discussed, and the 26-27 March was proposed, provisionally.

A discussion ensued of the current budget situation, how to craft our message both to Congress and to the administration. The NSF "doubling" bill is a great success, and the UEC visit certainly helped in this. We should be sure to express our thanks to the co-signers of this bill. We need to extend the idea that the physical sciences need an increase to the DOE Office of Science. April thought that we should downplay the LC issues and emphasize instead the fundamental health of the program, including a strong R&D effort in accelerator physics.

5. Non-US Users issues

The UEC has approached the FNAL visa office and Roy Rubinstein about the major problem of student (and other visas). While this is in principle a university issue, typically, they are offering advice on what has been working lately.

(It is important to note that strategies which worked months ago do not work now, since the rules are in flux.) The UEC is preparing a letter to be sent to

the users on this issue. Links to websites with useful information on visas

can be found on the UEC Non-US Users web page:

http://www.fnal.gov/orgs/fermilab_users_org/nu.html

Meanwhile the UEC is collecting information on specific instances of visa denial.

6. Next meetings; date of Users' Meeting

The next UEC meetings will be 1 February, 1 March, and 22 March. The 1 March meeting will be joint with SLUO, with members attending at the other's site if possible.

There was a discussion of the date of the annual Users' Meeting. Conflicts abound, but the choice of 2-3 June appears to have the smallest level of conflict (in this case with FPCP in Paris).

The next UEC meeting is scheduled for February 1, 2003.