



Minutes of the Fermilab UEC Meeting on February 11, 2011

Attending:

Todd Adams, Michael Cooke, Marj Corcoran, Dick Gustafson, Jonathan Lewis, Ron Moore, Brian Rebel, Mayly Sanchez (remote), Dave Schmitz, William Wester, Lisa Whitehead

GSA Officers: Joe Grange, Joel Mousseau

Guests:

Young-Kee Kim, Katie Yurkewicz, Dan Kaplan, Patricia McBride

Report from the Chair – Todd Adams

After discussion at the beginning of the meeting, the March UEC meeting has been moved from March 4 to March 11. The planning/training meeting for the DC trip will then be held March 12. Also, the May UEC meeting date has been set to May 13. The April date remains April 8.

The National Users Facility Organization (NUFO) has been asked by several members of Congress to host an event to educate Representatives and Senators on the mission of the national laboratories. As of our meeting the date had not been set. Since then it was announced that the event will occur April 7.

A reminder about procedures for UEC related travel was discussed.

Chat with Fermilab Directorate – Young-Kee Kim

Deputy Director Kim reports the lab is considering a symposium to celebrate the success of the Tevatron and the excitement of the future programs on the Intensity and Cosmic Frontiers. The target is spring/summer of 2012. It would be an opportunity to invite dignitaries to the program. Management would like us to consider the possibility of combining it with an extended (three day?) Users Meeting in 2012. This was discussed by the UEC. We would want to make sure that the Users Meeting serves the lab users, but it seems like it would work. Young-Kee also reported that the lab plans to turn CDF, D0, and part of the Tevatron tunnel into a public display area. The details are being explored.

The budget announcement by the House of Representatives was discussed. It is good that we know the proposal early so that we can react. It would be good if members of Congress better understood the impacts of the cuts. One way is to hear from their constituents. An important point to keep in mind is that while NSF did proportionally better with its funding than DOE, many scientists who are NSF funded depend on the DOE labs to carry out their research.

Young-Kee was asked about updates on DUSEL. She reports that DOE is working on a strategy to address how DUSEL might be operated.

Office of Communications – Katie Yurkewicz

Katie Yurkewicz, who is the new Director of the Office of Communications, came to introduce herself and offer the assistance of the office to the UEC. She showed a pre-production copy of the new “Frontiers of Discovery” brochure. It will be available publicly soon. There is also a new “Plan for the Future” website that gives information on the new programs planned for Fermilab. At the AAAS annual meeting in Washington, Fermilab will have a booth set up. Katie will be invited back for a longer discussion of plans and activities of the Office of Communications.

An Opportunity: Intensity-Frontier Antiproton Physics at Fermilab – Dan Kaplan

Kaplan described a program of physics that could be done with the antiproton source after the Tevatron is done running. Fermilab hosts the best antiproton source ever built. It is possible to construct a low cost (<\$10M) detector with a collaboration of order 100 scientists to utilize this unique source. The physics program includes hyperon physics, charm mixing, and the new X/Y/Z states reported at the b-factories.

Slides with details are available on the UEC agenda page.

Q: The lab currently has other plans that don't include an antiproton program. How would this program go forward?

A: If sufficient personnel/groups were to become interested in it, maybe management would change its plan. We figure this would have to happen by summer.

View from Washington – Bridget Glynn (Lewis-Burke Associates)

The newly announced House proposed budget would take us back to 2008 funding level. The DOE is a big target. The Senate and White House will have to sign off which will require some compromise.

Q: Does the House Appropriations Committee have power due to the possibility of a government shutdown?

A: A shutdown doesn't seem likely at this time.

Q: Why target DOE?

A: One reason is that not everyone believes that ARRA funding made good use of the money.

Q: Is clean energy a reason for DOE budget cuts?

A: Congress is not supportive of applied research currently.

Q: This seems ironic because we are always asked about applications of our work.

A: They want innovation, but not money to fund corporations.

The President's budget is due on Monday Feb. 14.

Q: Is it coincident that the House proposal is timed just before the President's 2012 budget?

A: Maybe. The transition in the House has made things slow this year.

Q: Are the committee assignments decided?

A: Mostly. There are a few vacancies on the House Science, Space, and Technology committee. The Appropriations Committee is less important now that earmarks have been removed. Education about the importance of our work is hugely important, especially for new members of Congress.

Subcommittee Reports

Report from the GSA

The GSA has started weekly meetings at the Users Center. There was a good turnout at the meeting following the Tevatron decision.

GSA has a new idea of a weekly colloquium setting for graduate students. The talks would be by graduate students about their work, particularly the background behind it. It would broaden the perspective of students at Fermilab. There is the question of support for coffee or food for the event. Different possibilities were raised including using the small dining room for a brown bag lunch, having it as a journal club, and doing chalk talks.

The GSA has a Wiki-formatted "Guide to Life at Fermilab" which is ready.

Non-US Users - Heather Gerberich

There was a presentation of tax issues for non-U.S. residents on Feb 1, 2011. Overall, users were happy that we were addressing the issue, but the presentation was overly technical and did not fully address all of the audience's concerns. Amanda Thompson plans to meet with KPMG in May to discuss next year's presentation. Approximately 50 people attended the presentation.

There will be a Feb 15th presentation: "Overview of Permanent Residence Process" by Amanda Thompson. The purpose is to get people new to the process "up-to-speed" on the permanent residency process prior to the more in-depth presentation to be given by the immigration attorneys.

The attorney presentation on "Immigration Law Information Session" will be in March. Potential dates are March 22, 23 and March 29, 30 (with a start time of 12:30pm). Based on feedback from last year, we requested that they make PowerPoint presentations which are to be sent to Amanda ten days prior to the presentation) and that the presentation be

streamed and archived.

Quality of Life – Michael Cooke

Chez Leon is booked solid for its Valentine's dinner (Feb. 12) with guest chef Joe Walding. The move to Friday night seems to be a great success. The day care center is also having a "Parent's Night Out" on Feb. 12. The UEC's own William Wester will be a guest chef in March.

A meeting was held with Bruce Chrisman to discuss how potential changes to services related to Quality of Life would be handled in the future. The lab does not want a repeat of the "surprise pool closure proposal". The budget uncertainty means that things are currently up in the air. We may start to know things in March or April. Management plans to discuss potential changes that will affect Users during the planning stages to get feedback. Also, extending taxi service was briefly discussed and this will be continued at a later date.

Users' Meeting – William Wester

Approximately half of the invitations to VIPs have been sent out. The banquet will be a barbeque and it is moving through the procurement process. Chu has been suggested as the public speaker.

A proposal for a Visiting Scholar Award to support travel funds for students or post-docs will be submitted. A draft proposal for agenda topics has been circulating around the subcommittee for comments.

Government Relations – Dave Schmitz and Marj Corcoran

We nearly have a list of the UEC/GSA members available to make the annual trip to DC. We are still waiting to hear about how many people can be supported. The format of the contact lists was discussed. We need to hear from everyone on the trip to set assignments for Congressional meetings. A draft of a new 1-pager was shown and comments solicited. It will be shared with the other user groups shortly.

Next UEC meeting: Mar. 11, 2011

Secretary: Todd Adams