



Minutes of the Fermilab UEC Meeting on March 11, 2011

Attending:

Todd Adams, Michael Cooke, Marj Corcoran (remote), Dick Gustafson, Ron Moore, Brian Rebel, Mayly Sanchez, Dave Schmitz, William Wester, Lisa Whitehead
GSA Officers: Zeynep Isvan, Joel Mousseau

Guests:

Young-Kee Kim, Bruce Chrisman

Chat with Fermilab Directorate – Young-Kee Kim

A naming task force for Project X is being formed.

There has been considerable discussion of budget issues. It appears that another continuing resolution will happen. At the budget briefing with DOE three scenarios were discussed - cut, flat, dream. There are discussions with various people going on to decide best way to ask for support of science and technology funding, including with Randy Hultgren, the new representative for this district. Congressman Hultgren visited Fermilab recently and will visit again soon. The University of Chicago trustees have also been contacted and involved.

Q: Is FRA board involved as well?

A: yes.

Q: How much clout/effort is being expended?

A: will check on it and be sure they are actively working. They had a presentation from the lobbyists at FRA board meeting on what to do.

These questions were followed by a discussion of how active URA is being. URA appears to not be communicating with members as well as might be hoped; YKK says DC trip is one of most important jobs of the UEC.

Q: Anything new with DUSEL?

A: Brinkman formed a task force chaired by J. Marx & Mark Reichenadter to evaluate DUSEL site in S.D. They will have a meeting April 13-15 at SLAC and will later visit the site. A report is expected by the end of May.

Q: Any word about DOE early career grants?

A: Panel reviews have been scheduled.

Q: Any changes with respect to commitments from international partners to FNAL?

A: YKK visited KEK end of February, looking to establish more collaboration with Japan beyond collider experiments (CDF), proposing to enhance muon program through collaboration

Other issues discussed: There was a muon collider miniworkshop recently and there will be a large workshop (accelerators, detector R&D and physics) in the summer in Colorado.

The DPF is discussing when the next Snowmass meeting might be and what its focus should be. 2013 is a possibility. It has been a while since the last one. Given the time/effort it takes to organize, we shouldn't have one for no purpose, but we also need enough time to plan it properly which is several years advanced notice.

Fermilab Sustainability Plan – Bruce Chrisman

Bruce discussed the DOE Sustainability Plan with the UEC. It includes a required 28% reduction in greenhouse gasses by 2020. The reduction must come from electricity use and direct production. There is some ambiguity with respect to the electricity usage as DOE defines tonnage for electricity based on coal for power production, while Illinois uses more nuclear power than most areas. The best solution right now appears to accomplish the reductions through buying renewable energy credits. There is concern that the cost for the credits will increase because of potentially large demand in the future.

Q: Isn't the government the major player in this market?

A: Yes, right now that is true and may mitigate costs somewhat.

Q: Could we build our own power source?

A: Nothing stopping it but the expense; could possibly use solar or wind power. Wind may be more viable, but not really stable enough of a source. Additional wind studies would need to be done. We have solar powered devices onsite (flashing stop lights), meeting a DOE requirement. Also, we are using alternate fuels. In addition, we need to reduce our use of vehicles, including reducing the number of vehicles by 35% in next few years.

Another concern is that FNAL must reduce air travel and commuting greenhouse gasses. This will effect travel to FNAL by users, with teleconferences becoming more frequent. We also must get a handle on understanding employee commuting.

Part of the sustainability plan is that new buildings must be certified to LEED gold standard; no exemptions being requested. GCC got an energy star award.

The sustainability plans for each lab were submitted Sept 30. The DOE concluded that the plans are barely viable through no fault of the labs. Some labs looking at small modular reactors, but they aren't approved for use at US locations.

This discussion was followed by a description of how overheads at FNAL work and a discussion of taxi service times.

Report from the Chair – Todd Adams

The NUFO event for Congress scheduled for April 7, one week prior to our annual Washington trip. The DC trip planning meeting is tomorrow in 1 East and will involve work to craft our message as well as how to deliver it.

The chair was asked to nominate a user (visitor) to be on the FNAL safety committee. Any nominations should be forwarded to tadams@hep.fsu.edu.

The chair is providing the user perspective to the FRA Visiting Committee for Scientific Programs on March 15.

An additional letter requesting support for scientific research and education was sent to Senators Alexander and Feinstein about the impact of cuts on young scientists. It was organized by Rob Roser and signed by approximately 500 graduate students, post-docs, and their mentors.

View from Washington – Carole McGuire (Lewis-Burke Associates)

We are waiting for House appropriators to introduce next CR today (Mar. 11). The Senate voted down cuts of \$60B, as well as a cut of only \$6B. Next week negotiations should start in earnest between the House, Senate and White House. It is likely they will have to pass another extension, possibly with another ~ \$2B in cuts. We are guessing that several more extensions will happen to get a compromise. The Senate did not reduce science program. The DOE Office of Science budget is in the mix for negotiations, but not a big target from the Senate. We need to advocate for investment in basic research when in DC and educate members as to what science funding means to research and future.

Carole looked at the draft 1-pager for the DC trip. It looks good. We need to be very singular in the message, push the investment to continue discovery and innovation.

The Senate is accepting written testimony for its budget deliberations. We should submit testimony for FY2012 as a statement of support for Office of Science and HEP. It should be one piece of testimony and we should get people to meet with their members, especially new republicans. During Congressional recesses, scientists should try to meet with their Representatives and Senators in their districts/states.

There is strong support in congress for research, with more senior members coming out in support of it. The President is also advocating. Pier is getting good statements of support and reception. Need to be sure that HEP is not cut even more in the 2012 budget if there is a move to cut areas of OS getting increases. It is likely that new big initiatives will not get funded.

Q: Should we talk about 2011 or 2012 on the trip?

A: Should talk about 2011, but there is little that members can do to influence the final bill for 2011. Tell members how difficult it is to work under the CR. Focus on the need to sustain investment for 2012. Don't be negative, but let members know what the impact is.

Q: Will a deal actually work with the current House majority and its new members?

A: We could certainly operate under short term CRs for the rest of the year.

Subcommittee Reports

Report from the GSA

Joel gave a report on a survey of graduate students about taxi service. 72/91 respondents indicated the taxi hours are too short. The preference was for later hours. Not certain what is possible to implement, but we now feedback on what is desired.

The GSA is having a student lunch seminar series.

Q: Is the GSA Life at Fermilab wiki public?

A: Yes. People know about it and we are signing people up as editors. gsawiki.fnal.gov

Non-US Users - Heather Gerberich

There was a presentation on Feb. 15 on Overview of Permanent Residency Process. There were about 30 people in attendance with lots of good feedback. It will be followed by an attorney presentation April 5, 2011.

Quality of Life - Michael Cooke

William Wester (UEC member) will be a guest chef at Chez Leon on March 25th. The daycare center is hosting a parents' night out on the same night.

The FNAL access control policy has been rewritten to account for concerns about restrictions for guests and minors.

A poll by the GSA indicates that longer taxi hours are much desired by a fair percentage of the respondents. (see GSA report)

Users' Meeting - William Wester

We are getting some feedback from VIP invitations. Mike Procaro is coming. Secretary Chu is being invited for the public talk. The requisition for the banquet has been approved. The registration site is getting put together. The folks from the Tesla coil demonstration have been contacted. GSA is undecided on New Perspectives - trying to increase interest for it. A Visiting Scholar grant was applied to fund some students/post-docs travel to the meeting.

Government Relations – Dave Schmitz and Marj Corcoran

We are in the middle of our preparations for the annual DC trip. The lists of contacts received so far have been processed. We will need to start getting appointments with members that are assigned to you; the process should start the week of Mar. 21. Members should familiarize yourself with all materials, voting records, etc. The planning/training meeting is tomorrow (Mar. 12), hosted jointly by Fermilab and SLAC with members from USLHC.

Next UEC meeting: Apr. 8, 2011

Secretary: Brian Rebel