

Users Executive Committee meeting minutes for December 12, 2014

The meeting, chaired by Bill Louis, began at 8:45. Bill Louis, Bill Lee, Jesus Orduna, Fernanda Garcia, Thomas Strauss, Marcelle Soares-Santos, André de Gouvêa, Fabio Happacher, Linda Spentzouris, and SPA representatives Mateus Carneiro, Alex Drlica-Wagner, and Rob Fine attended in person. Vivian O'Dell, Sandra Biedron, and Tulika Bose attended via phone. Also present at various times were Carole McGuire (via phone), Joseph Lykken, Timothy Meyer, Nigel Lockyer and Steve Geer.

Overview

The meeting began with the chair report by Bill Louis. The HEPAP meeting will take place in DC on April 6th and 7th. Upcoming UEC meetings are currently planned for February 20, March 20, April 24, May 29, and the June meeting will be the Friday following the User's meeting.

UEC member Thomas Strauss is serving on the Fermilab campus and facility planning board. He reported that the CDF/D0 trailers will be demolished by summer. Office space requirements are still being investigated. Kautz road will close, so there is the question of how to handle access to the Minos building. One possibility is to provide a north exit, although that would require changes in the lab security structure. Improvement of walking paths from the control room to the experimental buildings is also being discussed. The barn near D0 road is in bad shape. It should be taken down or rebuilt, depending on how heavily it is used. The horse club may still want to use it; however, it may not be an issue for any users, and in that case, it would not be of concern to the UEC. The board is also discussing where CDF artifacts might be moved for display.

Meeting with the Directorate

Joseph Lykken clarified some of the lab activities. There has been a user complaint that an LDRD tax has been added to the charge for staying in the Fermilab village. The structure of LDRD funding is highly regulated by the funding agencies, and a tax has been added to housing charges at other laboratories. However, Joe said that it is not the intention of Fermilab to levy an LDRD tax in any form on the users. Management will work with the funding agencies to make sure this does not happen. Another management activity is to broaden the scope of the Physics Research Equipment Pool (PREP). An issue that will be addressed is the concern from industry that if PREP gives out equipment that has been too recently put on the market, it undercuts commercial enterprises. The Fermilab calendar is not yet in satisfactory shape. Now people can subscribe to the calendar, but an agenda view is not available. People are thinking about the categories of events that should be displayed. One possibility is to have two flavors of calendars, one displaying wellness events, and one displaying all other events. It is possible to have up to three versions of the calendar, but the content of each calendar version needs to be settled. It was suggested that recurring events could be separated from one-time events.

Bill Lee reports that the Internet in the village is not completely fixed. A cheap router (now replaced) was installed in the houses that didn't work. They are continuing to check into user complaints concerning both connectivity and speed. Aspen East and the gym are in good shape, but not the houses. Rob Fine reports that the Internet doesn't work at night in at least one house. Nigel suggested getting John Bakken to attend a UEC meeting where a list of complaints is made known to him so that it can be taken care of in an efficient way. It would be helpful to have a survey of people in the village in-hand at that time.

There was a brief conversation about parking. Short term parking on the sides of the high rise (not the horseshoe) will go to up to two hours. The Carpooling spots are currently oversubscribed. There has been a request for an electric car plug in. Shall these be accommodated? They could be state of the art with solar panels or other forward-looking design.

Report from Washington

Carole McGuire phoned in with her report. The House passed the CR omnibus appropriations bill by a five vote margin the previous evening, and it has been sent on to the Senate. However, \$9M was removed from the HEP budget before it passed, leaving \$766M. A short two day Continuing Resolution (CR) was passed to cover the period when the Senate debates. The omnibus bill will allow funding agencies to move ahead with the CMS and ATLAS upgrades. Consultations occurred between the DOE and the Appropriations sub-committee to achieve better alignment to the P5 report. Fermilab and HEP were given the most critical \$22M for LBNE/LBNF, and \$10M for research (Project Engineering and Design (PED) work). There was a recommendation for \$23M for superconducting RF (SCRF) R&D, important for the LCLSII and PIP-II upgrades. The recommended budget was \$25M for Mu2E, and \$10M for the Accelerator Stewardship program, much of which will support the ATF at BNL. Much of the \$9M reduction affects the cosmic frontier and astrophysics budget, and prevents new starts in these areas. Some of the basic science budget has been redirected to initiatives such as energy research centers funded through ARPA-E (Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy). Although the outcome could have been worse for HEP, it is still a tough budget scenario. The community will have to continue to fight for P5 goals, and convince Congress of their importance. Funding caps are in place through fiscal year 2021, so budgets will continue to be tight. The community has two years to get their ducks in a row before the new administration arrives, and it should aim to be ready to present its case strongly then.

Nigel also commented on the budget noting that \$1.5M of proposed PIP-II budget (Proton Improvement Plan) were lost, leaving \$20M. This is still decent support since the project has not yet reached CD0. It is likely that there will be a one year period for each CD, and due to PIP-II's alignment with P5, the lab will be able to stay on schedule. The LBNE/LBNF funds are still lagging somewhat. Nigel stated that the DOE has been very supportive, and that if we want this to continue, our community will have to stay unified.

Bill asked if there should be any special messages to Congress.

Nigel said it is important to launch the neutrino program and PIP-II. The P5 report has had an impact, the international community is stepping up, and Congressional support is needed for the flagship program. The HEP community is 100% behind the LHC. Fermilab is participating in the detector upgrade, and production of high field magnets, CERN is relying on FNAL in those areas. Fermilab is in the process of launching the Illinois Accelerator Research Center (IARC). The center will cover the accelerator science base, including international partnerships, and will promote technology transfer for the benefit of society. Important technology includes high intensity portable electron machines (with energy of a few MeV, and a half a MW of power). There are lots of applications for these machines, such as liquefaction of natural gas, treatment of water, sludge, and asphalt. This is a new initiative, and it is not redirecting the lab mission.

Government Relations Sub-Committee

Sandra gave her report on the Government Relations sub-committee, organizing the trip to DC on March 24th-27th. The LHC and SLAC users organizations are in concurrence with those dates. Lee Roberts will extract talking points for the meetings with staffers in DC from the final budget and congressional testimony. Jonathon Lewis has helped the sub-committee gain access to the wiki to be used for the DC trip organization, and upgrades will be discussed in the future to make it easier to enter data for meetings. The primaries for the DC trip will be selected soon. The agenda is set for the January planning meeting. Bill Louis and Sandra will meet with Jim Siegrist on the 8th or 12th of January. Kim Pearce is contacting the URA to determine the funds available for this trip. The people going to DC will fill out cost estimates for their travel in January, and schedule their own meetings. Vivian is booking hotel rooms. There will be an information booth at the User's Meeting in June to give information to help people with local meetings with government representatives that could take place in August. There is a range of materials available for packets for the DC visit, and the UEC will need to decide on what to include.

Quality of Life Sub-Committee

Marcelle identified issues of concern to the Quality of Life sub-committee. People in that sub-committee have been assigned to work on them. These include the status of the Internet in the village, and the status of the VISA office. Someone from that office will be invited to attend a UEC meeting and let the committee know what the status and plans are regarding handling of VISAs. There is currently no permanent VISA person, HR is hiring someone and they will give us an update on the hiring process. Fabio is covering the issue of desk space, assessing the scope of the issue and the needs of the experimenters. Fernanda is coordinating investigation of transportation issues. The question arose as to whether there should be a career fair during New Perspectives for early career scientists. This might include industry booths and aids for job hunting (academic and non-academic), and possibly an appropriate speaker could give a talk. These will be discussed further at the next sub-committee meeting after the SPA has met and has discussed their views. Members of the SPA mentioned that the water quality in the village is bad, perhaps that could be improved.

PFX Document

Steve Geer spoke regarding the broadly informative PFX document for users. It used to be in hardcopy form, but now that it is electronic it has lost visibility. Steve would like to see it become even more relevant and useful, and to that end would like a couple of people from the UEC to look at the document and give suggestions on how to make it more useful. It can be accessed via a link from the 'Program Planning' website. Bill Louis will ask for volunteers from the UEC to read it.

UEC Website

Fernanda reports that the UEC website is deployed, and that she should be notified if there is a need for any additional material on the website. Jesus commented that it is desirable to get a similar webpage template for the User's Meeting webpage. Then the User's Meeting page will have the standard Fermilab look.

Users Meeting Sub-Committee

Bill Lee gave a report on the status of the User's Meeting. The sub-committee is now in the process of inviting another speaker for the public lecture, as the first invitation was declined. Cynthia Sazama has the conference office tasks under good control. Soon the DOE/NSF speakers should be invited, and information will be obtained from Greg Snow for that purpose. It is generally tough to get the poster sent out very early, as the public lecturer must be determined before the poster can be made. Last year the poster mailing appears to have been sent to only 30 institutions. It is desirable to add all the URA institutions to the poster mailing list, as well as any other institutions that attended last year's meeting. The merging of these lists adds another 140 institutions to those receiving posters last year. Also, more email notifications should be sent out, the ALL_USERS list does not reach everyone. In particular, the hold-the-date notification did not get sent to FNAL employees.

Outreach Sub-Committee

The Outreach sub-committee gave their report. They presented some proposals regarding possible activities of the sub-committee. The UEC was favorable toward the proposal to have an invited talk at the User's Meeting from a notable outreach speaker. Also, the possibility of having an outreach prize at the User's Meeting was viewed favorably. Bill Lee noted that a speaker and the prize should be determined quickly, since this folds into the organization of the meeting. The User's Meeting sub-committee would like a proposal regarding outreach at the User's Meeting by the second week in January. Other ideas regarding outreach at the User's Meeting were discussed, included the possibility of inviting selected high school students to present their posters at the New Perspectives portion of the meeting, and to give a prize for the best high school student poster. This could be coordinated with the Educational office. It was noted that the Outreach sub-committee should also aim to help Marge Bardeen with activities of the Educational office in general. It was noted that the previous Physics Slam was a great success, although these are a lot of work. The Physics Slam resulted in an hour or more of questions from the general public, and was very well received.

The meeting was adjourned.