

Users Executive Committee meeting minutes for January 22, 2016

The meeting, chaired by Bill Louis, began at 8:30. Jesus Orduna, Thomas Strauss, Minerba Betancourt, Ed Kearns, Louise Suter, Sarah Lockwitz, Fernanda Garcia, Kurt Riesselmann, Mateus Carneiro, Robert Fine, Eric Prebys, Kim Pearce, Sebastian Aderhold, Elena Gramellini, Griselda Lopez, and Linda Spentzouris attended the meeting. Tim Meyer was also present, representing the Directorate. Fabio Happacher and Georgia Karagiorgi attended by phone.

Overview

Bill Louis gave the chair report, and ran the meeting. The next two UEC meetings are planned for February 26th and March 11th. The dates for the DC trip are March 15th-18th.

Report from the Directorate

Tim Meyer reported for the Directorate. He reiterated that the DC trip is important to high energy physics, and that the people going should stay consistent with the message given in the previous few years. It is important to have a unified, consistent message at risk of being ignored. On another topic, Fermilab was approached by COMCAST with a communication that, for a fee, they would provide phone, internet, and TV service to the village. There would be some advantages to using COMCAST. The village networking would then not have to be compliant with the Fermilab research network regulations, the service would probably be better, and switching to a commercial provider would give the village a more residential feel. The fee would most likely be covered by adding a surcharge to the housing costs for staying in the village.

There is some government funding allocated for infrastructure improvements at the DOE labs, of which \$9M was given to Fermilab. The Wilson Hall upgrades, including the refurbishment of floor WH13, are coming out of this dedicated funding. The plan is to move everyone on WH13 by this summer, except for the transient summer population, and then when the summer people leave, the major refurbishment work will begin. There are enough funds to do two floors (part of WH12 has been done already) and to fix some of the leaking windows. The offices will be smaller, with some space freed up for additional meeting room space. The User's Office location is still not

completely fixed, and there is now a discussion about whether it should be near the key and ID office, possibly on the ground floor. This needs to be settled as soon as possible. The User's Center renovations will not be carried out this fiscal year due to lack of funds. There will be some phase zero adjustments, though, such as getting more daylight into the game room area.

Previously, there was concern expressed regarding different designated school districts for different parts of the Fermilab site. The lab has no authority over this issue, especially since it does not pay state or city taxes. It may be worthwhile to find the original documentation concerning the assignments of city school district boundaries to the various parts of the site. The original cause for having more than one city and school district was to alleviate the burden of supporting Fermilab on any one particular city. UEC members said that even if the school district situation cannot be changed, it would still be good to inform people before they become Fermilab residents about the correspondence of specific on-site housing locations to school district assignment. Then there would be no surprise for people after it is too late for them to change their housing arrangements.

Report from Washington

Ben Preis of Lewis-Burke Associates reported on the news from Washington. Government offices will close today at noon due to snow conditions. The Appropriations Bill has been passed. The bill was favorable to Fermilab, since there was a budget increase for the Department of Energy Office of Science of \$279 M, which is a 5.5% increase from FY15 to FY16. Within the Office of Science, HEP funding grew \$29M from FY15, bringing it to a total of \$795M. HEP funding for FY16 is expected to support Mu2E, a site preparation start for LBNF, and to focus more broadly on U.S. LHC upgrades. Congress is expected to be in session less this year due to campaign activities. There are 25 Republican and 9 Democratic senate seats up for reelection. The President's budget has not yet been disclosed; it will be released on February 9th. Not much is known about his budget yet, but speculation is that the President will focus on keeping those projects of interest to him alive after his tenure in office.

User's Meeting Sub-Committee

Thomas Strauss reported on User's Meeting activities. The Users Meeting is scheduled for June 15-16, which occurs just after the New Perspectives

Meeting on June 13-14. In spite of having already issued invitations to potential speakers for the public talk at the User's Meeting, there is not yet a speaker. This could be a problem since the deadline for getting out the poster is soon. It would be good to secure a speaker in the next few weeks. The Arts and Lecture Series committee funds the public speaker, so the selected speaker must meet their approval. A few names of possible speakers were discussed, and specific members of the UEC agreed to contact those people personally next week to try and expedite the process of speaker selection.

There is space for 37 posters on the second floor as it is configured now. If the unmovable acrylic tables can be moved, then 45 posters could be accommodated. If there are more than 45 posters, there are other options that are less conveniently located. It is desirable to have a uniform look for the posters, so they will be required to be in portrait format. Fermilab Visual Media Services will print out the posters if they are uploaded by the June 1st deadline. They will be printed on 3'x4' fabric for easy transportation and mounting. The vendor fees will help cover the cost of the printing, as well as potentially improving the coffee service, and allowing a booklet to be printed with abstracts of the talks. There are now 12 confirmed vendors. General registration starts on Feb 1st, and closes on June 1st. Vendor registration will open in mid-February. The abstract submission deadline for both posters and talks is May 1st. The webpage and Indico template are online, <http://orgs.fnal.gov/fermilab_users_org/users_mtg/2016>. The subcommittee is considering having raffle winners announced before talks to boost attendance. Also, in an effort to increase attendance, the talks will not be separated into sessions by topic this year. It was pointed out that more coverage is needed in requests for names of this year's Ph.D. recipients. They must be submitted to the subcommittee by June 1st.

Government Relations Sub-Committee

There was no need for Jesus to report on the Government Relations subcommittee, because there was to be a dedicated meeting on planning the DC trip all afternoon.

Quality of Life Sub-Committee

Minerba gave the report for the Quality of Life subcommittee. Results of the housing survey were sent to Tim Meyer in a letter. Housing and office

capacity during the summer continues to be an issue. A goal is to at least give users information about off-site housing options. Also, all year round there is a lack of available conference rooms, which has become an aggravating problem for many users. A large number of conference rooms are ‘blocked off’ for meetings by groups whose administrative assistants control the conference room. Those groups also have responsibility for maintaining the functionality of the rooms. Some meeting rooms are in need of minor repairs; for example, the \$600 bulb in the West Wing projector needs to be replaced. One suggestion to increase availability of rooms is that administrators in charge of conference rooms automatically make periodic checks to determine whether blocked off weekly meeting slots are still needed.

People expressed concern that the broken bathrooms fixes are only temporary, they seem to break again soon after they are back in service. Also, some bathrooms are not getting cleaned everyday. This is intentional, done in order to save money. Also, while there is money to repair flooded toilets (for example) there is not enough money to fix the plumbing infrastructure. When a floor is renovated, its bathrooms will be upgraded and have more permanent fixes. However, since only two floors are being renovated, this will not cover all bathrooms.

Some users noticed that the vegetables in the cafeteria were not clean. The kitchen staff says that they order pre-cleaned vegetables; but since they still are not fully clean, they will start washing the ‘pre-washed’ vegetables. Water issues in the village are not yet solved. Investigation of other water vendors did not result in switching the provider. The same company (Glacier) will be used, but the new contract will include extra terms and conditions. The UEC expressed skepticism that the issue of availability of good water in the village has been resolved.

Fermilab Student and Postdoc Association report

Mateus and Rob reported for the FSPA. Their organization is in good shape with respect to ‘New Perspectives’ at the User’s Meeting. They are preparing for the DC trip, along with the UEC. They are discussing increasing the number of sporting events that they sponsor in the coming year.

The meeting was adjourned.