

Minutes of the 6 March, 2009 UEC Meeting

Users Executive Committee members attending:

Karen Gibson
Mike Hildreth
Dan Hooper
Matthew Jones
Ashutosh Kotwal
Ron Moore
Heather Ray
Lee Sawyer
Mitch Soderberg
Jon Urheim
Tricia Vahle

Users' Meeting Subcommittee Update (Lee Sawyer)

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The 2009 Users' Meeting is scheduled for June 3-4 at Fermilab.

Invitations to various dignitaries were sent out in January.

This year the "Public Lecture" will feature a performance of the play "Copenhagen", performed by Wheaton Drama, Inc. The current plan is to have a "dress rehearsal" performance on the Wednesday during the Users' Meeting, and then a public performance on Saturday night which would be open to the public. The public performance would also include a discussion panel of various luminaries who have some insight into the events depicted in "Copenhagen".

The initial draft of the Users' Meeting poster is done.

The subcommittee will begin biweekly meetings next Monday.

Ron Moore is putting together an e-mail list of experiment spokespersons to make sure everyone is aware of the date of the meeting.

We are thinking of the best way to interface with the Outreach Workshop.

Work on the Users' Meeting agenda is ongoing.

Quality of Life SubComittee Update (Ron Moore)

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The bid for the pool contract is ongoing. The goal is to open the swimming pool by June 1, 2009.

Discussion with Deputy Director Young-Kee Kim
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Fermilab Deputy Director Young-Kee Kim met with members of the UEC.

Kim: We are currently in the middle of a PAC meeting. Last year the PAC meeting was focused on the "Energy Frontier" and LHC upgrades. This year the discussion is more focused on "Intensity" and "Cosmic" frontiers. We are considering extending the Tevatron run through FY11. We had a budget briefing with Dennis Kovar last week. The DOE is supportive of FY11 Tevatron running.

(UEC) What projects are considered for the "Cosmic" frontier?

Kim: COUPP and CDMS are making nice measurements. COUPP is already finalizing a bigger detector. They may attempt even bigger detectors in the future. Cryogenic techniques (CDMS) are looking to expand. Liquid-Argon detectors are also promising. The Sloan Digital Sky Survey run is complete, but Fermilab's role on data management for the community continues. DES is the next area for dark energy, and it should be completed in 2010. JDEM is a longer-term mission for dark energy, and Fermilab would like to host a JDEM science operations center to serve the community and to be close to science. Ultra high-energy cosmic ray work (Pierre Auger) continues. Last week at the HEPAP meeting there was an announcement of a subpanel on the non-accelerator based U.S. program.

(UEC) Do gravity-waves get included in the "Cosmic" frontier?

Kim: We have projects like NSF's LIGO for gravitational waves. This is an example of an area where astronomy and HEP overlap.

(UEC) Fermilab manpower seems spread thin in light of all the projects on the table. Can you comment?

Kim: We have quite a few exciting new projects in our future plan. This requires people. Construction of these new facilities and projects will involve staff at other national laboratories (and collaborating international laboratories) as well as many industrial contractors. We are currently in the engineering phase and need some increase in personnel in FY10 and FY11 before the conclusion of the Tevatron. We are handling this with a mixture of contractors and some new hires. In addition we continue to hire young scientists and engineers using various fellowship programs.

(UEC) What happens if there is another Continuing Resolution (CR)?

Kim: The outlook is not good under a CR. On the other hand, the Stimulus Package can help indirectly.

(UEC) Any updates on a proposed ATLAS group at Fermilab?

Kim: Such a group would not form officially until the Tevatron operation is complete. If there are individuals who are interested before then, they can join the ATLAS group through Argonne or University of Chicago.

(UEC) What's the thinking for FY10 budget?

Kim: The FY09 budget looks good. The FY10 and FY11 may have flat funding levels.

Government Relations Subcommittee Update (Dan Hooper)

A preliminary version of the "one-page" document for congressional offices has been completed. This draft is being reviewed and edited by the GR subcommittee. It will be circulated to the SLAC Users Organization (SLUO) and the USLHC Users Organization (USLUO).

We are finalizing the list of participants for the Washington trip, and their connections to Washington.

Logistics of the Washington trip will be worked on in the coming weeks.

Overview of Fermilab's Astrophysics Program - Craig Hogan

Craig Hogan, head of the Fermilab Astrophysics program, gave a presentation on this program and discussed it with the UEC.

Astrophysics started at Fermilab in the theory group.

Sloan Digital Sky Survey has been enormously successful and has helped a lot to advance the field. This was Fermilab's first foray into an Astrophysics experiment. Fermilab recently ended its use of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey instrument.

Dark Energy Survey is the current big project in Chile. It will be better than SDSS. Fermilab is spending about \$40M to upgrade the Blanco 4m telescope.

JDEM is the next big project that Fermilab would like to participate in.

(UEC) Can you comment on NASA project sociology and how it impacts Fermilab participation in JDEM?

(Hogan) It is interesting and complicated. Europeans are joining too. As long as DOE remains a

significant partner to JDEM, Fermilab's role does not depend on the exact instrumentation of the satellite. Fermilab isn't building hardware, so we're not tied to technology choice. We hope to be the "on-the-ground" focal point for users to come and work.

(UEC) How do university groups get involved in JDEM, and how does Fermilab facilitate this?
(Hogan) Fermilab provides infrastructure for users to do analysis. Users still have to petition to join JDEM. After about one year, JDEM data become public, so interested people can log into Fermilab and analyse the data.

Craig presented a summary of several other areas of the Astrophysics program, including:
Pierre Auger Observatory - the goal is to understand the source(s) of the highest energy cosmic rays. Eight Fermilab scientists are involved.
CDMS/COUPP - Dark matter experiments.
Many small new initiatives are being explored.

Washington, DC Update - Carole McGuire

Carole McGuire, of Lewis-Burke Associates, discussed via telephone the government situation in Washington, DC.

The Senate has not yet finished the FY09 omnibus appropriations bill. They have passed it over to next week. A short-term Continuing Resolution has been approved by Congress to keep the government running until next Wednesday.

The Senate needs 60 votes to pass the FY09 omnibus appropriations bill. Currently the Senate has about 59 votes. This is the important bill for Fermilab, as it would give about a \$50M boost to Fermilab.

Regarding the economic stimulus package: the portion for science is relatively small (\$17B to science agencies, \$1.6B for DOE Office of Science). DOE plans to spend this money are pending approval at the Office of Management and Budget and the White House. Pier Oddone has commented that this package is good for Fermilab. NSF receives about \$3B, \$1B for NASA and NIST gets nearly \$400M.

(UEC) How should we structure the "one-page" document for Congressional offices in light of changing scenarios in Washington?

McGuire: Start by thanking Congress for their support. Then you can make the case for continued support of science over the long-term. Borrowing some items from the Symmetry magazine issue that discusses benefits of HEP would be a good approach. Mention that HEP is helping to prepare the next generation of scientists.

(UEC) In what state will the FY10 budget be in during our trip to Washington in April?

McGuire: It will most likely have just started getting debated in Congress. President Obama is likely to be very ambitious with his spending, especially on items like energy independence. This budget will probably be debated intensely. We'll have to be careful about how we ask for more money in FY10, in light of recent gains in funding.