

Minutes of the May 7, 2010 UEC Meeting

Attendees:

Todd Adams, Heather Gerberich, Mike Hildreth (video), Ron Moore, Mayly Sanchez (video), Dave Schmitz, John, Urheim (video), William Wester
GSA representatives: Carley Kopecky, Michelle Prewitt

Discussion with the Directorate (Young-Kee Kim)

Young-Kee described her recent outreach activities at a local girl's high school in conjunction with National Lab Day. She also attended a national Biotechnology Industry Organization conference as a judge for high school research held in conjunction with that event.

The mood is still somber at Fermilab with the recent tragedy of the young Russian scientist who fell to her death in the high rise atrium. Young-Kee thought that the Fermilab response was smooth but there will certainly be self-examination as to what might have been done better. Counseling services were provided through the employee assistance program. Much of the response was done with sensitivity of the family involved.

There are continuing messages from the DOE Office of Science emphasizing applied research targeting the nation's needs and Pier's statements emphasizing the balance for support for basic scientific research and on particle physics in particular at Fermilab (see Pier's Fermilab Today columns of Apr 20 and Apr 27).

The possible extension Tevatron collider running (perhaps through 2014) has been brought up to lab management and also to DOE who welcome understanding all the facts and issues. CDF and D0 spokespeople are preparing white papers on physics and the state of the detectors. The issue will be brought up with the PAC. There are many issues of such a run extension especially the effect on the future Fermilab program.

The Critical Decision process continues for future proposed Fermilab initiatives such as the mu2e and LBNE experiments (both have CD-0). Young-Kee points out that not only CDF and D0, but in general, most existing experiments desire to run longer and these requests have to also be taken in the context of the future program.

g-2 will be reviewed along with US involvement with SuperB, proposed in Italy, and the upgrade of the B factory at KEK. The schedule for CMS/Atlas upgrades and JDEM status are all relevant items being discussed in terms of where money might be found for such initiatives.

Regarding DUSEL, there are plans for another meeting like one in January where all the interested parties can come together. This meeting will be held in conjunction with an upcoming LBNE collaboration meeting.

The View from Washington (Bridget Glynn):

David Obey (D-WI), Chairman of House Appropriations Committee, announced his retirement. This is expected to cause Washington shock waves that may slow down the process for the full committee to act on bills even more than just the effect of this being an election year. For instance, subcommittees may or may not move on mark-ups for their parts of appropriations bills. Year-long continuing resolution or a large omnibus bill is a possibility. Norm Dicks from Washington would be next in seniority to be the full chair but there are others who have expressed interest.

Supplemental appropriations for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and money for earthquake relief in Haiti, Chile, and flooding in Tennessee will further strain the budget process.

The America COMPETES reauthorization legislation through the House Science and Technology Subcommittee was passed in a bipartisan manner. It reauthorizes NSF, DOE Office of Science, NIST for 5 years. Unfortunately, the legislation became partisan and the most recent vote by the full house did not result in passage. The original bill has specific language for (BE=basic energy) BER/BES/OSCAR (high performance computing) which does reflect administration priorities - this is an item for discussion for the final bill.

This whole process stresses the importance of involvement by the community by contacting representatives, visiting Washington D.C., etc.

The next HEPAP meeting will be during the first week of June and Lewis-Burke will be present.

The Senate "Dear Colleague" letters in support for the funding of science are close to being closed for signatures.

Detector R&D at Fermilab (Erik Ramberg):

Erik gave a nice presentation on Detector Research at Fermilab. He emphasizes the lab's institutional capabilities - test beam, SiDet, engineering groups. There is a high degree of collaboration with universities and other national labs. An overview of a number of areas was presented including 3-Dimensional silicon, CAPTAN DAQ readout, optical (cable-less) interconnects, Silicon photomultiplier research, dual readout calorimetry, liquid argon detectors for neutrinos and dark matter, dark matter bubble chamber with new alpha particle rejection, solid xenon R&D, the meson test beam facility, and picosecond-scale time of flight detectors. In summary, detector R&D is contributing to the three frontiers.

News and Subcommittee Reports

Ron Moore: Encourage participation in this year's UEC election process for six new members.

Users Meeting: Agenda is getting in pretty good shape with just a few remaining talks to be finalized. The catering walk through happened. Judges for poster sessions are being worked on. Session chairs will be assigned.

Quality of Life: There have been some User concerns regarding new policies associated with travel. It impacts Users when visits to the travel office are discouraged/forbidden. Pool operations are currently with procurement who are writing up the contracts. The survey for Chez Leon in Fermilab Today is still expected soon.

GSA: Work continues for the poster session for the User's Meeting and the BBQ the day before. Some ideas are sought on how to raise interest for the New Perspectives - graduate student meeting that is held prior to the User's Meeting.

Minutes submitted by William Wester and Ron Moore.
This is the final meeting for the 2009-2010 UEC.