



Minutes of the Fermilab UEC Meeting on January 14, 2011

Attending:

Todd Adams, Michael Cooke, Marj Corcoran (remote), Heather Gerberich, Dick Gustafson, Jonathan Lewis, Ron Moore, Manfred Paulini, Brian Rebel, Mayly Sanchez (remote), Dave Schmitz, William Wester, Lisa Whitehead
GSA Officers: Zeynep Isvan, Tim Linden

Guests:

Pier Oddone, Craig Hogan

Report from the Chair - Todd Adams

The National Users Facility Organization (NUFO) has been asked by several members of Congress to host an event to educate Representatives and Senators on the mission of the national laboratories. They are planning a reception in one of the Congressional meeting rooms, possibly in late March or early April. They have contacted Fermilab for financial support, information for posters, and for a representative to attend the event. Fermilab is working on fulfilling the requests. This is an important and unique event to present the importance of the national labs.

The Chair has been asked to nominate a user to serve on the Fermilab traffic safety committee, with particular interest in a graduate student. Tim Linden has been nominated and agreed to represent users on this committee.

The UEC was asked to provide names for possible membership for the Fermilab PAC and after discussion a list was sent.

The Fermilab "Ask-A-Scientist" program needs volunteers to meet and answer questions of visitors once a month on a Sunday afternoon. Anyone willing to participate should contact Peter Garbincius. A message with further details has been sent to the users organization mailing list.

A letter was sent to Dennis Kovar by the UEC on behalf of the users thanking him for his service to the HEP community during such an important time.

The Fermilab potluck/holiday party in December was a success with great food and wonderful entertainment, including singing, magic, and skits. Thank you to all who helped organize the event.

The UEC held a coffee break on Friday morning to give users a chance to provide input. About 20 people attended and we had some interesting discussions that will help guide our future activities. In addition, we received email feedback from several others. Any

user can raise issues important to them with any UEC member in person or via email (contacts available on the UEC webpage).

Chat with Fermilab Directorate – Pier Oddone

Director Oddone first described the situation in light of the news about the decision on the Tevatron extension. The announcement came Monday (January 10) from the DOE that they did not come up with the extra money needed to run the Tevatron to 2014. It was good of Brinkman to let us know now rather than waiting until the President's budget is released. It appears that the planned doubling of the science budget is over. The administration is sending signals that budget cuts are serious and there is the possibility that Congress will cut further.

The Director answered a wide range of questions:

Q: What about America COMPETES?

A: It has been passed, the support for research is important, but as an Authorization it can't guarantee a certain funding profile (since it's not an appropriation bill).

Q: We are, of course, still working with a C.R. Is an appropriations bill better than a C.R.?

A: It is if at the same (or better) funding level. A C.R. does forbid "new starts". However, LBNE and mu2e are far enough away that funding for R&D is useful, so things can proceed for a while still. Eventually, of course, they become "new starts" and we need a budget to proceed further. The C.R. is better than an appropriations bill with less funding.

Q: What about the decision from NSB/NSF concerning DUSEL?

A: NSF does not typically do infrastructure work for a facility (digging tunnels and installing elevators, etc), instead they typically fund specific science projects. This makes DUSEL an unusual endeavor for them, and they are considering whether they want to be a steward for the DUSEL facility. There are questions about how to proceed and who to negotiate with. The Director has proposed a plan to proceed that is being considered.

Q: Can LBNE proceed without DUSEL?

A: Kovar was careful to keep LBNE separate so it is almost entirely a DOE project. This allows, in principle, LBNE to go forward without DUSEL. One possibility is to build a large liquid argon detector near the surface - you lose some physics, but, in particular, you keep the long baseline oscillation and proton decay physics. Better to use the 800 ft. level at DUSEL, building off the work already done there, and keeping at least part of the lab open for projects.

Q: What does the future program look like for the lab?

A: MINOS and MINERvA are running now and negotiating for NuMI beam (nu vs. antinu) before NOvA begins. MiniBooNE continues to run in the Booster beamline. NOvA and MicroBooNE are the next experiments at these facilities. g-2 and mu2e come later.

Q: What about the antiproton source? This is a unique facility in the world and should we try to keep it instead of re-purposing it for g-2 and mu2e?

A: The physics using the antiproton source was proposed and considered by the PAC, but their recommendation, based on comparing the physics, was to do the repurposing for the muon experiments.

Q: Is there concern about the Fermilab user community shrinking with the shutdown of the Tevatron?

A: The lab has a vibrant plan of future projects including involvement in the LHC and the neutrino program for the next few years that should provide a great base program to attract users to Fermilab.

Q: Any word on the plan or procedure for replacing Kovar at the Office of Science?

A: DOE will be soliciting recommendations and input from Pier and we, as the users group, should also submit any recommendations that we have to the chair of HEPAP.

Q: Is there a detailed, quantitative plan for how to shift people and financial resources from the Tevatron to the Intensity/Cosmic frontier program?

A: A more quantitative answer can be given at the next meeting. A survey was recently taken of employees about their plans for the next few years to compare to the projected needs. But the switch is expected to be fairly rapid.

Q: Is Fermilab responding to the requests from NUFO for their reception at Congress?

A: Yes, we are working on providing the information and support that they need.

Q: There seems to be an impression by some of the public that Fermilab is closing down. How can we fight this impression? Any advice for us in delivering a message to Congress?

A: Present that there is a vital program for the future. The stopping of the Tevatron is not an end for the lab, but is happening precisely to ensure the future program proceeds quickly. So far the lab's efforts have been aimed at communicating our plans to the DOE, Congress, OMB, and OSTP. Now we will begin to expand the audience. Many lab employees are also asking what they will be doing. The lab is creating an "FNAL in Transition" website to try to spread the message.

Visit with Craig Hogan (Director of the Center for Particle Astrophysics at Fermilab)

Hogan described the history of particle astrophysics at Fermilab that led to the creation of the Center. The Center is not its own division, but is comprised of members from other divisions. The members work on both theory and experiments. The experimental program includes Sloan Digital Sky Survey, Pierre Auger, CDMS, Dark Energy Survey, COUPP, LSST, QUIET-II, Gamme-V, the Fermilab Holometer, and explorations of other new programs. Slides with details are available on the UEC agenda page.

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

Things are starting to take shape in Washington with committee assignments being decided. The new ranking members of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology are both from Texas. "Space" has been added to the committee name and there is likely to be an emphasis on NASA. The House Energy and Water appropriations subcommittee will be led by Rodney Frelinghuysen (NJ). The Senate subcommittee may be led by Dianne Feinstein (CA).

There is a continuing resolution (C.R.) until Mar. 4. The House Republicans will try to put together a 2011 funding bill in February. Science is not a target, but everything will be tight. The release of the President's budget proposal for 2012 has been delayed until at least the week of Feb. 14, if not later. The budget is expected to cut discretionary spending overall. The America COMPETES act passed in Dec.

Q: We have had users ask about lobbying congress to extend the Tevatron run. Do you have any insight on that?

A: Will defer to the Lab Director on this.

Q: We're thinking April 13-14 for our D.C. trip. Are these good dates?

A: Sounds OK. We have a big job ahead of us to talk with all the new members and educate them about our programs.

Q: Any advice for our message to Congress in April?

A: The important thing is to present a unified message. We will need to lobby for funding for the Office of Science. If the overall budget for the office goes down, then high energy physics will be impacted.

Subcommittee Reports

Report from the GSA

The GSA has a Wiki-formatted "Guide to Life at Fermilab" which is mostly ready, but not announced. The GSA is hosting a monthly meet with pizza/beer at the Users Center and will ask about feelings of the Tevatron shutdown.

Non-US Users - Heather Gerberich

We got approval (and money) to host the tax presentation entitled "The Unexpected Tax Obligations of Foreign Nationals Visiting the US" to be given by KPMG. This will be held on Tuesday, February 1st at 12:30pm in Wilson Hall 1-West. The cost is being split with Argonne, and they will have access to the presentation. The presentation will be available online until April 15th. However, we encourage attendance so that people can ask questions. We plan to host this in future years. The cost is expected to be less in the future because KPMG will only need to update the presentation based on changes in tax laws.

Amanda will give a presentation entitled "Overview of Residency Process" on February 15, 12:30-2:00.

Quality of Life – Michael Cooke

There was a talk on advice on how to make the postdoc → faculty position transition on Dec. 14. Thanks to Rob Roser for giving it and Dave Christian for hosting.

The children's center is working with Chez Leon to provide after-hours care for a Valentine's Day dinner for parents on February 11. We are also setting up a chat with Bruce Chrisman in regard to communications about issues quality of life issues important to the user community.

Significant changes were proposed to Fermilab policy for access control in December. The wording of the changes would have significant impact on Daughters & Sons to Work Day and completely prohibit minors from WH ground floor email room. The open comment period ended in late December & produced a significant number of suggestions. An updated draft is still in the works, with Nancy Grossman actively participating the rewrite. A 2nd round of comments will take place for the new draft.

Users' Meeting – William Wester

Progress is being made with the banquet and other details. Invitations to members of Congress and people in the funding agencies are being composed and should reflect new committee appointments for the new Congress. Work on the agenda will begin shortly.

Government Relations – Dave Schmitz and Marj Corcoran

There was a meeting of representatives of the three user organizations to try to settle on a date. We tentatively settled on April 13-14, 2011 pending agreement from each of the executive committees. These were good dates for most of the Fermilab UEC.

Next UEC meeting: Feb. 11, 2011

Secretary: Dave Schmitz