

## **Users Executive Committee meeting minutes for November 6, 2015**

The meeting, chaired by Bill Louis, began at 8:30. Jesus Orduna, Thomas Strauss, Ed Kearns, Minerba Betancourt, 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. Timothy Meyer was also present, representing the Directorate. Fabio Happacher attended by phone.

### **Overview**

Bill Louis gave the chair report. The next two meetings will be held on Dec 11<sup>th</sup>, and January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016. The first meeting of the next year will be a double meeting, combining the UEC meeting with the DC planning meeting. Site infrastructure progress has been made since last month; the tenth floor bathroom is now working.

### **Report from the Directorate**

Tim Meyer reported for the Directorate. The physical construction for the new Users Office will start in the next calendar year. Tim adamantly stressed the desirability of selecting a public speaker for the Users Meeting whose orientation was toward neutrino physics, or else is an international visitor whose organization is interested in collaborating with Fermilab in some capacity. For example, a speaker from CERN would be attractive. Tim stated that it is very important to make the talks relevant to experiments such as LBNE or DUNE, because the neutrino program is the future of Fermilab.

### **Report from Washington**

Leland Cogliani of Lewis-Burke Associates reported on the news from Washington. Last week the President signed the bipartisan budget act of 2015; this is a two year budget deal, which increases funding by 80 billion dollars in 2016-17. The increase for 2016 is 50 billion, with half of that going to defense. The remaining 30 billion dollar increase will be in 2017. This raises the debt ceiling until March 2017, and paves the way for a FY16 budget deal. Now that there is a budget deal, there has been a lot of action in government in the last few weeks. The final bill must be negotiated, which may not happen before December 11<sup>th</sup> when the continuing resolution expires. The negotiations are not so much about money as they are about the policy riders. The goal is to be finished by December 1<sup>st</sup>, and then to sign an omnibus package by December 4<sup>th</sup>. It is worthwhile for people to contact local representatives and stress the importance of funding HEP at the Senate/President's requested level.

The Appropriations committees in the Senate and the House divide their spending allocations among the subcommittees, and these suballocations (302(b)) set the funding levels. It is not known whether the Energy and Water subcommittee funding level has increased. If so, a push will be made to increase the Office of Science budget. If the process unfolds in the same way as it has in prior fiscal years, HEP should do well. High Energy Physics has supporters on the Appropriations Committees, and in top leadership and budget authorization positions. For example, there will be a closed door meeting

attended by friendly congressmen such as Foster, Hultgren, Grisham, Coons, Rounds, Durbin and Kirk.

The Commission to Review the Effectiveness of the National Energy Laboratories (CRENEL) has completed the final report, and in a hearing recommended strong support for the national laboratories. There are recommendations in the report on how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the labs. There were no serious concerns, but there were 36 recommendations. However, since there was no prioritization of the recommendations, there is some risk that none of them will be implemented. It would be useful for people visiting the Congressional offices to mention the report, and to try to push for prioritization of the recommendations.

The nuclear physics program has issued a long-range strategic plan, the format of which is modeled on the P5 report. Two new experimental thrusts received the highest recommendation in that report. These were: (1) a U.S.-led ton-scale neutrinoless double beta decay experiment to investigate questions such as whether neutrinos are their own antiparticles (the experiment would serve as a parallel effort to the neutrino experiments DUNE/LBNF and NOvA) (2) a program based on an electron/ion collider. Fermilab and associated universities have expertise with much of the technology needed for a collider, and could potentially make a major contribution to the effort.

Paul Ryan is the new Speaker of the House. In the past he has said that he supports basic research, but he was also a drafter of the HR1 that cut the Office of Science budget. There was a 30% cut across the board to non-defense items, and basic research was not protected in any way. It is important to visit his office in March, and to emphasize to his staff the importance of the national laboratories and high energy physics.

The budget will not be disclosed until the final vote on Dec 11. The next several weeks offer a chance to influence the process. Leland has spoken with key members of Congress to remind them of the importance of supporting HEP.

### **User's Meeting Sub-Committee**

Thomas Strauss reported on User's Meeting activities. A larger poster session was investigated. Accommodating 100 posters will take some work, since FNAL does not have enough easels. The internal company Clorica does not have enough of these, so we would have to go to an outside vendor, which would cost money. It would be good to know how many people would like to have a poster. This question should go out with the registration request so we that can get a count of how many posters we need to accommodate. The vendor list has been compiled, although the invitations have not yet been sent. Drink tickets will be given out as part of the registration process to help with planning. The caterer will likely be the same as last year, but a bid will go out, following DOE procedure. The invited speaker priority list will be finalized soon.

### **Government Relations Sub-Committee**

Jesus reported that he has completed some tasks, such as updating the list of members of Congress. There are more things that must be done in the near future. He reminded the

UEC members to submit their requests for a wiki account, and to send their business card information to Kim. The connection files which detail any regional or personal connections with representatives should be filled out promptly. The 18 FSPA members and the UEC members are all slated to travel to DC in the spring. Jesus will check with Harvey Newman about participation of USLUA members; their user's meeting is next week at Fermilab. Jesus is still waiting to hear from SLUA; he suggested that Bill could contact LBNL and invite them to our DC planning meeting. However, they would probably have to fund their trips because there are no extra funds available. There will be an all day planning meeting for the trip on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Good dates for the DC trip next year seem to be March 14<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup>. The House and the Senate will be in session, and these dates are before the House starts crafting the appropriations bills. Minerba commented that the UEC should be encouraging people to send letters to their representatives in the next few weeks, but it was determined that the UEC mailing lists probably cannot be used for that purpose since they are associated with Fermilab.

### **Quality of Life Sub-Committee**

Minerba reported for the quality of life subcommittee. The housing survey had a low number of replies at first. Minerba suggested that there might be more success if the surveys were sent to the individual experiments and coordinated that way. After working hard to get more replies, it was possible to make a table describing opinions on office space and housing needs, i.e. how much space there is versus how much space is required. There was a unified opinion that there is a serious shortage of available housing. The issue was raised that people sometimes do not use the housing that they are allocated, exacerbating the problem. There was a suggestion that either we should penalize people for oversubscribing, or else require a deposit. However, this might be harsh for certain cases, such as no-shows due to VISA issues. Eric mentioned that the undergraduate summer intern programs house students via off-site apartments that are arranged through the Education Office. Other members of the UEC said they had been told that there was no way to get any arrangement made off-site, but they were told this through the Housing Office not the Education Office. Users uniformly commented that it would be a good thing if the lab arranged off-site housing to handle the overflow. Eric will talk to Tanja Waltrip of the Education Office to find out how she makes arrangements for the summer interns. Griselda commented that it might be possible to get corporate housing (furnished) but needs more information to investigate this option. The ideas of using the dormitories of local colleges or something commercial, such as rooms at Extended Stay America, were raised. Minerba will write a summary of the possibilities to improve the situation. It was also agreed that on-site housing needs modernization.

Jack Hawkins of the Housing Office is switching the coin machine responsibility from the snack vendor to the laundry machine vendor in an effort to have change more reliably available. This will likely go into effect in December. Cell phone connectivity in the village is being investigated; however service varies from vendor to vendor, and it is unlikely that a Fermilab fix is appropriate for this particular problem. There is no information on the breadth and nature of this problem, and until there is, users should complain to their individual phone companies. Regarding fitted sheets, provision for

these is not included in the linen contract, which is not up for renewal for two more years. If a large group of users feel this is an issue, it should be made known to Jack before that time. Mowing the grass is subject to many constraints, and it has to start early. However, Jack is looking into the details. There is no schedule of replacement for kitchen cabinets. If there is a particular set of cabinets that are not in good shape, the case should be made known to Jack directly, who will then have them inspected and potentially repaired or changed out. On that topic, Jack strongly urges users not to wait for surveys from the UEC to express housing problems they may have. He should be contacted directly for the potentially shortest path to a solution.

The presence of food trucks (as previously organized by Tim Meyer) generated some enthusiasm at the time. Feedback to the food vendors that people liked the food and its availability might get the trucks back on site.

### **Fermilab Student and Postdoc Association report**

Sabastian and Rob gave the FSPA report. Their organization has met frequently since the last UEC meeting. One of the meetings was with Tim Meyer about the yearly budget and the FSPA goals. It was decided to submit budgets to Tim Meyer quarterly instead of annually in order to enable more accurate budget estimates. The three primary FSPA goals are to (1) create a community of young people at FNAL, (2) act as liaison between young people and the Directorate, and (3) document the group's actions and activities to provide a legacy for future FSPA members. Activities in support of the first goal include putting on a Halloween party, and updating the FSPA Facebook page to keep it active and monitor the trends. Also, a photo contest was run via the page. The Halloween party was a success, about 150 people attended, and there were lots of children. NALWO was happy that the event was good for kids. The Fermilab/Argonne soccer match was also highly successful. Fermilab won, but everyone had a good time. These crosstown classics are likely to become an annual or semi-annual event. A proposed activity in support of the second goal (young people/Directorate connection) is to have an 'Ask-Your-Representative' night. Young people in the community would be invited to talk about issues they are facing or their ideas to improve the laboratory in an informal setting. These issues and ideas could then be passed on to the Directorate. In support of the third goal (helpful documentation) the 'Event Report' has been initiated. FSPA intends to put together documents about their events describing what was done and how it was done. The Event Report is for learning purposes, as well as to keep good records for the benefit of future FSPA members.

The meeting was adjourned.