



Users Executive Committee meeting minutes for November 17, 2017

The meeting began at 8:30 am. Attendees were:

UEC: Sowjanya Gollapinni (Chair), Jiyeon Han, Leo Aliaga-Soplin, Gavin Davies, Fernanda Psihas, Joseph Zennamo, Frank Chlebana, Carrie McGivern, Sarah Demers

Directorate: Tim Meyer

FSPA: Thomas Carroll, Xuan Chen, Thomas Warburton

Users' Office: Kim Pearce

Global Services: Griselda Lopez

Guests: Sandra Charles, Jennifer Gondorchin, Katie Yurkerwicz

Indico Page: <https://indico.fnal.gov/event/15745/>

Chair's Report

Sowjanya Gollapinni reported. The deputy roles and membership of the sub-committees are being finalized. Web master Gavin Davies updated all UEC web pages to reflect the current status. UEC's role in the lab strategic planning was discussed with reflections from the meeting held on Nov. 9 and how user input can be integrated into the scientific planning processes of the lab. Discussion on the idea of providing various venues (both informal and formal) for UEC officers to interact with users continued from last meeting. Directorate supports the idea. Also, the need to better advertise the existence of UEC through various mechanisms (e.g. a UEC brochure made available in the users' office and the village, UEC talks at collaboration meetings etc.) was discussed.

Following up from last meeting, Sandra Charles (D&I and Talent Acquisition) and Jennifer Gondorchin (Benefits) were invited to give talks on what policies exist under their departments and what methods are currently being used to make users aware of the existing policies. Both talks yielded productive discussions leading to specific items that can be implemented to better advertise and improve user awareness. Although most policies are applicable to both users and employees since their names contain the word "employee", this leads to significant confusion in their applicability (e.g. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) although named EAP is for both users and employees). Such instances can be improved by simple changes (e.g. renaming Employee Assistance Program with Community Assistance Program or something along those lines to avoid confusion). These specific implementations will be pursued by the program managers. Another idea that is currently being pursued is to include relevant policies and training as part of user orientation making it similar to employee orientation. Both program managers welcomed UEC's collaboration to help with all aspects of their program, especially in the diversity and inclusivity efforts at the lab. At the next meeting (Dec.

15th), UEC will hear from HR partner to get their perspective on policies and user awareness. Later in the meeting, UEC discussed about launching a focused effort for Safe and Respectful environments by raising awareness of non-hostile spaces (see page. 4).

Katie Yurkewicz (Communications) was invited to present a talk on 50th anniversary activities with a focus on the Open House event. Numerous public outreach events were launched on the occasion of the lab's 50th anniversary which required increased user participation to meet volunteer needs, especially for the Open House event. A (commercial but customizable) volunteer database was used for the sign-up process for the Open House. Leveraging on this experience, the importance of developing a lab-wide volunteer database service for users/employees to systematically sign up to participate in outreach and education activities at the lab was discussed and will be pursued with high priority. In collaboration with the UEC, other approaches that motivated increased user participation in the 50th anniversary events will be adopted moving forward to keep up the same level of user participation.

Report from the Directorate

Tim Meyer reported. The Resource Review Board (RRB) meeting on LBNF/DUNE and PIP-II projects was held in the first week of November to discuss project progress and planning. Paul Dabbar, undersecretary for science for the DOE visited the lab on Nov. 21 and a rich agenda was planned for his visit. Paul Dabbar is interested in basic science and research. The input from UEC on the Community Standards document was found to be very useful and a new version is currently under preparation which will be circulated soon. A Host Lab Working Group is being launched to further improve and enhance the user experience at the lab. One of the activities of this working group is to visit CERN to observe host lab activities there as a case study. Regarding lab access for foreign visitors, work continues with DOE, progress is slow. Other approaches will be taken by the lab if the issue persists moving into the new year as it has the potential to impact the reputation and scientific productivity of the lab. The incremental, few-at-a-time renovation of Village housing will continue this year; the work typically takes place in winter and spring to make units newly available before the summer rush.

Report from Washington

Ben Kallen reported via email.

FY 2018 Appropriations: For the past month, Congress has been primarily focused on tax reform. Both the House and the Senate have been drafting competing tax reform bills. Republican leaders in Congress hope to have a final bill passed by early December, but negotiations are complex because the two bills differ from one another substantially. Meanwhile, congressional leaders have started negotiating on a budget deal that would lift the budget caps in anticipation of a final FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bill. An increase for the non-defense discretionary portion of the budget, which includes the Department of Energy and thus High Energy Physics, is still part of the discussions. It is unlikely that these negotiations will be completed before the current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires on December 8, so another short-term CR

will likely be needed to give Congress additional time to complete negotiations and pass an omnibus.

Administration updates: The Senate confirmed Paul Dabbar, an energy investor with JP Morgan/Chase & Co., to be the Under Secretary for Science at DOE. In this position, Dabbar is now responsible for overseeing the Office of Science but not the applied energy programs. This is a contrast to DOE's management structure during the Obama Administration, which had former Under Secretary Lynn Orr overseeing both the energy and science portfolios in an effort to facilitate greater synergy between them. The Senate also confirmed Mark Menezes, former Vice President for Federal Relations at Berkshire-Hathaway Energy, to be Under Secretary for Energy. Steve Binkley is still Acting director of the Office of Science, and the Administration still has not nominated anyone to the position of Director.

Other Congressional Updates: As mentioned in last month's minutes, the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology has been working on a scientific infrastructure bill designed to streamline the construction of large-scale scientific facilities. The Office of Science is a major focus of the legislation, and the bill text includes the optimal funding profile for LBNF/DUNE. While the bill itself does not appropriate actual funds, it is a strong statement of congressional support for the project. On November 15, the House Science Committee unanimously approved three bills advancing DOE basic research and infrastructure programs: The Department of Energy Research Infrastructure Act ([H.R. 4376](#)), introduced by Rep. Steve Knight (R-Calif.), vice chairman of the Energy Subcommittee; the Accelerating American Leadership in Science Act ([H.R. 4377](#)), introduced by Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-Ill.), a member of the Energy Subcommittee; and the Nuclear Energy Research Infrastructure Act ([H.R. 4378](#)), introduced by Rep. Randy Weber (R-Texas), chairman of the Energy Subcommittee. The one that is most relevant to HEP is the Accelerating American Leadership in Science Act as it includes authorization and funding for LBNF/DUNE. Lewis-Burke worked with Committee staff to incorporate specific language and the most optimal funding levels for construction of the LBNF/DUNE into the bill. In terms of prospects, even if the bill is passed by the full House, which is likely, there is no companion bill on the Senate side and will not be passed and enacted this year. However, this bill shows bipartisan support for Office of Science facilities and infrastructure and LBNF/DUNE specifically. Options for reintroduction and passage next year are also explored with an emphasis on finding a vehicle for passage in the Senate.

Government Relations Sub-Committee

Joseph Zennamo reported. The effort to update and redesign the USParticlePhysics.org website continues in active weekly meetings with key stakeholders. Mike Cooke from DOE and AAAS are coordinating this effort. The goal is to have outreach related materials ready for March. The plan is to have the text ready in December followed by a "two-pass" review from the UEC with final approval in January. The sub-committee has started meeting bi-weekly to start the planning activities for the March DC trip. The next sub-committee meeting will hear initial plans and reports on updating the DC trip wiki page, trip logistics and bottlenecks, current status of scripts that match a given user to a

congressional district, a first proposal for reaching near 100% coverage and a proposal for a budget.

Special Topic: Proposal for a Sub-Committee for Safe and Respectful Environments

Fernanda Psihas reported. The procedures and resources available to Users at the lab are unclear. Multiple approaches and broader community interactions are needed to achieve the goal of fostering a safe and respectful environment for everyone. Among the various approaches discussed, reinforcing the community standards through experimental collaborations and supplementing the policy through visual complementary materials were thought to be effective. A proposal was made to launch a new subcommittee to focus on these activities. As UEC has limited people power, a suggestion was made to make this a focused group effort (e.g. a task force) by identifying liaisons from each of the existing 4 sub-committees who will focus on raising awareness of non-hostile spaces from within their sub-committee. This suggestion met with consensus among the members. More discussion on the topic is planned at the next UEC meeting.

Outreach and Education Sub-Committee

Gavin Davies reported. The sub-committee is meeting regularly to define sub-committee goals. Two main goals of the sub-committee include providing communication training to DC trip participants and to serve the user community as a hub for best practices in science communication (e.g. consulting with speakers such as in Saturday Morning Physics, or to bring a science communication workshop to the Users' meeting). The committee has been compiling best practices on science communication and has begun developing a training curriculum for the DC trip. The sub-committee will soon coordinate with Government Relations sub-committee to establish timelines. The committee is happy to consult on science communication needs, so, users are encouraged to contact the sub-committee if their services are required. Other goals of the sub-committee are being defined and will be reported at the next meeting.

Users Meeting Sub-Committee

Jiyeon Han reported. Planning for the 2018 meeting is underway with a focus towards finalizing the keynote speaker. The sub-committee received several suggestions and a decision will be made in the coming weeks. A request was made to make the speaker selection procedure more transparent within the UEC.

Quality of Life Sub-Committee

Frank Chlebana reported. The Quality of Life sub-committee held a brainstorming session on Nov. 7 to discuss topics and priorities. The committee will soon appoint a deputy and is seeking more members to participate in group's activities. The broken feedback form on the Quality of Life page has been fixed by web master Gavin Davies. The existence of the form needs to be better advertised (e.g. by putting the form and URL at the elevators or offering a small gift) for active input from users. A proposal was made to make the form more general seeking feedback on all UEC topics and link it from

the main page. A webpage design for this generic feedback form will be finalized in the coming weeks.

There have been some changes to the rental car provider at the lab. As of November 1st, Enterprise is our new provider. Users will not be able to pick up cars from onsite. Users will have to go to the offsite rental office to rent a car or request that Enterprise deliver a vehicle during business hours. They can also request to be picked up from the lab to one of their local offices. More information will be provided on the Global Services' [website](#). UEC will continue to communicate any updates on this topic to the users. Regarding the office space issue, a floor space survey has been initiated. Office space usage can be periodically surveyed to see if allocated space is being utilized effectively. Another idea is to have a designated area/office where people can reserve desks for short term stays. UEC has gotten some feedback about problems with facilities (e.g. Broken faucets, leaking fixtures etc.). Most often people are not sure if it is their responsibility to report problems or do not know who to call. Among the proposed solutions, adding larger signs indicating who to call for problems (currently there is a tiny-easy-to-miss sign with phone number), having facilities group do a monthly walk through with checklist, and designating people on a floor responsible to call in problems were thought to be effective.

Griselda Lopez reported on the Bike Share and the short- and long-term car rental programs. The bikes are assembled and ready but since the weather got too cold to have a soft launch, the bike share program will launch in the first week of April. For long term car rentals, as of Nov. 1st, Enterprise is the lab's rental car provider for longer term rentals. Pilot's leasing contract expired on Oct. 31st. If someone leased a vehicle from Pilots prior to Oct. 31st, that lease is unaffected by expiration of the contract with FRA, unless Pilot's notifies them otherwise. For short term rental car service, Zipcar is the selected vendor. Griselda is working on the program details. Launch of the program is expected to be January 2018 if not sooner. Global Services site has full information on this: <https://get-connected.fnal.gov/users/services/>. Users are encouraged to check out the website for additional details. Users are encouraged to contact the sub-committee and Griselda Lopez with questions and comments on this.

Fermilab Student and Postdoc Association

Thomas Carroll reported. FSPA opened up discussion on the recent tax bill which will count tuition waivers as taxable income and eliminate the deduction for student loans. Ways for FSPA to collaborate with UEC and APS DPF to raise awareness about the bill in the broader user community are discussed. FSPA successfully organized an International Thanksgiving Potluck in the Users Center on Nov. 20 and a career event with Greg Davis of IDA on Oct. 16 and the annual Halloween party on Oct. 27.

Upcoming FSPA event: Career Panel on "A Discussion on The Application Process for Jobs at National Labs", December 1, 2017.

Minutes drafted and signed by Sowjanya Gollapinni.

Regular reminders:

Housing options can be found at:

<https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/service/TravelSystem/SitePages/Lodging%20Near%20Fermilab.aspx>

Frontier Pub webpage

<https://www.facebook.com/thefrontierpub/>