



## **Users Executive Committee meeting minutes for August 10, 2018**

The meeting began at 8:00 am CT. Attendees were:

**UEC:** Sowjanya Gollapinni, Leo Aliaga-Soplin, Fernanda Psihas, Gavin Davies, Jiyeon Han, Carrie McGivern, Sarah Demers (remote), Brian Nord, Frank Chlebana, and Thomas Strauss

**Directorate:** Tim Meyer

**Washington:** Ben Kallen

**FSPA:** Karl Warburton, Aleena Rafique (remote) and Midhat Farooq (remote)

**Users' Office:** Kim Pearce

**Global Services:** None

Indico Agenda Page: <https://indico.fnal.gov/event/17458/>

### **Chair's Report**

Sowjanya Gollapinni reported.

- 16 total nominations were received for the UEC 2018-20 election. Candidates are asked to submit nomination materials by August 6. Voting will be open for the period Aug. 13 to 24.
- The meeting in September will be decided once the 6 new UEC members are elected. Two weeks before the September meeting, nominations for the next UEC chair will be open and the voting will take place at the September meeting.
- After the September meeting, a two-week nomination period will be open for the four sub-committee chairs with the voting taking place at the October meeting.
- A UEC chair has been prepared and will be placed at various locations across the lab for users. Thanks to Diana for preparing the brochure and Leah for helping with the content.
- A question was raised as to what to do in the case of a tie between two candidates. One can break a tie based on various criteria: diversity considerations, balancing the experiment representation etc. A proposal will be made by the election committee to handle if such a situation occurs.

### **Web Admin Report**

Gavin Davies reported.

- Migration to the new web space (<http://uec.fnal.gov>) is now complete. Thanks to Maura Barone and Jean Reising for making this happen.
- A SharePoint document management area is created to store various documents (minutes, policy documents etc.)

- A UEC policies page is now created that lists all the policies adopted so far along with the policy adoption date. All policies are collected in a file and will be version tagged to keep track of any amendments that will be made in the future.
- An election page for the 2018-20 elections is also created and materials from nominees are being added to the page. Voting will take place through the Indico page as was done in the past few years.
- Gavin suggested a password-protected internal web space area to store internal documents, notes etc. that can help with the transition of membership each year and information is not lost in the process. Rest of the UEC agreed it is a good idea.
- A suggestion was made to save the profiles of the candidates in the current year and the past year so prospective nominees can look at them as an example. Web admin will follow up on this.

### **Report from the Directorate**

Tim Meyer reported.

- Fermilab continues to receive VIP visits which is great.
  - Dr. Chris Fall, Nominee for Director for Office of Science visited Fermilab on July 19 and toured Fermilab facilities.
  - Science attaché from Indian Embassy Dr. Sumit Goswami visited Fermilab early August and was impressed with PIP-II activities.
  - UK Deputy Ambassador Michael Tatham visited Fermilab on August 10 and discussed about US-UK collaboration on DUNE/LBNF.
- Planning meetings are being held to follow up and act on commitments/plans made by the lab for deliverables for various projects. Some of the promised deliverables were delayed due to technical issues. DOE is keeping a close watch and there is pressure from the DOE on the lab to fulfill promises. Lab is working hard to achieve the set goals.
- FY19 appropriations are drifting slowly and it may be unlikely they will be finalized before September.
- Lab received mid-year feedback from Jim Siegrist, Steve Binkley and others at DOE. DOE applauded Fermilab for circulating the new leadership changes to the lab community; recognized and appreciated that the lab now has a “Statement of Community Standards” policy; On the project side, DOE expressed concern on the status of SBN in terms of schedule and funding and asked the lab to follow up and look for ways to produce science early.
- Wilson Hall 13<sup>th</sup> floor migration will start in less than 8 weeks, but might take about six months to complete full migration; working towards a more organized and smooth transition.
- The ground floor transition (VMS moving out and Global services coming in) will take longer than expected.
- Per DOE guidelines, the lab did an accountability drill to do a head count of employees present in their work space in a 16-hour window. Not all of it went well, there were issues in the technology being used. We need a new system

that provides more flexibility in how reporting can be done e.g. text, call and email. The lab will discuss with the DOE on how often this needs to be done.

- **Q:** *For the feedback that UEC is collecting, what is a good communication model to ensure input is being considered and implemented? At what point do we come to the directorate?*

**A:** Griselda Lopez from Global Services should be the first contact point and then bring in Directorate as needed. For input/feedback that is not being implemented or delays in implementing, it would be good to meet with the groups and check it is being implemented and if there are issues, directorate will be happy to follow up.

- **Q:** *Any change or improvement in the international access to the lab?*

**A:** The progress is still slow but is happening. We are expecting to get more written guidance on the issue from the DOE.

- **Q:** *International access restrictions are in conflict with our statement of community standards policy. It is great DOE applauds our efforts on code of conduct, but hopefully they also see this conflict.*

**A:** Yeah, not sure if they see it that way. This is a phase that the country is going through.

### **Report from Washington**

Ben Kallen (Lewis-Burke Associates) reported via email.

#### FY 2019 Appropriations:

- The appropriations process has moved more quickly during this cycle than it has in recent years. Notably, the Senate has surpassed the House in terms of the number of bills passed for the first time since 1998. One of the bills passed by both chambers is the FY 2019 Energy-Water Appropriations bill, which was part of a larger “minibus” package.
- Republican congressional leaders would like to pass as many appropriations bills as possible once the House returns from August recess in order to convince voters that the Republican party can be trusted to govern effectively in advance of the mid-term elections. However, a number of factors threaten to impede quick resolution of the FY 2019 appropriations process.
  - The Supreme Court nomination is likely to occupy much of the Senate’s time in the lead up to the elections.
  - There is considerable disagreement between both parties and both chambers over top- line allocations in each appropriations bill. For example, there is a \$500 million difference between the House and Senate versions of the Energy-Water bill.
  - There is ongoing disagreement over funding mechanisms for a specific Veterans Affairs program, which could pose an obstacle to passage since the Energy-Water bill is part of the same “minibus” package as the VA

bill.

#### Other Congressional Updates:

- On July 23, the Senate passed the *Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act* (S. 2503). This is the first major piece of authorizing legislation for the Office of Science in eight years. It would formally authorize major strategic priorities and programs across all six Office of Science program offices, including experiments and priorities articulated in the P5 report. The House version of the bill (H.R. 589) was passed early last year.
- Both the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation have approved their versions of the *National Quantum Initiative Act* (H.R. 6227 and S. 3143, respectively). This bill would create a National Quantum Initiative and facilitate fundamental quantum information science research at various federal agencies.
  - While the House bill includes provisions on NSF, DOE, and NIST, the Senate version is absent on a DOE title. This is only because the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation does not have jurisdiction over DOE while the House Science Committee does.
  - The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is working on a separate DOE title which will then be combined with the larger Senate bill. Once this is done, the House and Senate versions of the *National Quantum Initiative Act* will match. While this will make the bill's ultimate enactment more likely, its passage may slip to next year since Congress will need to first resolve the FY 2019 appropriations process and address the Supreme Court nomination.

#### Agency Personnel:

- On July 24, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources unanimously approved the nomination of Chris Fall to be Director of the DOE Office of Science. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has indicated that he supports the nomination, so Dr. Fall could be in place at DOE by the end of this month.
- Dr. Fall has met with key senators in anticipation of a full vote, including Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL). We worked with her office to provide her with questions/talking points related to Fermilab and LBNF/DUNE in anticipation of her conversation with him.

#### UEC Advocacy:

- The UEC has submitted a conference letter urging appropriators to include \$1.01 billion for HEP in the final Energy-Water bill, consistent with the Senate mark.

This level of funding is necessary for accommodating planned increases for major construction projects like LBNF/DUNE while also protecting HEP Research activities.

Other Activities:

- We have drafted a letter on behalf of Members of Congress addressed to OMB that urges the Administration to strongly support HEP and LBNF/DUNE in its budget proposal for FY 2020. We are currently circulating the letter through Congress to gather signatures.

Q&A:

- **Q:** *What are the chances that the FY19 appropriations will be delayed?*  
**A:** Probably nothing will happen until early September. But, representatives really want to pass the bill to show voters that they do things on-time and that they can govern (important to demonstrate given the upcoming elections), so it is very likely they will move forward. Also, Energy and Water Appropriations bill is the least controversial so I am very hopeful that it will go through before end of September.
- **Q:** *What happens if it doesn't happen by end of September?*  
**A:** The fiscal year 2019 starts from October so if it doesn't pass by end of September, then we move to Continuing Resolution and will most probably be revisited after the election in December.
- **Q:** *Should we consider a DC trip in the Fall to push on FY19 appropriations?*  
**A:** No. I don't think it is necessary. It is not looking too bad and I am hopeful house and senate will converge on it early September.
- **Q:** *For the FY20 Advocacy, is there any preparation/support needed from the users community side?*  
**A:** At this point, no need, but I will ask Leland (who is leading the FY20 advocacy efforts), about having users community sign the letters and get back.

**Government Relations Sub-Committee**

Fernanda Psihas reported.

Planning ongoing for the upcoming year. More work is done by Justin Vasel in the background on the WHIPS database side to incorporate comments received from last trip and include other planned improvements. Concern was expressed at the timeline with regards to the new subcommittee chair election and how it might impact planning. The goal is to have the subcommittee chairs elected by the October meeting with no delay. For the next year, it was suggested that the entire nomination and election deadline be moved early so the transition happens sooner and avoid any potential impact on trip planning.

**Quality of Life (QoL) Sub-Committee**

Frank Chlebana reported.

- The Zipcar service will be terminated due to lack of usage. Bike Share program has been very popular. There is budget to purchase few more bikes.
- The subcommittee will monitor and work with the people responsible for the main areas (Food services, Facilities, Housing etc.) to ensure user feedback is being considered. In some of the areas there is concern that there is no response to the input being provided.
- A webpage will be created to post responses from the UEC to the feedback and questions being received. This mechanism also requires accountability on the UEC side which is a good way to actively address user concerns. The subcommittee will work with the web admin to launch this.
- The subcommittee is also thinking of focusing more on ways to facilitate the physics programs and related facilities/support for the users. There is discussion to rebrand QoL or start a working group within QoL for this.
- From the QoL survey conducted as part of the Users Meeting survey, major complaints were received w.r.t. rest rooms maintenance, food services, housing and dormitories. A lot of these are known issues and UEC will try to push more with relevant groups to make improvements.
- The subcommittee also plans to make an end-of-the-term report and a Fermilab article to summarize the major concerns, what has been done so far and what the next steps should be to address them.

### **Outreach & Education Sub-Committee**

Gavin Davies reported.

- Brian Nord managed the social media site for Jessica Esquivel (Fermilab postdoc) who participated in the Wakandathon event.
- Brian Nord is also assisting in training of pre-college students in science communication through his work at University of Chicago. This relates to the subcommittee's efforts in training at Fermilab.
- The subcommittee met with Andre Salles from the Communications Office and discussed on continuing science communication training. The meeting was very positive and a lot different ideas came out. The goal is to open the science communication training more generally to the lab with 4 to 5 sessions a year with about 25 attendees per session. There was also discussion on training more members to be Science communication experts so more people can give the training rather than the same two people. Offering the sessions during specific occasions such as part of collaboration meetings, Users Meeting, Lunch times will be useful.
- There was also discussion on how to train people on posters and talks. One idea is to launch a "Science Communication Club" in evenings so it is not too formal and members can practice their talk/poster at the club to get input and learn best practices.
- Sarah Demers met with Maura on the EPO volunteer database. A decision was made to go with a custom-built database at Fermilab rather than commercial

options (such as the Volgistics software used for Open House). The next step is to come up with requirements and develop a template for the database.

### **Users Meeting Sub-Committee**

Jiyeon Han reported.

- The meeting dates for Users Meeting 2019 has been decided as June 5-6, 2019. The sub-committee made an effort to avoid conflicts with other events happening around the same time. A suggestion was made to also ensure that the dates do no overlap with religious holidays.
- Users Meeting 2018 survey closed on Aug. 6. A total of 81 people filled out the survey. The survey had 15 questions on Users Meeting and 4 questions on Quality of Life (QoL). QoL survey analysis is reported under the QoL report.
- About 66% users reported they were satisfied with the Users Meeting and 93% users said they thought the length of the Users Meeting was just right. On the question of plenary vs parallel sessions, it seemed users largely liked the plenary session format more.
- As was noticed last year, the lower attendance for sessions seemed to be mainly driven by schedule conflicts, work assignments etc. and not being able to spend full two days for Users Meeting. This might be an inevitable problem given the meeting location is Fermilab.
- 75% of the users said they found the science communication session useful and would consider participating if it were offered next year. 77% of the users felt the program card was useful while some questioned if it was really eco-friendly. UEC discussed on other options here: providing the card only to people with disability and/or those who are graduating, putting minimum amount of information on the back of the badge, larger agenda posters posted all through the meeting space, and using monitors to display the agenda outside Ramsey auditorium
- On the public lecture, keynote theme, most users felt a combination of both topics like this year is good. 82% of the users thought the talks on future particle physics programs both inside and outside of Fermilab were useful.
- The food at the meeting got a rating of 3.52 to 4.02 out of 5.
- Along with the specific feedback above, a lot of comments/suggestions were received for improving Users Meeting next year.
- Attendance at the vendor exhibits was also lower and a suggestion was made to implement a raffle game for vendor exhibits. We need vendors to come back next year as they provide valuable funding for the meeting.
- FSPA member suggested implementing gender pronoun badges and possibly talking to the directorate and conference office to make it a default tradition for all meetings as a best practice.

### **FSPA Report**

Aleena Rafique reported.

- FSPA held a successful badminton tournament on July 14<sup>th</sup> followed by a barbeque. More than 20 people attended the event.
- Two events were held as part of the Career Week: An Industry Job Expo on July 17<sup>th</sup> and an Insight Data Science Workshop on July 19<sup>th</sup>. The attendance for the event is about 40 to 50 people. For the Data Science workshop, Insight representatives visited the lab and had lunch with students/postdocs along with a Q&A session.
- The Brazilian BBQ held on July 20 was very popular and received more than 100 people attendances despite heavy rain!
- FSPA mission statement has been updated on their webpage and are currently working to develop bylaws.
- The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) seminar series hosted Dr. Jesus Pando on July 23<sup>rd</sup> to talk about how to actively engage in diversity and inclusion efforts. About 70 people attended the seminar. A new EDI webpage is now available that includes all the EDI talks: <https://fspa.fnal.gov/diversity-and-inclusion>
- Karl Warburton was elected to be the continuing FSPA officer for 2018-19 year

Minutes drafted and signed by **Sowjanya Gollapinni**.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- UEC Elections have begun, deadline for voting is August 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:59 pm CDT  
The profile pages for the slate of candidates can be found here:  
<http://uec.fnal.gov/election-2018/>  
  
Please go to the following Indico page in order to cast your vote:  
<https://indico.fnal.gov/event/17921/>
- Invitation from Argonne: August 29<sup>th</sup>: Private Sector Prep

### **Regular reminders & useful links:**

- Housing options can be found at:  
<https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/service/TravelSystem/SitePages/Lodging%20Near%20Fermilab.aspx>
- Offsite housing Candlewood Hotel reservation:  
<http://www.candlewoodsuites.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=cw&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=CHIWI&rateCode=ILY71&PMID=99502056&corporateNumber=000118397>
- Frontier Pub webpage: <https://www.facebook.com/thefrontierpub/>
- Frontier Pub new menu:



[https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/organization/os/FESS/web\\_docs/Shared%20Documents/FrontierPubMenu.pdf](https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/organization/os/FESS/web_docs/Shared%20Documents/FrontierPubMenu.pdf)

- Rental car information: <https://get-connected.fnal.gov/users/services/>
- UEC user feedback form: <http://uec.fnal.gov/uec-feedback-form/>