

# Minutes of the RHIC/AGS Users' Group Executive Committee Meeting 13 December 2002

Present: J. Burwood-Hoy, J. Engelage, V. Greene, J. Hill, B. Johnson, S. Kettell, R. Seto, M. Vazquez, S. White-DePace, P. Yamin (Secretary)

Telephone: S. Pate

Guests: P. Bond, T. Kirk, D. Lowenstein, T. Ludlam

Richard Seto opened the meeting by saying that it would be devoted to the discussion of "internal" issues. He commented that Lab housing, having vastly improved in past few years, is no longer an issue.

General concern was expressed regarding the increasing delays many foreign users are experiencing in getting US visas. Tom Kirk suggested that the UEC network with user organizations from other DOE labs because they're all confronting this problem.

There was a discussion of a "malaise" experienced by many younger users. Susan White-DePace expressed the hope that the soon-to-be-opened student lounge would increase the camaraderie among students. Richard Seto said that involvement of very senior physicists with visitors to Fermilab was extremely helpful. He also said that the Lab administration had been helpful and responsive with respect to user concerns and expressed the hope that the new Director would continue the tradition.

John Hill reported on the activity of the Public Affairs Committee. He described a particularly informative discussion with Steve Pierson, Senior Policy Fellow at the APS, about the federal budget process (see attachment). Richard Seto said that the President's FY03 budget would be good for us. He emphasized that as users we can lobby for funding, but the Lab administration cannot. Tom Kirk said that the OMB makes many important decisions and suggested that it is important to keep them advised about our work. He said that he would help in every way that he can. Marcello Vazquez commented that the expanding AGS radiobiology program is funded by NASA and the NIH. John Hill said that Steve Pierson had told him that when the APS asks members to write their congressmen about budgetary issues, the response rate is about 2%.

Jack Engelage reported on the availability of video and telephone conferencing facilities at BNL. He said that ITD had been helpful and wants to be responsive to user needs, but suggested that they need input from us. Presently, there are four 12-line telephone conference bridges available and two 6-line bridges. These can be reserved on the ITD web page. Four modes of video conferencing are available: ISDN (old technology, ~\$100/hour); Access Grid (through Berkeley, state-of-the-art); desktop PC (H323 protocol, problems with BNL gateways); and VRBS (somewhat like H323). Jack will try to determine user preferences and try to set up a test for a UEC meeting.

Vicki Greene suggested that the UEC make a statement with regard to the Lab's procedures for identifying holders of guest badges at the main gate. Presently, all visitors' badges are being optically scanned, but US citizens have the option of bypassing the scanning if they request a badge with a "US" identifier. The principal purpose of the scanning is to identify guests whose visas have expired. However, as Susan White-DePace stated, the scanning can also identify users whose training has expired and collect general data on user access to the site. A vote was held to determine the level of support for these procedures. The results: support (4); neutral (2); don't support (1).

The next UEC meeting was scheduled for 10 January 2003.

Attachment: UEC Public Affairs Committee Report (J. Hill).

UEC PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

by John Hill

December 13, 2002

Discussion: Steve Pierson,  
Assoc. Prof. of Physics  
WPI  
  
Senior Science Policy Fellow  
American Physical Society  
202-662-8700

President's Budget 2004:

Due--> First Monday in February  
Last Year--> 0.4% DOE Office of Science & 3% NSF  
This Year--> ???  
Response--> ???

NSF authorization bill:

Purpose--> To authorize doubling of NSF budget in 5 years  
Status--> Sent to President on Monday  
Outcome--> Believe he will sign it  
Response--> Best not to do anything at this point

House Bill HR 5270:

Purpose--> Authorize major increase for DOE Office of Science  
Author--> Rep. Biggert from Argonne N.L.district  
Co-sponsors--> Got 97, 3 of 5 Iowans  
Status--> Died with old Congress

New Version of Old HR 5270

Author--> Biggert  
Co-Sponsors--> Need to recruit for new bill  
Suggestion--> All of us should write to our House representatives  
from our state

I will--> Compose several letters as samples and put on Public Affairs UEC committee website

DOE Office of Science budget 2004

Route--> House Budget Committee (chair Nussle-Iowa)  
Sets caps for Energy and Water committee  
  
Energy and Water committee  
Sets fraction of cap to go to DOE Office of Science

Strategy--> Target Energy and Water committee

Response--> Members UEC from each state represented on the Energy and Water committee should write their Representative asking support for Office of Science

I will--> Compose letter as model

UEC Visit--> Need UEC to visit Energy and Water committee. 15 visits by 15 different groups is counter-productive. Need to correlate visits with that of other interest groups, ex. Division of Nuclear Physics

I will--> Try to organize something

Timing--> Budget Committee decision February or early March  
Appropriations from Energy and Water committee by May or early June.

Here are the members of the House Energy and Water (E&W) subcommittee of

the Appropriations Committee. The five who cosponsored H.R. 5270 are:

Latham (R-IA) now representing Iowa State and Ames

Pastor (D-AZ)

Doolittle (R-CA)

Roybal-Allard (D-CA)

Wamp (R-TN) Oak Ridge National Lab

The others are

Rogers (R-KT)

Frelinghuysen (R-NJ) rumored to be leaving the subcommittee

Wicker (R-MS) has U of MS in district

Emerson (R-MO) has U of MO-Rolla in district

Visclosky (D-IN) good ties with Notre Dame

Edwards (D-TX) has Baylor in his district

Clyburn (D-SC)

#### SUMMARY FOR ACTION

- A. Write to representatives from our states concerning co-sponsorship of new version of HR-5270.
- B. Organize with other interested parties visit to Washington in March or April relevant to Energy and Water committee.