

**American Physical Society -- Forum on History of Physics
Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of April 16, 2018**

**Columbus Hilton, Columbus, Ohio
Hayden Room, 8:00 a.m.**

Present:

Paul Cadden-Zimansky (Vice-Chair)
Alan Chodos (Chair)
Robert Crease (Past Chair)
Greg Good (AIP Representative)
Dan Kenefick (Vice-Chair)
Joe Martin (Vice-Chair Elect)
Al Saperstein (Member-at-Large)
Aimee Slaughter (Member-at-Large)
Virginia Trimble (Councilor)
Rebecca Ullrich (Member-at-Large)

APS Editor-in-Chief Michael Thoennessen was briefly present for the discussion on journals. FHP Chair Emeritus Brian Schwartz was briefly present for the discussion on staged plays.

Call to Order: Chodos called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. and all present introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: Trimble moved and Saperstein seconded approval of the minutes of the 2017 Executive Committee meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Journals. Trimble said there was no place to publish history of physics articles in the APS family of journals, and asked Thoennessen, who was present just for this discussion, if something could be done about it. There were two paths: 1) getting more history into existing journals, and 2) creating a new home for original research. Regarding 1), Thoennessen said that RMP is pretty much the only option given how the journals are run. Regarding 2), Martin said one would have to look carefully at disciplinary scope and how to position a journal amongst others.

FHP Membership. Membership has declined for two years, and Chodos asked for ideas to boost it. He said there were two possible kinds of potential FHP members: physicists with an interest in history, and historians with an interest in physics. Martin proposed adding philosophy to FHP's portfolio. Others thought that we should proceed carefully. Crease proposed that the FHP start with sessions with "philosophy" in the title and see how they go.

Program Report. Kenefick reported on FHP sessions at the March and April 2018 meetings.

Staged Readings of Play. Schwartz reviewed this year's FHP-sponsored staged readings (*Silent Sky* and *Flight*). Schwartz is in the seventh year of his nominal four-year term of organizing these popular presentations. For the 2019 meeting he is considering a full-fledged performance of Alan Lightman's "Einstein's Dreams," and has some ideas for the other performance.

Councilor's Report. Trimble summarized some recent discussions of the APS Council. These included discussion of prizes and awards – whether there are too many or too few – the impact of open access of journals, mobility and visas, and efforts to boost the APS international membership. cole@aps.org is the recommended Council contact.

Newsletter. Crease summarized the FHP Newsletter operations; he is in his seventh year of his three-year term as Editor. He is willing to continue – as long as his attendance at sessions is reimbursed – but would like to identify a successor. Most issues comprise information on contributed sessions and the Pais Prize; he would like to see a more stable flow of contributed articles and book reviews.

Unit Convocation. Cadden-Zimansky reported on certain issues that had arisen at the Unit Convocation; more information about this meeting has already been circulated.

Nominating Committee. Chodos reviewed the work of the Nominating Committee. He will contact those who did not get elected, encourage them to run again, and see if they are interested in serving on committees.

Essay Contest. Chodos discussed the results of the history of physics essay contest. For the immediate future, we will stick with the existing text. Chodos will make sure the contest is advertised through APS, while Martin will tweet it and put it on H-Net.

Future Programs. Several ideas were discussed, including:

History of Physics in Industry

An "Author in Dialogue" session focusing on David Kaiser's *How the Hippies Saved Physics*
Secrecy in Physics

Anniversary of the Periodic Table (Ann Robinson?)

Centenary of General Relativity eclipse expeditions.

Paul Forman on Weimar culture (Cathryn Carson?)

Connections between atomic physics and astrophysics

Centenary of Rutherford artificial transmutation experiment

A session on the 120th anniversary of the founding of APS

NMR

Schwinger

Chodos concluded by itemizing action items discussed at the meeting, and who would be in charge. He thanked members of the Executive Committee for their support during the year. The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert P. Crease, standing in for Cameron Reed, Secretary-Treasurer