

**APS Forum on Physics & Society Executive Committee Meeting
At the April APS Meeting, St. Louis, MO
Monday, April 14, 2008**

Attendees: Andrew Zwicker (Chair), Don Prosnitz, Pushpa Bhat, Benn Tannenbaum, Brian Schwartz, Barbara Levi. On Phone: Bo Hammer, Ruth Howes, Lawrence Krauss (joined in late). Visit by: Judy Franz

Minutes: Pushpa

Meeting started at 10:30 AM CDT after some phone trouble

Agenda:

1. 2007 Budget Report Pushpa
2. March and April meeting sessions Report/Follow-up Andrew
3. Energy Course Report Barbara
4. Student Fellowships Bo
5. APS council meeting Bo
6. P&S Newsletter
7. Committees

1. 2007 Budget Report (Pushpa)

FPS Financial Report for CY2007			
		Sub-totals	Totals
Carry over from prior yrs.	\$16,705	\$16,705	\$16,705
Revenues		\$24,754	\$24,754
APS membership dues	\$19,732		
March meeting share	\$938		
April Meeting Share	\$852		
Investment Income	\$3,232		
Available Funds			\$41,459
Expenses			\$25,201
Student Fellowships	\$8,000	\$8,000	
mtg. fee waivers(9x\$300)	\$2,700	\$2,700	
Travel reimbursements		\$5,445	
Planning mtgs.	\$637		
Speakers/ExCom	\$4,807		
Newsletters		\$9,036	
Printing	\$2,569		
Postage	\$2,280		
Foreign Mail Service	\$3,131		
Mailing Services	\$1,056		
Telephone	\$21	\$21	

We overspent the revenues in 2007 by \$447.09, but had a comfortable carry over from prior years. We spent approximately a third of the total income each on student fellowships, meeting expenses and newsletters.

2. March and April meeting sessions:

There were two excellent sessions at the March meeting in New Orleans -- "Understanding Hurricanes and Severe Storms" and "Lessons learned from Katrina ...". Andrew had some comments and follow-up ideas gathered in a document that he distributed (attached). It was thought that FPS should write up a short report on the lessons learned and recommendations on what can be done to help in case of such disasters in the future. We discussed whether APS can play a role in helping in case of future disasters, especially smaller ones which do not get much attention. For example, in matching affected individual physicists with departments elsewhere that would act as temporary hosts. This was also discussed with Judy. She was asked if we should send the FPS recommendations to POPA. Judy said that FPS can draft recommendations and submit it to APS directly for distribution to Physics Department chairs. We should also put a copy of such a document in the Newsletter.

The April meeting sessions were going well except for the problem that 2 out of 3 speakers for the session on "Communicating Science" canceled at the last minute. The cause was not clear – whether the speakers did not get invitations from the APS on time or whether the speakers did not take their commitment seriously. Judy said that the speakers for our sessions should have been invited with sufficient advance time.

3. Energy Course report (Barbara)

A 2-day energy course was held at Berkeley during March 1-2. The course was organized by Dave Hafemeister and Barbara Levi. The course was essentially fully sold out and many more who wanted to attend could not be accommodated. Attendance was limited to 250. There was a large demand from young people – mostly graduate students and postdocs who are interested in switching to the Energy sector. The course paid for itself through registration income. The attendees were 2/3rd from the west coast and 1/3rd from elsewhere in the country (or was it half and half?). Took in \$25,620, spent \$11,575 for the organization; expect to pay \$12,500 for 200 books @ \$50 a piece (to be published by AIP). Might have some travels expenses to pay. It looks like there is a huge demand for such a course and it might be beneficial to repeat it periodically. Presentations from the course can be found at <http://rael.berkeley.edu/files/apsenergy/>.

3. Student Fellowships (Bo Hammer)

Bo reported that we had only three applicants for the FPS student fellowships and the committee awarded only one fellowship this year. There was discussion about how to improve advertising of the fellowships. Benn suggested advertising through Triple Helix, a forum of students interested in science and society issues. Pushpa suggested AAPT as the other channel.

4. APS Council meeting (Bo Hammer)

Bo gave a short report on the recent APS council meeting. APS now has 46K members. FPS has 5800 members – the largest forum and the second biggest unit in APS. He mentioned the APS initiative to double the number of bachelor's degrees in physics. He also mentioned the APS study on energy efficiency led by Burt Richter. There was a presentation by Burt at the April meeting. A report on the study is coming out soon.

5. P&S Newsletter

Al Saperstein who has been the chief editor of the newsletter for a number of years would like to step down. Jeff Marque is willing take over fully. It was felt by the committee, however, that we need to find a co-editor who can help and train to take over eventually from Jeff. It is also high-time to renew the Editorial Board. It was decided to have a conference all with Al and Jeff to discuss these issues. Pushpa will arrange one in the next month or so.

The committee also decided to honor Al Saperstein for his services in some tangible manner. The idea proposed is to present him with a framed certificate at the next April APS meeting in Denver and have him give a talk at one of the sessions. We should also put a tribute in APS News. Barbara has taken the responsibility to arrange for all this.

Another important discussion with regards to the Newsletter was about paper copies of the Newsletter. It was unanimously decided that printing and mailing of two sets of paper copies, which are costing us close to \$10K per year should be stopped. Apart from the cost, there are many good reasons in favor of this decision – (1) the newsletters can be in color instead of B&W we have now! (2) it will be fair for all authors contributing because all of them will be published electronically rather than two of them in print and two digital copies only, (3) spend some of the money saved to get better design and layout of the newsletter, (4) the money saved can also be used for some new initiatives, such as public physics & society events annually.

6. Other discussions with Judy

Judy was asked about registration fee waiver for speakers that APS gives and charges back to FPS. We wanted to know if it is necessary for invited speakers who are not physicists who come to the meeting only to the particular sessions to give talks. Judy said that in fact, all forum meetings are open to anyone in the public without registration and the speakers do not need to register as long as they do not plan to attend other sessions. So the forum should try to get special badges for the invited speakers and save the registration money!

7. New Initiatives

Public forums on Science & Society issues that Pushpa proposed last year are of interest. Since we postponed organizing such an event to mid-May of this year and the disastrous omnibus bill distracted many and we haven't been possible to pull off such an event yet. It should be pursued for this Fall or more realistically for a joint event with the AAAS physics section next February in Chicago.

We discussed starting a discussion forum either in the Newsletter or through blogs. Benn suggested getting someone like Gordon Watts (University of Washington) to start and coordinate such blogging activity.

8. Other News:

FPS had sponsored a table for "Lunch with an Expert" for grad students at the APS meeting. Pushpa substituted for Lawrence who could not be at the meeting. About 12 or more students attended the lunch. There were wonderful, lively discussions on science research, politics, scientific literacy, communicating with the public and other issues of science & society. It was a success!