

Minutes of the Ohio-Region Section of the American Physical Society (approved) Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the Ohio-Region Section of the American Physical Society met on Friday, 5 October 2012, in Conference Room H of the McGregor Conference Center at Wayne State University. In attendance were:

Laura Van Wormer, Jason Pinkney, Nicholas Pike, Tom Coffey, Cornel Rablau, Mo Ahoujja, Ken Hicks (guest), Joe Scanio (guest), Jim Sullivan (guest), Gabriela Popa, Gavin Lawes (guest), Perry Yaney

Cornel Rablau presided over the meeting, calling it to order at 10:07 am, and began with introductions.

I. Business

We begin with big thanks to Gavin Lawes for being event chair and hosting the meeting.

A. Minutes approved with minor amendments.

B. Treasurer's Report: Cornel Rablau for Roy Day

For the last meeting at The Ohio State University, all expenses were covered by registration and abstract fees and a grant through OSU. Only the honoraria for speakers came from the OSAPS budget. An issue was raised that there were some problems getting the student travel grant checks; they were going to the wrong person and took a long time. Roy was informed and facilitated the resolution. We tried to recall what had been said before: that we need to keep open the option of having students get the student travel grant checks as well as the option that departments get that check. Where does the money for the travel grants come from? From the OSAPS account. Having some departments get reimbursed doesn't work well given the red tape at some institutions. What about having a PayPal account? A recurring problem is trying to send a check to a student when we don't have their address.

If you look at abstract fees collected, and at Ohio State report, there were 55 contributed presentations but abstract fees collected were \$310, not the \$550 we would have expected. (It was not clear whether plenary speakers had to pay the fee.) The possibility was raised that they might not care whether their abstract gets published, but in fact, all abstracts are. How is that still happening? One guess was that APS keeps track of number of abstract fees paid through the registration process, and that is what they report on. This is the problem with the online registration – the abstract fee is a separate charge and it appears to be optional. There are two issues. Presumably we want a low barrier for submitting abstracts. Also it is ambiguous as to whether it should be paid. We somehow need it made clear on registration form that there is a \$10 fee if you are presenting. Cornel will follow up with Roy. Jim asked, for today and

tomorrow, if I turned in abstract but missed registration date, how do I pay the abstract fee?

Answer: When you fill out the form in person, you have to be proactive and check the box that is on the form. At Ohio State, nearly 30% registered on site, so it is potentially a large group that will have such questions. However we do it, it needs to be unambiguous!

Looking at the balance in the budget, we are still within the normal range. We discussed whether we'll continue making the seed money a loan or keep it as money to be used if needed, but returned if possible. For the past 4 or 5 meetings, the expectation was to reimburse whatever money you didn't need. However if you don't get local support, you can use the \$3000 and not reimburse. The argument was made that if we want to have many different institutions host, having an advance is necessary for many schools. It can help leverage money from the administration. Has there been advertising income in the past? Sometimes there is local sponsorship, as at Kettering University, but not a significant amount. The consensus was that the advance is very helpful; it is a safety net if the university can't provide enough support. Keep in mind that the \$3000 advance is not the only money that comes from OSAPS. The honorarium fees and student travel grants also come from us. In that context, expecting that you return as much as possible seems realistic as well.

A possible discrepancy was noted between the Treasurer's report (meeting expenses about \$4000) and local meeting report (which shows about \$2000). Did OSU refund some money? No one present was able to answer. OSU report is not complete – we need more details. We'll resume this discussion when we get to Future Meetings. It was noted that Ball State returned \$695.61 from their \$3000 advance.

At the spring APS convocation, Cornel noticed that our section has the lowest meeting registration fee of all sections that were reporting – fees for other sections were \$50-\$100. In the future, we might talk about an increase of \$10, from \$35 to \$45. It might make a difference for local organizers, bringing in a little bit more for them. Do the other sections do things we don't? Not that Cornel could tell. Jim Sullivan provided a guess at history of our lower rates: joint meetings with various AAPT sections have created a pressure to keep our fee down. Their fees are much lower. Used to be that if you registered with either group, you had access to both and AAPT registration was significantly cheaper.

The Treasurer's report was accepted.

C. Chair's report: Cornel Rablau -- will report on APS convocation later

D. Meeting reports

1. Fall 2012 Current Meeting Report: Gavin Lawes, Wayne State University

There were 65 registered in advance, with an additional 15 or 20 who have said they'll register on site. There are 67 contributed presentations, 31 posters, 36 oral presentations,

4 plenary speakers, and a planetarium show after the banquet. There will be 4 parallel sessions on Saturday. Gavin secured \$3000 from various campus offices, \$1000 each from the Department of Physics and Astronomy, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Nanoincubator Program at Wayne State University. Gavin sold the idea of donating by saying we have 20 or 25 institutions represented; this is a big deal. Gavin did not get the \$3000 advance since he didn't know about it! Expenses are about \$4500 including the banquet, so we'll have to get that difference. Gavin will speak to Roy. We didn't give honoraria to speakers because we didn't know it was available – we gave them free banquet tickets. We got local people so they didn't have to travel as far. It was pointed out that presumably there is still money coming from APS from registration and banquet fees, so the “advance” money may not be needed at all. The banquet fee is not included in the registration, it is a separate fee, usually about \$35. We had 36 confirmed, but he ordered an extra 7 meals. Instead of a banquet speaker, since didn't want to leave out those who didn't pay the extra for the meal, Gavin will lead some policy discussions. Is the banquet price for students different? Initially he reported that it was the same price, but this was corrected later. It was different, \$15 instead of \$35. Registration is free for students, but the banquet is not. Question – how do you organize abstracts? They are submitted to APS, we get a report from APS listed by poster or oral presentation. Then the local committee looks at the abstracts to split them up for the oral sessions. Posters are not such a big deal since they are all in the same place. APS sends documents for printing as pdfs. Does this building cost anything? Yes, \$800/day plus catering which is done through the building. We brought our own projectors since they charged exorbitant rates.

There will be awards for posters – we need one more volunteer to judge (Gabriela had volunteered previously but that had been missed – so all was fine). How will that work? Gavin has judging forms – the prizes are a book, a certificate and a bullet point on their resume. Gift cards presented insurmountable problems with red tape. Sometime during the nonexistent breaks, judges will look at posters. Right before 4:00, they will get together and select 6-10 to speak with during poster session, then decide and announce the winners just before banquet, about 5:45. One person commended Gavin for a good idea, hoping it might increase a student's interest and they might put a little more effort into it.

At Ohio State, Gordon had parking passes....it would have been nice but it is difficult to manage the parking system at Wayne State University. Joe commented that it will be equally difficult at the University of Cincinnati.

2. Spring 2012 Past Meeting Final Report: The Ohio State University

The basic details were gathered from a report sent in by Gordon Aubrecht: 107 registrants pre-registered plus 30 who registered onsite. There were 55 contributed presentations, 25 posters and 30 oral presentations. APS collected \$3845 (not including abstract fees) minus the \$3000 advance money. The net cost to OSAPS will be \$2000, from the speakers' honoraria plus the deficit in abstract fees. To get to this number, the OSU Physics Department contributed \$1356.77.

It was hoped that we would get a more detailed report later on. Roy and Gordon can sort out the discrepancy between the meeting expenses as reported in the Treasurer's report and the information provided by Gordon.

3. Spring 2013 Next Meeting Report: Ken Hicks, Ohio University

Ohio University is in Athens, 75 miles, SW of Columbus. A bypass should be ready by then. We have a suggestion for dates: Mar. 29-30, which are not during the March meeting. The March meeting is the week before. We have a really nice venue that we can use that's available on those dates. If we go for mid-April, that's near the end of our term and things are already booked up. We could go to May, but many schools will be out. (After the meeting, APS was contacted and approved these dates.)

We will be able to get about \$3000 from internal sources; we didn't know about possible advance money. Ken would like to get a really nice keynote speaker, so he will use the honoraria. (5 x \$400 for a total of \$2000) Ken wondered whether \$400 is the limit he can offer as an honorarium if he can get a really good speaker? The department can cover travel. Answer: \$500 is max we've ever paid. A possibility is to open the talk to other audiences who might also be interested. The tentative topic is "From Quarks to Superclusters: Physics at all Scales". Ohio University has a strong nuclear/particle group and strong astrophysics. The keynote would be the first plenary, starting about noon on Friday and going through noon on Saturday. At Miami, someone recalled, they had tours of the labs on Friday afternoon; that can be an option. It's recommended not to compete with the poster session.

4. Future Meetings: Gabriela Popa

Fall 2013 meeting: University of Cincinnati, no date set because we don't know football schedules yet. It may be that we have to do late September instead of October. We know that Sept. 21 is an away game at Miami, but they like to participate in these OSAPS meetings. We may not know until the spring. Cornel

– is there any danger of not being able to host at all? No. There was some discussion about the difficulty in getting ready for such an early meeting, and some discussion about the benefits of settling on a date early and being able to promote it.

Perry, web master and archivist, noted that there are 2 parts to OSAPS web site. Perry has access to one part where he could put a direct link to the local meeting. This suggestion was met with general approval.

Spring 2014 meeting: we have an offer to host from Youngstown State University

Fall 2014 nothing yet – Mo is working on Xavier University, in contact with Steve Herbert, chair of department at the time of his conversations, but associate Provost now. The new department chair is Marco Fatuzzo. They have a facility and are willing to host.

In 2015 should we try for something in Cleveland or Akron?

II. Standing Committee Reports

A. Membership Committee: Tom Coffey

Most things are the same, but there was a 4% drop in student members. There are 511 student members. The only growth group was the retired! Questions: How do we get more undergraduates represented? Do we have a form that we pass around at the meeting? Yes, Tom has 4 or 5 and plans to hand them out. We do an announcement, asking them to sign up. Tom would like to do it both Friday and Saturday for those. There is no list of undergraduate physics programs, is there? Through SPS – they have department chair and SPS advisor. If we could identify undergraduate program coordinator, we could work through that person. Maybe advertising the poster competition would help. What are junior members? Post-docs.

1. Student membership report: Nick Pike

There is some discrepancy between Nick and Tom's numbers – it is not clear when numbers are from; there are some of the same numbers but different dates. Tom and Nick will confer and submit corrected reports, if needed.

Cornel: one thing we all can do is to encourage undergraduates at our own institutions to become members and give posters at these meetings. You can be a speaker at an SPS meeting, for example. Do undergraduates get a break on dues for APS? Yes. Is it still that you have to declare Ohio-Region Section – yes, it is just a check box, no extra money. We should encourage our faculty colleagues as well. If students sign up on this

paper, that list then needs to go to APS. We think that APS needs to follow through with signing up. Tom will check on that. Does APS have a standard email they send to students encouraging them to sign up?

B. Honors and Awards: Bob Hengehold was not present. Cornel reported that no award was planned for this meeting, and they are still working to identify potential nominees.

C. Nomination Committee – Jason Pinckney

Positions that need to be filled: Vice Chair, Secretary, Student member at large, Member at large

One of the ideas of the member at large is that they might move to one of the regular Executive Committee positions. People should contact Jason with names of possible nominees. Making an announcement at the meeting would be helpful. The Chair needs to appoint someone else to be on nominating committee. We need to have units@aps.org send out email asking for nominations of self-nominations to run for election. Can the email also be sent to APS members who are in this geographical region? It would be useful to have emails of department chairs and program leaders. Wolfgang Bauer ran Midwest Department Heads (physics).

D. APS Convocation Report: Cornel

Cornel and Roy attended the APS convocation on April 19 and 20. April 19 was a Congressional visit day. Cornel reports that it was a very interesting experience, lobbying for “robust budgets” for science and physics. There is a strategic plan that was adopted by APS; they’ve been working on it since 2010. It’s on the APS web site. Cornel encourages us to look at it, in preparation for a discussion at the next meeting. One specific effort is to be more inclusive and try to increase diversity. Several task forces were commissioned such as on education in physics. Please take a look. If we could parallel at a regional level the strategic plan, that is something we could discuss. Should we have a strategic plan? Perry: I would think national APS would take leadership on that. If they don’t they are missing an opportunity. They are trying to keep a stronger connection with national, perhaps a summary letter letting them know what happened.

E. APS Councilor’s Report: Paul Wolf, not present, but report should be similar to what Cornel has reported.

F. Archivist and Webmaster's report: Perry Yaney

Perry has been collecting every report from all meetings. Archive is not online but he has it on disk. Some years are large because of photos, and he's trying to include more. Bob Hengehold is trying to get someone to organize all the old papers, scan and get into electronic format. Request from Perry for all of us: if your address or anything is incorrect, it is because APS has the wrong information. You have to go to APS to correct it.

III. Old Business

Perry passes on Gordon's appreciation for our support for the State Science Day.

IV. New Business

V. Future Business

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 pm.