

**US Burning Plasma Organization
Meeting of the Council
March 5, 2008 (1:00-3:00 p.m. EST)
Videoconference Minutes**

Council Members in attendance:

Steve Allen
Rich Hawryluk
Amanda Hubbard – *Chair*
Earl Marmar
Stan Milora – *US ITER Chief Technologist*
Martin Peng
Craig Petty
John Sarff
George Tynan

Ex-officio participants in attendance:

Erol Oktay – *USDOE*
Jim Van Dam – *USBPO Director and US ITER Chief Scientist*

Others in attendance:

Chuck Greenfield — *USBPO Deputy Director*
Nermin Uckan — *USBPO Asst. Director for ITER Liaison*

Unable to attend:

Bill Nevins
Gerald Navratil
Gene Nardella
Dave Petti

On Leave:

Tony Taylor
Mike Zarnstorff

NOTES

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 EST. Attendance was as noted above, with 9 of the current 14 voting members present for a quorum.

It was noted that Council Vice Chair Mike Zarnstorff and Member Tony Taylor are, as discussed at the last meeting, taking a temporary leave from Council activities so as to avoid any potential for conflict with their current service on the NRC CRISPP panel.

2. Review of minutes from November 13, 2007

Draft minutes from the last meeting, which were distributed to Council members in January, were approved. It was noted that minutes from other 2007 meetings are now posted online in the Council section of the USBPO website.

3. Changes on Council, Research Committee

Director Jim Van Dam updated and consulted the Council on changes in Council and Research Committee membership. Council member Steve Cowley has resigned due to an upcoming new position as Director of the Culham Fusion Science Center in the UK.

Since his term was to expire in 2008, and the current Council has more members than specified in the Charter, it was decided not to replace him at this time. Council thanks Steve for his service and wishes him well in his important new role.

Two current members of the Research Committee, Rejean Boivin (Diagnostics Topical Group Leader) and Bill Heidbrink (Energetic Particles Deputy Leader), have expressed a desire to step down soon due to other commitments. The Diagnostics Topical Group currently has two Deputy Leaders, Steve Allen (LLNL) and Jim Terry (MIT). It was proposed, and agreed by Council, that either of these two would be an excellent candidate to replace Boivin. The choice was left to Van Dam and Chuck Greenfield.

For Energetic Particles, Joe Snipes (MIT) was suggested as a replacement Deputy Leader. Council members approved of this selection.

It was noted that a regular rotation of about half of the Topical Group leadership was expected in mid-2008.

Note: Soon after the meeting, it was learned that Snipes had accepted a new position at ITER, effective July 7, 2008. In view of the short length of time he would be available, an alternate Deputy, Donald Spong (ORNL) was selected; Council was consulted by e-mail and gave approval. Also, Steve Allen was appointed Topical Leader for Diagnostics, with Jim Terry remaining as Deputy.

4. Process for election of new Council members

At the November 2007 Council meeting, it was agreed that Council members should start a regular rotation in Spring 2008, and a division of terms for each of the current members was approved. According to the USBPO Bylaws, two of the new members should be elected by the Membership. Since this will be the first such election, procedures need to be established.

Amanda Hubbard started the discussion with a strawman proposal procedure, which was circulated before the Council meeting. In brief, a nominating committee would be set up and would solicit nominations from the USBPO community. The committee would then select a 'slate' of approximately 5-7 names from the nominations, to be approved by the full Council and OFES before the election. At this point nominees would be contacted to ensure they were willing to serve, and an election would be held.

Most were in agreement with this general procedure. It was suggested that the text be amended to clarify that each member may cast up to two votes, and that the two candidates with the most votes would be elected. There was discussion about the need to downselect from community nominations. While some were uncomfortable with this, it was pointed out that other organizations, such as APS, follow a similar procedure and that the slate might otherwise become too large. An electronic voting process was preferred over paper ballots if possible. Hubbard agreed to work on the logistics with USBPO Communications Coordinator Jim DeKock following the meeting.

Prior to the meeting, Hubbard had asked those Council members whose terms are expiring in 2008 to form the nominating committee. Craig Petty, Earl Marmar, Steve Allen and Gerry Navratil have agreed to serve, and Petty will be the Chair. She asked for further interested volunteers during the meeting, and Martin Peng agreed to also participate.

Note: The election procedure, revised according to Council feedback, is attached to the minutes for future reference. Following the meeting, it was realized that the Bylaws specify Research Committee members as part of the nominating committee, and Tom Rognlien was therefore asked to join the committee. The proposed process was approximately followed, though it was found that more time was needed.

5. Strategic Planning: Status report from Subcommittee on US-ITER Participation

Earl Marmar reported briefly on the progress of this Council subcommittee, which he is chairing. The committee now has drafts of most sections of the report on US participation in ITER, with gaps in a few topics. He expected that this would take about a month's work to complete but noted other activities which are keeping committee members busy.

Both Council members and OFES representatives expressed interest in seeing the draft report before it is finalized. It was agreed that the draft report, when ready, would be circulated and discussed at a future Council meeting.

6. Update on USBPO activities and plans for 2008

USBPO Director Jim Van Dam and Deputy Director Chuck Greenfield gave a report on USBPO and related activities since the last Council meeting, with input from ITER Design Review WG member Rich Hawryluk, and USBPO ITER Liaison Nermin Uckan where appropriate. Van Dam started by noting that many details of recent activities were contained in the USBPO Annual Report, a draft of which was distributed before the meeting (and is available online).

Topics covered by Van Dam included:

- *ITER Design Review:* There has been good progress on the ITER Design Review follow-up work, and this phase is nearing completion, with recommendations to be made to STAC at a special meeting in April. US participation has been excellent, with involvement in almost all working groups, and a total of 22.5% of the effort. There was discussion of whether and how this effort will continue after the upcoming STAC and Council meetings; several Council members felt this was important, and ITPA and USBPO were suggested as part of the solution.
- *NRC CRISPP report:* This is nearing completion. The NRC panel requested a number of "metrics" on US participation in ITER to date, and appeared pleased with responses, in particular the US contributions to the design review noted above.

- *Winter School:* As a response to suggestions by Council and others to hold a USBPO “summer school” for students and others interested in burning plasmas, a day devoted to burning plasmas, with three talks by Van Dam and others, was added to the existing UCLA Winter School. Response was good, and attendance was highest on that day. Based on this encouraging step, Council members suggested holding a separate BP school in future years, perhaps with scope broadened to include technology and engineering areas.
- *Communication and Outreach:* Ongoing outreach efforts include contributions to an ITER booth at the recent AAAS meeting in Boston, a talk by Nermin Uckan at the recent Fusion Power Associates meeting, and plans for an evening session at the March TTF meeting. The USBPO web site has recently added a file share feature for exchanging large documents, and Emily Hooks is working with a designer on a new logo.

Chuck Greenfield discussed developments on the Research Committee (RC). The RC is currently reassessing its activities as the ITER Design Review begins to wind down, including broader and longer term tasks which were suggested by community members earlier in the design review process. Methods of clearer and more regular communication between USBPO and ITPA and to VLT are being discussed and set up, such as reports to USBPO after key ITPA meetings.

Suggestions by Council participants included holding “video seminars” on targeted topics, and forwarding ITPA reports, for the wider USBPO community. The possibility was raised of another USBPO workshop, perhaps after the ITER design is rebaselined. Jim and Chuck encouraged other ideas on communications and on the broader USBPO mission.

7. Update re ITPA and ITER

Erol Oktay (OFES), gave an update and led a discussion of developments regarding ITPA and ITER. ITER leadership had requested changes to the ITER charter, which have recently been approved, bringing ITPA under ITER auspices. Topical groups have been slightly modified. The new charter outlines procedures for selection and rotation of topical group leadership; nominations will soon be solicited from parties for leadership positions, and later for up to 7 members for each Topical Group. The process for these nominations is still being defined, but it is expected there will be USBPO as well as ITPA input. In discussion, it was felt that while it is important to have representation on ITPA from major facilities, since inter-machine experiments are a key activity, ITPA membership and leadership should not be restricted to people from these facilities but should span the whole fusion community.

Finally, there was discussion of the effect on ITER, and on international perception of US participation, of the recent US budget cuts. Little information on funding prospects was available.

8. Any other business

The meeting was opened to any other business; none was raised. It was noted that this might be the last official Council meeting of those members whose terms are ending in 2008. Steve Allen, Craig Petti, Dave Petti, Earl Marmar and Jerry Navratil were thanked by the Chair for their two years of service on this initial BPO Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. EST.

Nomination/election process for new Council members

Amanda Hubbard

As discussed and amended at Council meeting March 5, 2008

Background: As decided at the last Council meeting 11/13/2007, six Council members have terms ending Spring 2008, and four will be replaced. According to our Charter and Bylaws, two of them should be elected from the USBPO regular membership. Since this is the first such election, we need to establish a process for doing this. (Dates are estimates only)

Proposed process and approximate timeline:

1. Set up a small 'nominating committee' of Council and Research Committee Members. (3/5/08)
2. Send message to USBPO membership (~3/10-14), letting them know about the openings for Council and requesting nominations for the two elected slots. Remind about eligibility rules (must be USBPO regular member, no more than two Council members per institution, Research Committee members ineligible). Allow ~ 2 weeks for responses. (by ~ 3/28/08)
3. Nominating committee will consider nominations from the community, including Council and generate its own suggestions. If, as is likely, there are too many names suggested, cut down to a smaller 'slate' for the election (approx 5-7 names). The prime consideration is that all on the slate would be good additions to the Council, are interested in USBPO and are likely to contribute actively. Other considerations are breadth of institutions represented, and areas of expertise. There should probably not normally be more than one from an institution on the slate. Send proposed slate to the whole Council, the Director, and the OFES ITER Science and Technology managers, for comment (by ~ 4/4/08).
4. Contact all proposed nominees to ensure they are willing to serve. If not, make some substitutions.
5. Hold the election, with each USBPO regular member getting the opportunity to vote for up to two candidates, and allowing about two weeks for votes. Nominating committee Chair and Council Chair will work with Jim DeKock and Emily Hooks in March to set up a mechanism for doing this (preferably by website or email). (voting period ~ 4/8-18/21).
6. Tabulate votes and announce the names of the two candidates receiving the most votes, who will become the new Council members (~ 4/25). Decide on a date for changeover of terms.