

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the APS Forum on the History of Physics, Sunday, April 23, 2006, in the Macmillan Room of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dallas, Texas.

Present: Robert H. Romer (Chair), Virginia Trimble (Chair-Elect), William E. Evenson (Vice-Chair), Thomas M. Miller (Secretary-Treasurer), Roger H. Stuewer (APS Councillor), Benjamin Bederson (Newsletter Editor), Catherine Westfall, Noemie B. Koller, John S. Rigden, Michael Nauenberg, J. David Jackson (Executive Committee members-at-large), Paul Halpern (Executive Committee member-elect).

Bob Romer opened the meeting with introductions and a report on FHP activities, most of which are enlarged upon, below. He handed out framed certificates of appreciation to outgoing Executive Committee members Noemie Koller, and Michael Nauenberg, and mailed one to Nina Byers, and to the outgoing Newsletter Editor, Ben Bederson. Ben Bederson noted that Bob Romer also deserved thanks as FHP chair, a sentiment applauded by all.

The APS Treasurer, Thomas McIlrath, was present at the beginning of the Executive Committee meeting and gave an overview of APS finances and publications. The issues he mentioned were APS ones, and did not relate to the FHP specifically. He said that the new APS Treasurer will be Joe Serene.

Tom Miller gave a report on FHP finances. The FHP (and APS) fiscal year is the calendar year. The FHP has a carryover from previous years of about \$21,000. The FHP receives about \$17,500 from the APS annually, partly from annual dues allocation, partly from sharing of March and April meetings fees, and interest income. The FHP spends roughly \$11,000 annually on the FHP Newsletter, \$11,000 annually on travel expenses, and about \$2,000 on miscellaneous expenses (elections, various APS services). The FHP has been kept afloat in recent times with donations from Virginia Trimble, who has also been very effective in soliciting other donations, especially for sponsored speakers. The FHP had 3,725 members at the beginning of 2006.

John Rigden handed out a written report (attached) on activities of the Historic Sites Committee (HSC) of the APS, and discussed each item. He showed a classy handwritten ledger on celebrations at places where plaques have been placed thus far, with a few pages (and photographs) on each. He noted that the APS pays about \$500 per plaque. Some are smaller plaques placed near larger, existing plaques. The smaller plaques mark the site as an APS Historic Site. Rigden discussed public relations moves such as inviting National Public Radio, other media, and teachers to the celebrations, and possibly giving a small APS trinket as souvenirs. Roger Stuewer made a motion to ask the APS to allow the FHP to administer the HSC for the APS, after Rigden proposes (and Virginia Trimble reviews) rules and policies for the HSC. Funding for the HSC would continue to come directly from the APS. The motion was seconded by Bill Evenson and passed unanimously. Rigden asked that the FHP Newsletter solicit nominations for Historic Sites.

Bill Evenson reported on program plans for 2007. The FHP has been allotted two 5-speaker sessions at the March 2007 meeting and three 3-speaker sessions at the April 2007 meeting, including the Pais Prize talk, and there will be one additional evening session for a celebration of the 50th anniversary of BCS theory at the March meeting. FPS has already agreed to share their award session with us again for the Pais Prize lecture. Other session sharing could expand our program possibilities. Evenson mentioned a number of anniversaries coming up in 2007 that could be used as starting points in organizing FHP sessions: the 350th anniversary of Fermat's principle of least action (April meeting); the 250th anniversary of latent heat and the differentiation of the concepts of heat and temperature; the 150th anniversary of Clausius's work in thermodynamics and kinetic theory (March meeting); the 200th anniversary of Thomas Young's introduction of the term "energy" into physics; the 200th birthday of Avogadro's number; the 50th anniversary of Sputnik. Bederson noted that a session on the Manhattan Project had not been held in many years.

Virginia Trimble noted that there were two sponsored lectureships in 2005 (in honor of G. S. Goldhaber and R. H. Dicke), and three in 2006 (in honor of R. T. Cox, J. R. Oppenheimer, and D. Hoffleit). Trimble expects sponsored talks in 2007 (honoring S. K. Allison and F. Rasetti) and probably two student lectures honoring J. Bardeen. Trimble will appoint a subcommittee to look into getting two students to come to the March and two to the April meeting with a \$500 stipend each (and either the students or their advisors must be APS members). This would have to be done by Fall 2006, in plenty of time to make the abstract deadlines for the March and April meetings.

The APS Executive Officer, Judy R. Franz, paid a visit to the Executive Committee. She said that there was a Task Force examining all aspects of the April meeting. If it should continue, it would likely not be in April, in order to move it further from the March meeting. Anyone with suggestions can contact Chris Quigg or Ken Cole. One problem is finding facilities large enough to house the meeting without being overly expensive. Because of existing contractual obligations, the meeting would not move until 2010 at the earliest, but some changes could take place as early as 2008.

Franz was asked about making the HSC a (permanent) standing committee of the APS. She replied that everybody is happy with the HSC, so it will continue without making it a standing committee, and there's a feeling that there may already be too many standing committees.

Franz was asked if it would be possible to increase the funding to fora. She noted that at least one forum has a surplus of donated funding—the FIP—and she noted that most people don't pay dues for fora, so that the APS contribution is not simply passing on dues money to fora. Following Franz's visit, there was a general feeling of the Executive Committee that the Chair should write Franz a letter asking that the APS consider increasing the dues allocation to fora, and even consider treating individual fora differently. (Note: the APS presently allocates \$1000 from dues and adds \$4.50 for the first 1366 FHP members and \$3.00 for each thereafter, for each forum.)

Ben Bederson reported that he has enjoyed being Editor of the FHP Newsletter for the past 3 years. There was discussion of increasing the number of newsletters from 2 to 4 per year, with 2 being devoted mostly to FHP business such as elections, and timed accordingly (as with the present 2). Paper copies of additional newsletters would further strain the FHP budget, however. Members will be encouraged to notify the Editor if they are happy to view newsletters online, thus avoiding printing, handling, and mailing costs. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to appoint Michael Riordan as the new Editor. Bob Romer will serve as Associate Editor. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to thank Bederson for his outstanding service as Editor.

Virginia Trimble reported on the World Year of Physics (WYP) Speakers Bureau, operated out of the University of Texas, Brownsville. Talks arranged to date number 160. The APS provided \$2000 in 2005, and there was a \$1000 donation from Walter Smith of Corning Community College. Another large donation (through the University of Texas-Brownsville) will support operations through 2006. The Speakers Bureau website is <http://www.phys.utb/WYPspeakers/REQUESTS/howto.html>. Trimble said that we need to think of new and exciting things to do.

Virginia Trimble passed out a list of members of various FHP committees for the coming year. The committee makeups will be posted on the FHP website once finalized.

Roger Stuewer reported on items from APS Council deliberations that relate to the FHP. (1) The APS wants more Fellowship nominations; (2) the FHP gets 12 slots and rarely uses them; (3) he read a statement passed, on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; (4) an APS webpage on ethics will appear, that includes case histories; (5) Mike Lubell reported to the Council on how the Competitiveness Initiative is expected to help science funding.

Dave Jackson reported on getting physics departments to collect departmental histories, and making sure that the AIP Niels Bohr Library receives copies. Jackson handed out a sample (for UC Berkeley) entry for a proposed catalog of an archive of institutional histories. Jackson also handed out a list of institutional histories that the NBL presently has. This list may be accessed online by going to the NBL book catalog at <http://www.aip.org/history/nblbro.htm>. Scroll down and click on "Niels Bohr Library Book Catalog," then type an asterisk in the "General" box and choose "Limit = Institutional Histories held at AIP". [Later note: the Secretary-Treasurer didn't see on the list a fine book by M. E. Rudd on the department at the University of Nebraska and inquired about it. He was told by the NBL that it's in the "Book" collection instead of the "Institutional Histories" collection. So the latter doesn't contain all institutional histories that are in fact available at the NBL.] By unanimous consent, Jackson was delegated to pursue this project.

Virginia Trimble expressed the opinion that more needs to be done on archiving obituaries for APS members since Physics Today is cutting back. It was suggested that department chairs should be contacted both about the departmental history matter (item

above) and to request that they provide obituaries when a death occurs. Bill Evenson said that he will look into the obituary issue.

Roger Stuewer reported that the FHP Fellowship committee rarely receives spontaneous nominations for the slots allotted to FHP, so they are going to examine a list of FHP members to look for deserving people who have not been nominated by their colleagues. The deadline for fellowship nominations to be considered by the FHP is May 12, this year.

There was discussion about how useful the old printed APS directory was, since it had lists by units and officers. Bill Evenson made a motion, seconded by Roger Stuewer, to ask Virginia Trimble to write a letter to Leo Kadanoff on behalf of the FHP, asking that the APS consider printing a more recent version of the directory. The motion passed.

Bob Romer passed out a statement on conflict of interest (attached) relevant for FHP committees. Romer also compiled a list of FHP committees, taking effect at the close of the April 2006 meeting, for the FHP website. It has been updated by Virginia Trimble and will be placed on the FHP website once the committee membership lists are completed (see attached).

The meeting was adjourned.

Attachment 1:

To: Members, Executive Committee, APS FHP

From: John S. Rigden, Chair Historic Sites Committee (HSC), on behalf of members Gordon Baym, Sid Drell, Millie Dresselhaus, and Gerald Holton

RE: Update and Report of the Historic Sites Committee

Date: April 17, 2006

1. The first five sites selected by the HSC were Ben Franklin (Franklin Institute), Arthur H. Compton (Washington University in St. Louis), Michelson-Morley (Case Western Reserve), Henry Rowland (Johns Hopkins), and J. Willard Gibbs (Yale University). In three cases, the plaques were presented in a ceremony by an individual in the APS presidential line and the plaque was received by a notable official from the honored site.

Four ceremonies have been held at which the plaques have been presented and the Ledger of the APS Register of Historic Sites was signed. The first ceremony (Philadelphia) was small scale and not satisfactory to me. The others were much better. The ceremonies in Cleveland, for example, occurred before around 1,500 people, St. Louis around 100 people, and the one in Baltimore about 150-200 people. The latter ceremony occurred at an APS meeting which, in part, defeats the purpose of the HS initiative which is to bring physics to the general public. During this coming year, I shall make a determined effort to make the plaque-presentation

ceremonies a public event at which the top individual at the site attends and receives the plaque.

2. I have created a ledger which, I believe, will provide a worthy record of the APS historic sites initiative. I shall have the ledger at our meeting for your examination.
3. Six more sites have been selected and each has been notified. These sites are:
 - Robert Millikan (Chicago)
 - Joseph Henry (Smithsonian)
 - Transistor – Bardeen, Shockley, and Brattain (Lucent/Bell Labs)
 - Jefferson Labs – as first physics building built specifically for research (Harvard)
 - Rabi and Magnetic Resonance Method (Columbia)
 - Radiation Laboratory (MIT)
4. Two members, Sid Drell and Millie Dresselhaus, will rotate off the committee as soon as their replacements are named. At the meeting on April 23, I shall suggest individuals to fill the positions of Drell and Dresselhaus. I shall also suggest for consideration that new members of the committee be drawn from sites that have already been recognized by the APS HSC. This suggestion is intended to minimize any thought that members of the committee are selecting their own institutions for recognition.
5. At the meeting on April 23, I shall make a motion that the Executive Committee of the FHP recommend that the HSC be made a permanent committee of APS.
6. I shall write to Sid and Millie and thank them for their work. I want to do this on behalf of both me personally and the Executive Committee.

Attachment 2:

Guidelines on Conflict of Interest

These were sent to me by Alan Chodos. With the exception of one or two unimportant words, the same guidelines appear on FHP's website, in the Pais section. According to Judy Franz and Alan Chodos, these are the only written conflict of interest guidelines that APS has. The words refer only to "prizes and awards", but the general ideas (watch out for "special relationships", etc.) and what to do if a problematic situation arises seem to me to be applicable to most possible conflict of interest situations. I think all members of the FHP Exec. Comm. should keep these potential problems in mind, problems which generally seem "obvious"—except when they involve one's self! -RHR April, 2006

The process whereby recipients of APS prizes and awards are selected must both be fair, and also manifestly appear to be fair. Otherwise the value of the prize or award is diminished. It is unacceptable to present a recipient with a prize or award that has been tarnished by questionable selection procedures.

Selection committees must therefore be aware of, and respond to, issues of potential conflicts of interest. These may occur whenever there is a special relationship between a member of the committee and one of those under serious consideration for the prize or award. Such special relationships might include, among others, being at the same institution, being part of the same research group, being in a student-advisor relationship, having collaborated in the recent past on a research project, etc.

If a member of the committee has such a conflict, he or she must reveal it to the other members, and the committee as a whole must discuss the best way to deal with it. Depending on the situation, actions to be taken might include resignation of one or more members of the committee, withdrawal of a member from parts of the committee's deliberations and voting, deferral of a particular nomination to the next cycle, or simply complete disclosure of the nature of the conflict, so that other members can take it into account. Each committee is urged to schedule its initial meeting as early as practicable, to allow for the possibility that a serious conflict of interest might call for a change in the committee's composition.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A potential conflict of interest involving the Chair of the selection committee is *ipso facto* a serious matter, and at the least another committee member should take over as Chair. Depending on the circumstances, further action may be required as well.

When the conflict of interest involves someone who is recommended by that committee for an APS Prize or Award, the committee must include in its report not only the name and citation of the proposed recipient(s), and any other routine matters for the Executive Board to consider, but also a detailed account of the nature of the conflict and how the committee chose to deal with it. In particular, the committee must show that the conflict influenced neither the vote of the committee nor the deliberations leading up to the vote. In deciding whether to approve the recommendation, the Executive Board will consider whether the committee demonstrated sufficient awareness of the conflict, and acted in a manner to ensure not only that the selection process was fair but that it would be perceived as fair by reasonable members of the physics community. If the Board is not satisfied, it can ask the committee for clarification, or it can reject the recommendation and send the matter back to the committee for further action.

Attachment 3:

FHP Officers and Committees 2006-2007

Executive Committee

OFFICERS

Chair (to become Past Chair following the April 2007 meeting)

Virginia Trimble, Physics Department, University of California, Irvine, CA 92697; phone 949-824-6948; fax 949-824-2164; email vtrimble@astro.umd.edu

Chair-Elect (to become Chair following the April 2007 meeting)

William Evenson, 711 E 3100 N, Provo, UT 84604-4277; phone: 801- 863-6440; email bill.evenson@uvsc.edu

Vice Chair (to become Chair-Elect following the April 2007 meeting)

David Cassidy, Hofstra University, New Science Bldg 106, Hempstead, NY 11549,
phone: 516-463-5537; email: chmdcc@optonline.net

Secretary-Treasurer (term expires April 2007)

Thomas Miller, Boston College, Air Force Research Lab, Space Vehicles
Directorate/VSBXT, Hanscom AFB, MA 01731-3010; phone: 781-377-5031; email
thomas.miller@hanscom.af.mil

Members at Large

(terms expiring after the April 2007 meeting):

John Rigden, 822 Havenwood Ct., St. Louis, MO 63122; phone 314-965-5512; email
jrlgden@aip.org

Priscilla McMillan, 12 Hilliard St., Cambridge, MA 02138; phone: 617-547-6260; email:
priscillamcmillan@verizon.net

(terms expiring following the April 2008 meeting):

J. David Jackson, Theoretical Physics 50A-5104, LBNL, Berkeley, CA 94720-8162;
phone: 510-486-4490; email: jdjackson@lbl.gov

Catherine Westfall, 3945 Breckinridge Dr., Okemos, MI 48864; phone: 517-347-1878;
email: cwestfall@nscl.msu.edu

(terms expiring following the April 2009 meeting):

Paul Halpern, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, Department of Mathematics and
Physics, Philadelphia, PA; email: p.halper@usip.edu

Peter Pesic, St. John's College, 1160 Camino de la Cruz Blanca, Santa Fe, NM 87505;
phone 505-984-6467; email: ppesic@mail.sjcsf.edu

Ex Officio Members

(VOTING)

Past Chair (term expires at end of the April 2007 meeting)

Robert H. Romer, Department of Physics, Amherst College, Amherst MA 01002; phone
413-542-2258; email rhromer@amherst.edu

Forum Councilor (term begins 1 January 2006, term expires 31 December 2009)

Roger H. Stuewer, Tate Laboratory of Physics, University of Minnesota, 116 Church
Street, Minneapolis, MN 55455; phone 612-624-8073; fax 612-624-4578; email
rstuewer@physics.umn.edu

(NON VOTING)

Director, Center for History of Physics (indefinite term)

Spencer R. Weart, American Institute of Physics, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740; phone: 301-209-3174; email: sweart@aip.org

Editor, FHP Newsletter (term expires at end of April 2009 meeting)

Michael Riordan, Institute of Particle Physics, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064; phone: (831) 459-5687; email: michael@slac.stanford.edu

Other Statutory Committees

Nominating Committee

Robert Romer, Chair

(rhromer@amherst.edu)

Alana Connors (appointed by APS)

Guy Emery

David Jackson

Harry Lustig

Elizabeth Paris

Catherine Westfall

Fellowship Committee

David Cassidy, Chair

(chmdcc@optonline.net)

Bill Evenson

Noemie Koller

Editorial Board and Publications Committee

Michael Riordan, Newsletter Editor, Chair

(mriordan@ucsc.edu)

Ben Bederson

Bill Evenson

John Rigden

Bob Romer, Associate Editor

Spencer Weart

Program Committee

Bill Evenson, Chair

(bill.evenson@uvsc.edu)

David Cassidy (*ex-officio*)

Thomas Miller (*ex-officio*)

Virginia Trimble (*ex-officio*)

Kameshwar Wali

Catherine Westfall

others as needed

Award Committee

vacant

Ad-Hoc Committees

Pais Prize Selection Committee

Michael Nauenberg, Chair

(michael@mike.ucsc.edu)

John Heilbron (past prize winner)

Daniel M. Siegel, Vice Chair

Roger Stuewer

Spencer Weart (appointed by APS)

Membership Committee

Thomas Miller, Chair

(thomas.miller@hanscom.af.mil)

Ron Mickens

Ian Durham

Paul Halpern

Historic Sites Committee

John Rigden, Chair

(jrigden@aip.org)

Gordon Baym

Sidney Drell

Mildred Dresselhaus

Gerald Holton