

**APS Forum on Physics & Society Executive Committee Meeting
April 15, 2007**

Attendees: George Lewis, Lawrence Krauss, Pushpa Bhat, Don Prosnitz, Peter Zimmermann, Barbara Levi (on phone), Dave Hafemeister (on phone), Jennifer Wiseman, Judy Franz (APS), Mike Lubell (APS),

The meeting was called to order around 3:40 pm. George Lewis and Lawrence Krauss, the outgoing and incoming chairs, respectively, presided over the meeting.

1. Energy Study and an FPS sponsored short course

There was a discussion on the proposed short course on Energy to be held at LBL in the spring of 2008. It will be a 2-day course for about 100 people. The event is expected to pay for itself. The course material will be turned into an AIP book – estimate \$35/copy and about 150 copies to be bought. (A book on “Energy Sources” was published in 1985. A lot has changed since then.) A first draft of the agenda will be worked out in June. The working title for the course is “Physics of Sustainable Energy.” The event was approved by six votes. Pushpa mentioned that a working group at Fermilab is looking into the feasibility of accelerator-driven system for nuclear energy using Th232 as fuel and if the findings are positive to propose an R&D program then she will provide the information to the Energy study/course sponsors to possibly include as one of the topics.

2. Discussion on APS/POPA study on energy efficiency

Pete mentioned that the APS council has blessed a high level APS/POPA study on energy efficiency. It would deal with a broad spectrum of issues – alternate fuels, reduction of carbon emissions, nuclear energy, security, climate etc. The project is supposed to cost \$700K (??) and it is believed to be sufficiently worthwhile that APS has decided to underwrite it.

3. Pushpa suggested that FPS should attempt to hold public events, one per year, with a relevant theme. For this year, the issues might be the ones addressed in the “Rising above the Gathering Storm” document. – American competitiveness, Leadership in science, etc. There were positive responses from Judy, Mike and others.

4. Judy Franz and Mike Lubell were asked for suggestions on topics/issues that are of current interest to APS and the ones FPS should be considering. The following were mentioned/discussed.

- Energy
- RRW issues
- Nuclear Forensics; Michael May is to chair the task force.
- Nuclear Energy task force. Need to find a chair. Suggestions solicited.
- Electricity storage
- Nuclear waste storage

- Research Budget and Science Education
- Ethics case studies
- H1B visas
- Space weapons; space debris

5. Discussion of topics for 2008 Annual APS meetings

March Meeting will be in New Orleans, LA and the April Meeting in St Louis, MO. For the March meeting in New Orleans, it was suggested that sessions on Hurricanes should be included – predictability, flow-patterns, mitigation and prospects for prevention. Peter Zimmermann (I believe) suggested a broad title, “Physics of the Lower Mississippi”. Energy is one of the core issues for FPS and will continue to be on the agenda for the next year. George suggested that space-related issues be included.

6. Physicists influencing policies

Lawrence asked Mike Lubell how effective APS/POPA focus studies have been. The answer was that they have been useful and have had positive effects. Latest studies have included topics of space security, space weapons, space debris, etc. There is a \$10b /year (?) approved government funding for work on missile defense.

7. Student Issues:

Student fellowships for summer study by graduate or undergraduate students on topics relevant to FPS have been instituted and two are awarded by FPS each year. The coordinators of the program have been pretty happy with the proposals this year.

There was an issue raised on how to encourage and provide opportunities to students who are interested in policy issues. Graduate students have organized sessions on how students can get involved in science policy. It was suggested that FPS could consider a joint session with them.

Careers in “intelligence” were mentioned. In 2010 we meet with the APT.

8. Various Committee memberships:

- Program Committee: Andrew Zwicker (Chair), George Lewis, Lawrence Krauss, Peter Zimmermann, Jennifer Wiseman, Phil Taylor, Benn Tannebaum, Don Prosnitz
- Fellowship Committee: Current committee to continue for this year
- Awards Committee: Peter Zimmermann (Chair), Carol Herzenberg, Jim Hansen
- Nominating Committee: Phil Taylor (Chair), Maury Goodman, Benn Tannebaum

9. Andrew could not join the meeting, so no presentation on the budget and expenses. (As the new Secretary-Treasurer, Pushpa will be taking over this activity.) Lawrence mentioned that there were a bunch of extra expenses at this meeting due to miscommunication regarding the speaker schedules and from funding waiver of registration fee for some speakers (some of this done each time though).

10. Last, but not least, being prompted by George, Pushpa reiterated her proposal that FPS should hold a big “dialogue with the public” event each year on a specific theme and some discussion ensued. She proposed to focus, this year, on future of science research in the US and issues of American Competitiveness and Leadership in Science. She volunteered to help organize the first one in the Chicago area. She was asked by Lawrence to form a task force and to chair it. Pete Zimmermann and Don Prosnitz graciously volunteered to help and will be on the task force. Pushpa will add a few more people to the task force. DOE’s Fermilab in Batavia, IL and the Adler Planetarium in Chicago were mentioned as possible venues for the event. Details are to be worked by the task force in the coming months.