



## Fermilab Users Executive Committee meeting minutes, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### Attendees (hybrid format):

- **UEC:** Biswaranjan Behera, Richard Cavanaugh, Sridhara Dasu (Chair), Adam Lyon, Alexx Perloff, Aleena Rafique, Ashley Back, Sophie Middleton
- **FSPA:** Olivia Bitter
- **Directorate:** Greg Bock, Griselda Lopez, Kevin Pitts
- **Users' Office:** Kimberly Pearce
- **EDI Office:** Anahi Ruiz Beltran
- **Lewis & Burke Associates:** Hale Stolberg

Indico page: <https://indico.fnal.gov/event/54435/>

The meeting began at 8:30 am (CDT).

### Report from the Directorate – Kevin Pitts, Greg Bock, & Griselda Lopez

- This session started with a discussion on the current state of the badging and site access procedures. Additionally, the directorate asked for any input on site traffic due to the DUNE Collaboration meeting. The Directorate is aware of the need to smooth out the process and make it less work, both from the lab and user/affiliate/employee perspective.
  - The UEC members reported on their experience renewing badges and accessing the lab. There was also discussion about the number of people coming onto the lab site and how often that happens. While the badging and access process for the UEC members was

smooth, each member was able to report on other people they know where that wasn't the case. These concerns are being addressed.

- On the topic of the DUNE Collaboration meeting, there were issues because people asking to come on-site either didn't complete the training or didn't upload documents prior to their badging appointments. It is vital that people upload these documents in a timely fashion, otherwise their badging appointment is subject to cancellation. In order to inform people of these requirements, the Campus Access Office will put together a standard set of instructions to display on the Indico page for any event happening on-site.
- There was also a discussion about the annual Users Meeting, especially because a state of high-COVID transmission may be put in place prior to the start of the UM. The UEC was also informed by the Directorate that Harriet Kung would be unable to attend, and that Glen Crawford would likely take her place. There is hope that Jim Shank will be able to represent the NSF.
- A question was raised about the ability for badged persons to escort visitors and un-badged persons. Anyone with an active Fermilab badge can act as an escort, they don't have to be a Fermilab employee. For example, DUNE lined up ~17 people to help as escorts for the DUNE meeting.
- The Directorate reported that the accelerator run is going well.
  - The laboratory has received FY22 budget guidance from the DOE. The operations budget is good and it is likely that the beam will run through June/July.
  - There will be an LBNF/DUNE Director's review next week, ahead of CD1 DOE review, which is an important milestone.
- The Government Relations Sub-Committee reported that the Dear Colleague Letters circulated during the annual trip to Washington DC have been made public and that they came with a healthy signature count. While the letters were received only a day or so before the deadlines, the participants were nevertheless able to circulate them widely. There is some disappointment that the DOE letter had no dollar amount, but it was nonetheless supportive of the scientific goals and general funding asks.

## Report from FSPA – Marvin Ascensio

- The FSPA will be continuing its Early Career Seminar Series. This month the speaker will be Stefano Tognini, a postdoc at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. The meeting will be held in a hybrid format.
- The abstract submission deadline for New Perspectives is June 3<sup>rd</sup>. This meeting will be held in a hybrid format. In addition to the regular schedule of talks there will also be a career panel and a workshop on funding opportunities.

## Director's visit – Lia Meringa

- The director presented directly to the UEC for the first time. As part of her opening remarks, she said that she is committed to improving access to the laboratory and smoothing the badging/access process. She also stressed that whilst LBNF/DUNE is a priority it shouldn't be the

only priority. Lia plans to set up an office that covers all projects and make sure we continue push forward on other projects.

## Report from EPE – Alexx Perloff

- There was a discussion of Fermilab's participation in the DuPage NAACP ACT-SO program (science activities co-organized by Fermilab and Argon). Increasingly, projects are involving more data science aspects. Both FNAL and ANL have a history of teaching such skills, so this year are doing a specific six-week summer program focused on teaching students data science skills. The program will have a hybrid format with remote breakout rooms as necessary. The lessons will cover everything from python basics to machine learning.
- There is a new US CMS internship program (starting June 6<sup>th</sup>). This year the program will be held in a completely remote format. The organizers are looking at how to address feedback on making the most out of remote participation. They are working with Sandra Charles and the EDI office in order to provide a welcoming environment and one which is responsive to the interns needs.

## Report from QoL – Richard Cavanaugh

- There were 13 new feedbacks submitted this past month, most of which were related to the re-opening.
  - There was a request for updated information about shuttle/taxi service. This has already been resolved and the relevant website (<https://fess.fnal.gov/parking-bus-and-taxi-services/>) was updated.
  - There was a request for information about transportation to Wilson Hall, which has been reported back to the submitter and the issue resolved. The lab clarified the ride share services are allowed on-site, but that the rider needs to contact x3414 to let them know the time of arrival for the vehicle (both coming and going). Additionally, Pace has a call and ride option which works on-site.
  - There was a sense that the annual users meeting email discouraged on-site participation. While the UEC did not mean to explicitly discourage in-person attendance, we needed to make clear that the capacity of the event was <100 people. Therefore, we needed to have some wording which conveyed that restriction. Even still, the number of in-person registrants, people wanting to attend in-person, has exceeded 100. Therefore, we feel that the wording was appropriate. This reasoning has been conveyed to the person who submitted the feedback and we have marked this issue as resolved.
  - There was a request for information about FNAL bike share program. This issue has been resolved and the information conveyed to the person who submitted the feedback.
  - Feedback was received regarding FermiWorks and the on-boarding process. The submitter said that they were asked to renew their account every 6 months. The UEC was told, by the Campus Access Office, that the on-boarding needed to be completed each time a person submitted a new request. So maybe there was some confusion about if and when a new request needed to be submitted. The UEC and the directorate

realize that there is a lot of information to be read. The Campus Access Office is continually working to make the wording better and to help direct people to the appropriate directions.

- To clarify, each user/affiliate is able to request an account for a full year and that these rules apply to all US citizens, regardless of their country of birth. Additional scrutiny of requests from a user/affiliate/employee who was born outside of the US, but who is now a US citizen is due to additional steps needing to be taken at the DOE approval level.
- As a reminder, the onboarding piece can be done on-site, but the forms to get access to the site needs a longer review and should be completed prior to arrival.
- There is an effort by the Campus Access Office to try to make the onboarding process shorter for people who have to renew their account every year, but where nothing has changed from the previous year.
- Two complaints were received having to do with the cafeteria. The complaints said that staffing is limited and that it can take a long time to receive one's food. This issue is recognized by the relevant offices, but this is a problem of supply and demand. There is an effort to work on staffing issues and on the menu.
- One feedback stated that there are no vegetarian salad/sandwich options in the cafeteria. This has not yet been addressed.
- Feedback was received about the Microsoft Exchange account renewal process. If someone doesn't renew their account in time, they will lose all of their email, permanently. However, the email to confirm the person's identity ended up in their spam folder and was never seen.
- There was a request for an update on the status of the badges containing chips. The UEC was told that it would be another 2-3 months before chipped badges arrived. An email will be sent to people with chipless cards to come get a chipped card. The process to replace these is already in place.
- Feedback was received from a person who was prevented from attending an in-person badging appointment because they were stopped at gate due to a problem on the FNAL side. The computing division is putting in a fix for the cases that the badging office knows about. In this case, the system was picking up an old profile for people who were once employees but who are currently users.
- Information was requested about badged users' ability to escort people on site. Anyone with an active Fermilab badge can act as an escort, they don't have to be a Fermilab employee. This issue will be marked as resolved.
- There was a continuing discussion of the 10 existing feedbacks and 11 resolved feedbacks. The UEC webpage will be updated with the current feedback information.

## Report from UM – Sophie Middleton/Biswaranjan Behera

- The UEC discussed plans for the upcoming Users Meeting, including the current attendance numbers, the number of poster abstracts currently submitted, and the need to discuss with Lynn

Johnson/Creative Services about the webinar for the event. Additionally, there was a discussion on the number of escorts needed for people arriving without a badge.

## Report from GovRel – Adam

- There was a summary report on the activities related to the annual Washington DC advocacy trip. The report shows that there was a similar level of participation as last year (2022: 56 participants, 2021: 61 participants). The lower participation is probably due to the lack of SLUO participants, which needs to be addressed in future years.
  - The group asked for a large increase in the HEP budget, both for DOE and NSF. While justification for this increase was provided and many offices saw it as reasonable, there were some reports of pushback.
- There weren't enough post trip survey responses to do a serious analysis. However, some freeform comments were discussed.
- Continuing the tradition of years passed, Breese Quinn setup meetings with the relevant congressional committees and Harvey Newman setup meetings with the relevant executive committees. There was a discussion of the need to start training people to fill in for Harvey and Breese. They are invaluable to the effort, but we know that at some point they will likely need/want to pass on their responsibilities to someone else.

## Report from Washington – Hale Stolberg (Lewis & Burke Associates)

- FY22 Congressional Appropriations:
  - L&B Assoc. heard good things about the advocacy visits and didn't hear about any pushback.
  - The Dear Colleague Letters in support of our appropriations bills garnered a significant number of signatures. The letter in support of the DOE appropriations bill received 123 signatures in the House and 32 in the Senate, 15 and 2 more than last year, respectively. The final letters will be sent to the Government Relations Sub-committee for reference.
  - The deadlines for all appropriations bills has closed as has the time for public input. Moving forward there will be testimony from congress members not on the appropriations committees. The exact dates for this testimony haven't been announced. The House hopes to markup the bills in mid to late June, with the Senate following suit in late June to July. The fiscal year will end on September 30<sup>th</sup>, so Congress is already very behind.
- FY22 Congressional Authorizations:
  - Both the House and the Senate are in the final stretch of discussing USICA and Competes (DOE Science for the Future Act). Senator Schumer wants to wrap this up by the end of May though L&B Assoc. Are hearing that congressional staffer don't think this timeline is realistic. More likely the non-controversial portions will be settled by late June/July and then the process will finish in September. Everyone thinks this needs to be passed by end of year or the legislation will be dead.
- Other Congressional Updates:

- Dr. Asmeret Berhe was confirmed as the head of the DOE Office of Science. The vote to approve her as the new head has four republican votes, though only one was needed.
- Energy Sciences Coalition is putting together a congratulatory note. Hale Stolberg is drafting a note on behalf of HEP and asks if we want a joint letter with the UEC. He will share draft by next week.
- There was a discussion about whether visits to district offices in late summer would be helpful. Hale Stoleberg things that visits to the district offices of Congressmembers Underwood, Casten, and Foster could be helpful. That way they can consider us while campaigning.

## Regular Reminders & useful links:

- UEC user feedback form: <https://uec.fnal.gov/uec-feedback-form/>
- How to report concerns or violations to FNAL: <https://generalcounsel.fnal.gov/how-to-report-concerns-or-violations/>
- Campus Access and Experience: <https://get-connected.fnal.gov/>
- Housing Office: <https://fess.fnal.gov/housing/>