

Committee on Meetings

Annual Report -- 1999

Susan Seestrom, Chair
November 8, 1999

The Committee on Meetings had one meeting, May 18, 1999

The committee members present were David Cassel, Mary Ann Sweeney, Tom Cohen, Alan Kleinsasser, Paul Peercy (joined by conference call for the first hour), Judy Franz, Tom McIlrath, and Susan Seestrom. Staff members present were Donna Baudrau, Terri Adorjan, Vinaya Sathyasheelappa, Karen MacFarland, and Don Wise.

The discussions of the committee can be divided into two categories:

- A. **The Mechanics** (registration fees, deadlines, Bulletins) of the meetings sponsored by the Society
- B. **The Health of the Meetings** (attendance, excitement).

A considerable amount of attention was also devoted to the Centennial Meeting.

Health of Meetings

The success of the Centennial Meeting demonstrates the support that members of the Society have for coming together in general meetings. There was considerable discussion about the April Meeting. This meeting is traditionally attended by DNP, DPF, DAP, and DAMOP. The participating units have varying degrees of commitment to this meeting, with DNP having probably the strongest interest and DAMOP voting not to join in the future. Various options keep this a vital meeting have been discussed. One option discussed was combining with the DPP and moving to the fall; this option was ultimately rejected by the DPP. The importance of location was discussed; the DNP is very interested in returning the meeting to the Washington DC area. It was agreed that a primary issue at this time was ensuring the continued participation of DPF, DAP, and DAMOP. The Chair agreed to contact the leaders of these units to understand the issues they have with respect to the April meeting in order to provide basis for making changes that would ensure their participation. There is as yet no progress to report on this effort.

Mechanics

The committee reviewed abstract submission policies and procedures. The issue of "quack" abstracts was discussed. The Committee agreed that although the APS cannot require abstract, they should strongly encourage abstract submission, especially for non- technical sessions. Donna Baudrau asked that the committee consider moving the abstract deadlines back three weeks in the interest of easing the tight production schedule for the BAPS. The abstract deadline is set as it is to allow as many recent results as possible to be discussed at the meetings. Although

the members of the Committee sympathized with the difficulties presented by the present schedule, they felt strongly that the abstract deadline not be moved back.

The Committee reviewed the format of the Bulletin. The staff presented a number of suggestions of changes in format of the Bulletin aimed at increasing the utility of the Bulletin to the Members. The Committee thought all were good ideas and endorsed proceeding with the changes described.

The issue of Registration fees was discussed. The APS fees seem reasonable in the context of those of other scientific organizations. The Committee did not feel that it was necessary (or desirable) to include perks such as tote bags or complementary coffee. The Committee was very interested in structuring the Registration fees so as to encourage attendance by junior members. The Committee proposed a revenue-neutral adjustment be made to the registration fees by raising regular registration rates a nominal amount to allow junior APS members (post-docs) to register at a discounted fee. Donna Baudrau agreed to provide an estimate of the number of Centennial attendees who were junior members (post-docs), to make a proposal for how this might be accomplished.

A number of innovations were discussed. McIlrath demonstrated a new web-site with Centennial Symposia speakers transcripts (audio and text), biographies and view graphs. The Committee agreed that the site would be useful to students and teachers, but suggested that further costly editing would not enhance the site. Also, the Committee was not certain that audiotapes of most of the talks would be big sellers. Stefan Martin, of the Information Services Department, demonstrated the new abstract submission page and the on-line program scheduler. The Committee made a number of suggestions aimed at increasing the usefulness of this page.

The Committee reviewed the APS A-V policy, as well as A-V policies of other organizations. The Committee agreed that for most presentations it is not critical that an LCD projector be used instead of an overhead or a slide projector. APS should pay for special A-V for plenary sessions, but special A-V for invited and contributed sessions should continue to be paid for either by the unit sponsoring the session or the speaker. At the end of the discussion, the Committee agreed that the current A-V policy should stand.

MacFarland presented day care proposals from two companies who are experienced in providing daycare services to conventions. Approximately 250 Centennial survey respondents said they would use day care if available at a cost of less than \$10/hour. The Committee agreed that day care should be provided on a 2-3 year trial basis beginning with the March 2000 Meeting.

Baudrau reviewed the hand-out on the Policy on Commercial Workshops at APS General Meetings. The Committee agreed that Commercial Workshops provide a good opportunity for interaction between industry and the physics community, as well as potential employment contacts with industry for students. The Committee supported promoting commercial workshops in our promotional material for the meetings.

Conclusion

The scientific meetings of the society are a very important activity contributing to the health of the society as a whole. The Society is being well served by the APS meetings department, especially in their efforts at innovation in the areas of electronic submission and dissemination of abstracts, inclusion of daycare, and assessment of technical innovations for inclusion in meetings. It is the opinion of the Chair that the Committee on Meetings plays an important role in assuring that the meetings continue to be organized in a way that best serves the needs of the Members of the Society.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan J. Seestrom