MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 15, 1995 MEETING OF THE USERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE


* retiring member

Approval of Minutes

There were no amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting on October 17, 1995.

SLUO Executive Committee Election

The newly-elected members, John Fry (Liverpool U.), Stan Hertzbach (U. of Massachusetts), Tom Mattison (SLAC), and Stéphane Willocq (SLAC), were welcomed by the committee. The retiring members, Philip Burrows (MIT), Richard Kofler (U. of Massachusetts), Nan Phinney (SLAC), and Walter Toki (Colorado State U.), were thanked for three years of dedicated service. The honeymoon was over soon with the election of new officers. The new officers for 1995/96 are:

- Chairperson: Uriel Nauenberg,
- Coordinator of Committees: Jennifer Huber,
- Executive Secretary: Stéphane Willocq.

Staffing of SLUO Office

Several candidates will be interviewed in January to fill the secretary position for the SLUO office. This position will be full-time.
Discussion of Annual Users’ Meeting

Nauenberg proposed holding the next meeting late in the Spring instead of in the Fall. A major concern was to select a date which might attract a greater participation from the members of the BaBar Collaboration.

David Hitlin joined the discussion and presented the many constraints to the BaBar schedule. It was finally agreed to hold the next Annual Users’ Meeting on Thursday June 6, 1996, as this day coincides with the end of the Lehman Review for BaBar. It was unanimously felt that it is crucial for BaBar to be better represented at future Annual Meetings.

Mark your calendars for the

Next Annual Users’ Meeting: June 6, 1996.

SLAC 2000

Nauenberg brought up the issue of what could/should SLUO do to define the future of SLAC. The management is seeking input from the users for new large-scale experimental initiatives using the SLAC facilities in the years (slightly) beyond 2000. It was felt that it is SLUO’s role to appeal to the users and organize an effort. After much discussion, it was agreed to: 1) send out a memo to the users community to call for ideas; 2) organize a workshop at SLAC to allow the various ideas to be presented and discussed openly; 3) to report the users input to SLAC management.

The deadline to submit ideas is the end of February 1996. A tentative date for the workshop was set for April 12, 1996. An organizing committee was elected consisting of Mike Fero, Bruce Schumm, and Tom Mattison, as well as two external nominees, John Jaros and Su Dong. The Chair for this committee will be announced at a later date.

Committee Reports

1. Space Committee

Johnson reported that, thanks to SLUO’s efforts, there is now plenty of available office space. In particular, the newly-SSC-furnished maze on the first floor of the Central Lab remains essentially unoccupied but ready for new users. If the need were to arise, there is more space available in trailers behind the SCS building and in IR-12.
2. Networking Committee

Usher reported that the new network wiring is now complete and is supposed to be operational. However, Mattison indicated that new interface units are required to be able to “plug” into this new network. Huber will investigate about the readiness of the new network and about plans to make the new interface boxes available.

The discussion quickly evolved into a full-fledged review of local, medium, and wide-range networking issues. Fry brought up the issue of erratic networking between the US and the UK. Porter reminded the committee that John O’Fallon (DOE) suggested that SLAC submit a proposal to request DOE support for improved overseas networking. An outline is now in David Leith’s hands.

Toki followed this by raising the issue of poor bandwidth between American universities and the national laboratories. One possible approach is to request use of the DOE labs’ ESNET to improve the connectivity of universities. Several universities have already been given access to ESNET.

On the local networking front, there was a discussion regarding ISDN. Currently there are 6 dedicated phone lines in a pilot program involving 12 persons. Fero indicated the need for SCS to formulate an ISDN policy to guide users and help them take advantage of this technology.

Given the large number of issues and the vast interest in improving networking for the SLAC users community, it was decided to form a new SLUO networking committee consisting of John Fry, Bruce Schumm, and Tracy Usher. Fry was elected head of this committee and will concentrate on wide-range networking. Schumm and Usher will concentrate on medium-range and local networking, respectively.

3. Computing/Desktop Committee

Porter reported that the committee spent much of its time discussing a desktop model involving PCs and Macs, and the required support. The HEP research representatives emphasized the necessity for X terminal and Unix support. A report was made to the ADs. The committee made a specific recommendation for SLAC to not support Windows 95 (in favor of continuing with only NT).

4. WWW Committee

Huber reported that the SLAC World Wide Web Coordinating Committee will meet for the first time on December 18. Huber is SLUO’s representative on that committee.

The subject of creating a SLUO home page was brought up later on. It was agreed that Tom Mattison will oversee that project with technical help from Steve Williams.
Discussions with Management

David Leith, Burt Richter and Steve Williams joined the meeting for lunchtime discussions.

Discussion began with the topic of the Annual Users’ Meeting. Richter stressed the need for the SLAC users community to participate and provide more feedback to the management.

Nauenberg reported that the first SLUO Social was a success and that SLUO will continue organizing these users gatherings on a monthly basis.

Users concerns about the lack of proper lighting in certain areas (e.g. parking lots, outside staircases) at night were brought up. Adelman Stolar mentioned that a proposal has been submitted to Facilities to improve the parking lot situation. Williams recommended that users report problems related to building areas to the appropriate building managers.

The status of the ISDN pilot was enquired about. Leith replied that the pilot has been going on for two months and a report is expected to determine costs and feasibility.

Concerning the Annual Users’ Meeting, Richter supported the idea of holding the meeting in the Spring as budget projections for the following fiscal year are generally better known at that time. Richter also reiterated that one of the benefits of this meeting is to provide an opportunity to learn about the variety of experiments taking place at SLAC. He said that talks would be more interesting if they focussed more on future prospects and experiments’ needs to achieve these rather than simply reporting the latest results. Richter praised SLUO for its achievements and wished these were more widely publicized.

Nauenberg presented SLUO’s proposal to attract new ideas to make use of SLAC’s present or upgraded facilities in the years beyond 2000. Leith stressed the focus should be on the years slightly beyond 2000 when the SLC/SLD program is completed and the PEP-II/BaBar program is mature. Richter said SLAC faculty and staff members are currently going through the exercise of drafting an internal SLAC 2000 report describing possible options to exploit SLAC facilities within the expected resources available and given the existing program (PEP-II/BaBar, NLC, GLAST, etc...). Richter emphasized that the proposals need not be accelerator-based. He also pointed out that many HEP construction projects (PEP-II, Fermilab Main Injector, CDF/D0 upgrades, etc...) will be complete around year 2000, and thus additional funds may become available for bright new ideas with good physics potential. The internal SLAC 2000 report is expected to be available in draft form by the end of January 1996. Richter invited SLUO to contribute actively to this effort and to solicit users participation. He then proposed to design the 1996 Annual Users’ Meeting as a forum to discuss the various options for SLAC 2000, and then to release a final report that would emanate from both the Directorate and SLUO immediately following the Annual Users’ Meeting in June of 1996. The Executive Committee endorsed these ideas and will steer the Annual Users’ Meeting in a new direction focussed on the future.

The layoff situation was discussed; 90 ± 10 layoffs are expected in HEP but the increase in SSRL funding will decrease this number to 70 ± 10 for the whole lab in 1996. Richter expects a similar number of layoffs in 1997. It is not yet
possible to anticipate what will happen in 1998. The voluntary layoff program ends on December 18. Richter stressed that the layoffs will not affect operations in 1996. The accelerator will run for 11 months as scheduled. Richter said that PEP-II/BaBar has appropriate resources, and major upgrades for the fixed target program and for SLD (new vertex detector) are now essentially complete.

Next SLUO Executive Meeting

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on Friday March 8.

Minutes submitted by,

Stéphane Willocq
Secretary/Treasurer
Users Executive Committee