

IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors meeting minutes

Boston Marriott Cambridge, Cambridge, 07.01.2012, 1-6pm

Natasha Devroye

Present: Muriel Medard, Gerhard Kramer, Natasha Devroye, Frank Kschischang, Helmut Boelcskei, Emanuele Viterbo, Amin Shokrollahi, Michelle Eros, Alon Orlitsky, Max Costa, Jayne Cerone (IEEE), Alex Vardy, Giuseppe Caire, Urbashi Mitra, Paul Siegel, Abbas El Gamal, Bruce Hajek, Matthieu Bloch,

conferences: going forward there will be a cost of around \$1,000 per technically co-sponsored conferences plus a few dollars per paper. There will be an associated quality assurance from IEEE { this will affect us. Muriel has requested that there be an allowance for a few special cases per year (for conferences that have been technically co-sponsored for a long time). Muriel has also suggested using volunteers to verify the quality and guarantee presence (rather than sending IEEE staff) at the conference.

Motion: Bruce Hajek moved to have the Appeals for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory be taken care of by the 2nd Past President. Michelle Eros suggested this be a past Editor in Chief. Muriel expressed concerns. Apparently no appeals above the EiC (to the level of the IEEE) have been coming up in past years. Frank Kschischang moved to table the motion until the next BoG, as he feels this is moving quite hastily, as it will go into the Bylaws.

Motion: Frank Kschischang would like to table the discussion about the original motion proposed by Bruce Hajek. There was no discussion. The motion to table the motion was passed unanimously. This will be further discussed at the BoG in Lausanne.

4. ITSOC treasurer Aylin Yener reported on the ITSOC's financial health.

Some housekeeping items: there is now a procedure in place for reimbursements for committee expenses. Please send receipts along with expense form within one month to Alyson Rupp (A.Rupp@ieee.org) with a CC to Aylin Yener. Closing the books of a conference is a process that involves the IEEE and should be done within 3 months of the conference ending, max within one year. Aylin Yener encourages everyone to be responsive to avoid fines.

The 2011 forecast was +\$90k; the BoG approved a "one-time" page budget increase to clear the publication queue. This brought the forecast for operational budget down to -\$15k. Final numbers turned out to be more optimistic, with 2011 ending at +\$28k (better income than forecasted from conferences). Additionally, we were hit with -\$350k reflecting IEEE investment losses. Thus, our bottom line in 2011 was -\$317k. Since this is not our fault we are not being penalized.

The 2012 budget projected a surplus of \$119k, along the way the BoG once again approved an increase in the page budget for 2012 from 6750 to 7800 (pages), which brings down the projected surplus to \$12k.

For 2013, the first pass of the projected budget was made in May 2012; the projected surplus was \$131k. Recently, the BoG again approved an increase on the page budget from 6750 to 8000 pages, changing the new forecast to \$2k.

These numbers are obtained from an IEEE analyst assigned to our society.

Up to 50% of our surplus can be designated for special initiatives of the society (if you are in good standing); currently we are unable to propose such initiatives for the next two years due to the low expected surpluses in 2012 and 2013. Societies are not supposed to have a yearly operational budget that is in the deficit: three consecutive years in deficit puts us on an IEEE financial watch list. ISIT 2011 is projecting a +\$83k surplus but it is not yet closed; this could affect things.

Some good news: Aylin believes we run the society extremely efficiently; volunteers use their own resources and donate their time generously, minimizing "committee" expenses. Conferences often exceed surplus expectations, and conference papers bring in significant revenue on IEEEExplore (\$242k in 2011). The IT Transactions IEEEExplore revenue is healthy and the largest source of income (\$742k in 2011).

Cost items: very modest committee expenses. The Transactions cost is overall the largest ticket item: e.g. in 2011 it was \$833k. The overall Transactions income in 2011 was \$986k; membership fees added up to only \$80k.

The treasurer recommends reducing the cost of the transactions (rather than relying on conference income) in order for the society to be able to run its activities and initiatives in the future.

5. The Nominations and Appointments committee report was given by Frank Kschischang. A slate of 12 candidates for the BoG next year was presented (available online), which was constructed with the aim of better representing the various regions our members. The current BoG membership is 65% from North America, whereas our membership numbers are quite different.

Motion: to approve the BoG members for next year.

Frank Kschischang opened the floor for nominations for President for 2013. Gerhard Kramer was nomi-

The production process remains expensive: about \$90 is spent per printed page. Alternatives are being explored outside IEEE to reduce the costs. Helmut Boelcskei is currently exploring another option within IEEE with the help of Stefan Moser: a full latex production and "light" editing which does not touch language. They tested it on "problem" papers and it worked well. Helmut Boelcskei cautions against making quick decisions on changing the Transactions.

The 5 year review: IEEE is concerned about the impact factor which peaked in 2008 at 3.75, but is now back down to 3. Historically though, there is still a steady increase. The also noted the rather lengthy

Three papers were proposed with one recommended paper.

Motion: to accept the recommended paper. The motion passed and one paper was decided to be the 2012 paper award winner.

8. Prakash Narayanan reported on the External Nominations Committee. The main activity was putting forward nominations for the Baker Prize, which was quite difficult; he suspects it will take a few years to get this committee up and running smoothly { it is quite a large amount of work.

