SURF User Association Executive Committee Meeting

Date: 04/10/2025

Attending: Mike Headley, Frank Strieder, Mark Hanhardt, Oxana Gorbatenko, Jeff Burghardt, Brianna Mount, Ed Blucher, Christopher Kreitzinger, Jaret Heise, David Woodward

Start Time: 11:01 AM

Welcome and SUAEC Election Results

- Frank welcomes everyone to the meeting and moves into election results. No outside nominations had been made, although Jaret made some helpful suggestions. Erin Cunningham was nominated, but not elected. Frank invited her to attend the EC meetings in a consultant role due to her high vote-count, but has not yet received a response. Sent out about 430 emails, some bounced but we have been cleaning up the User List. New count is about 420 people able to vote, 67 votes were cast. Brings back general discussion for user engagement.
  - Mark comments that David Woodward received the most votes and will now serve a 3-year term.

(11:05 AM)

SURF Update

- Mike: Shares a PowerPoint. Reviews staffing changes (Wendy Straub as new COO; Mandy Knight new Chief of Staff; Annie Averitt new Foundation Director). Funding for FY25 flat at $35M, FY2026 TBD (should hear more by the end of April). Ross Shaft staff supporting infrastructure construction and regular DUNE installation planning meetings occurring. Yates Shaft heavy maintenance completed to 4850L and returned to full operations. Strong outreach to SD Legislature this session and fundraising outreach is ramping up. DOE preparing for approval of Yates Shaft refurb as a formal DOE project. SDSTA been designated a partner in US Senators Rounds (SD) and Heinrich (NM) led American Science Acceleration Project. K-12 E&O performance remains strong and Davis-Bahcall scholars selected.
  - Shares pictures of LBNF infrastructure construction (fire suppression, steel for first cryostat)
  - Shares E&O statistics (on track with last year)
  - Shares link to APS SURF commercial video in meeting chat

- - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfkQHTtWd_E
- Frank: Escorts through South Drift to stay in place?
  - Mike: Working with LBNF to try and waive escort, but they remain uncomfortable with moving unescorted. Likely it will remain in place until focus moves to caverns or if we can get our staff trained as guides.
- Frank: Is the Ross clutch an issue for operations?
  - Mike: One of the spider clutches has a crack in one of the attachments to the drum. It's secure, but we're not fully aware if it'll be a long term issue. The company that manufactured the hoist set to come out to review, and three suggestions are made but none of them are cheap. SURF to implement what is safe and a long term fix. Ross shaft outages focused on weekends if possible. Plan is still in the works. Will be sure to have secondary egress at Ross still.
- Frank: How can we help with the budget and lobbying? Opportunities for those in SD to meet with congressmen to promote funding for SURF.
  - Mike: Continue to stress upgrade to Yates hoist. Would like to do upgrade to hoist before refurbishment to shaft. Looking for $23M for both projects. Start with cage hoist and later skip hoist as a way to get the project moving. Feel free to bring this up in any meetings.

(11:21 AM)

Vote on Chair and Secretary

- Frank: Happy to continue the work but is up to committee.
- Mark: Also happy to stay on if the committee decides.
- Frank: No objections so will continue.

(11:23AM)

Report on SNOLAB Group Visit

- Mark: Purpose of the meeting was to talk about UA at SNOLAB and share information. Their UA is brand new, so not much to offer us in the way of advice at the moment. Looking forward to working closely with them to help improve both UAs. Some specifics discussed on how the role of UA is different from ours and theirs. They look to take over all communication, whereas we have communications department. Perhaps moving forward, we can take over some communication. SNOLAB UA also looks to take over training and tracking of said training. They are looking to be the entire interface for users. Will reach out to SNOLAB in a couple weeks to continue fostering our relationship and share updates. Prior, SNOLAB held

meetings for users, but also had low attendance much like SURF. SNOLAB didn't have an online space but had a Facebook group for undergrads which also had low engagement.

- o Their group is not volunteer group like ours, they are paid positions.
- Frank: Both share the difficulties in engagement. Wonders if one could jump on existing meetings, such as the Davis Campus.
- Oxana: May not help much. We do have emails, so maybe updates quarterly from different disciplines, events, conferences, local news, etc. Serve as a simple reminder that the UA exists.
- Frank: Christopher working on a quarterly email list, but difficulty still includes subject for emails.
- David: In LZ they've had success in having their collaboration meetings with other conferences in order to share travel costs. Perhaps attach meeting to something else that is already in the calendar, may be effective in improving attendance.
- Frank: Agrees but is also worried that will only reach a relatively small group. May only reach certain disciplines of physics for example, so to get people from biology or geology will be even more difficult.
- David: Agrees with concern, but for those who don't have a conference it would be attached to the UA meeting and that meeting would serve as a stand-alone meeting. The following years can be around other conferences.
- Brianna: Depends on what people want like zoom, in person, we need to figure out what the users want. Is there a webpage yet Mark where users can get information?
- Mark: Turned into an onboarding project. UA webpage on SURF website with some information. Regarding lodging and local news, working with comms to have that part of SARF 2.0 so they receive emails once their SARF's are approved containing all that information.
- Oxana: Would be helpful for people to have access to local research and other collaborations work. Sharing information on research resources to foster better collaboration between disciplines and experiments.
- Mark: Ultimately, that's one of the hopes for the UA, this is one value we should provide. Create an online forum perhaps so everyone is able to share information in real time, but still unsure how much engagement it would receive. Open to ideas on how a community space would work.
- Oxana: Providing information with contact information of those in different disciplines and experiments so they can answer questions directly. Ask users if they would be okay to have their contact information shared if asked.

(11:42 AM)

Action on Creating List of Research Support Resources for Users

- Frank: Would be helpful so that if an experiment needs analysis on something, perhaps another experiment or group could help with their resources.
- Oxana: May be able to put something like that together, can do at BHSU, but SDSMT unsure.
- Frank: Will check with Sarah to see about geology.
- Jeff: Can assist with geology.
- Frank: This would provide some value to users.

(11:45 AM)

Reports on Contracts with Other UA

- Jeff: Hasn't had a chance to reach out to other user groups but will here shortly.
  - https://www.emsl.pnnl.gov/about#advisory-committees
- David: reached out to some user associations but have not heard back from them yet. Interested in finding out how some of their projects could be applied to SURF.

(11:47 AM)

Discussion on Increasing Reach Towards DUNE

- Frank: Looking through the current membership role, not many people have listed DUNE as their experiment. How could we engage people from DUNE?
- Ed: One thing that may help would be for someone from the SUAEC to attend a DUNE meeting. That would likely get many, but the talk should have a purpose so that the group would be engaged.
- Frank: In the past Jaret covered that role.
- Ed: A lot of turnovers in DUNE, maybe attend September meeting. There will likely be people who are interested.
- Frank: Will keep that on our agenda. Also discussed with Stacie hosting DUNE meeting through the SURF Institute. Both agreed would be a good idea.
- Ed: Agrees.
- Frank: Then could put the SUA meeting as a satellite to the DUNE meeting. Can also reach out to the new spokesperson for DUNE.

(11:52 AM)

AOB

- David: Should we consider surveying people to gauge what is most interesting to them for a meeting? Need to make sure we provide something that benefits them.
- Frank: Would at least reach the people who are interested and could gauge their priorities. Ask for overviews, work at SURF, etc.?
- David: Should think of suggestions for sessions and talks of varying focuses. Maybe people would be interested in how to most effectively work at SURF or working at the lab. Maybe an informal group of the same discipline could get together and discuss results. Could make a list and then ask users to rank the suggestions.
- Frank: Chris to add to IDS for Objectives Meeting.

Meeting End: 11: 58 AM