

USLUO Executive Committee Meeting
25 May 2010

Present: Harvey, John, Sridhara, Kevin, Greg, Sarah, Boaz, ...

1. Harvey first reported on the spring DC trip.

At OSTP, lots of HEP pictures were on display. Overall there was a good response, and they received several interesting questions back (see slides). In discussions, it became apparent that there may be some tension between the energy frontier and the intensity frontier. At DOE SC (Koonin) they were told that HEP is not doing so bad communicating with congress, but needs to do better communicating with the public.

2. Funding for USLUO

Right now USLUO is only funding the trip to DC and the USLUO annual meeting. So far the main funding has been from DPF. A request for funding support for 2010 went to Pier Oddone but there was no answer. In general, there has been less response from FNAL and SLAC. Because of concern about inviting too many people that might not be funded, a limited number of people were invited and in the end only 2.5k of 5k from DPF was spent.

As a proposal for the future, USLUO would aim for a \$20k budget. There are a few options for how to collect such funding:

- collect funds from membership
- use the annual USLUO meeting as a funding source
 - Note: a DOE lab can't collect money (can CalTech collect this year?)
 - How many possible attendees, and thus how much can be raised at the meeting and how much would need to be raised elsewhere
- become APS topical group

To become an APS topical unit, the group should be focused on a given area of science (e.g. hadronic physics). It should really feel like a scientific activity. For USLUO to fit as a topical unit, we would need to reform our mission slightly to be coincident with the APS. Things like student talks at the annual meeting match well with the APS mission. The size of USLUO is appropriate (850 current members) for a topical unit.

In collecting and maintaining the \$20k budget tax free status is needed. This means that legal and financial operations handled by professionals, a benefit of becoming an APS topical group. The group would get back \$5 of the dues from members. In addition donations could be requested from the membership (e.g. \$20, \$10 from students).

Initial discussions with members of the APS exec committee were favorable, though the APS president was less favorable, emphasizing that topical units need to be about science. The APS council only meets twice per year, so to be accepted as a topical unit we would need to collect signatures, present a mission statement, and describe activities.

Among the benefits are that there would be an LHC session at the April meeting, we could nominate members as APS fellows, and student talks at the USLUO meeting would be APS endorsed conference.

Among the obligations are that the added formality of having a clear organized structure that is part of the APS organization. USLUO would have to adopt the standard executive line structure, which implies a four-year commitment. In addition any lobbying activities would have to be done in coordination with those of the APS.

Discussion:

In the discussion that followed, there was a general sentiment that there were few alternatives and this would likely be the best way to continue to exist as an organization. It would also give the organization a home, which it does not currently have, unlike the SLAC/FNAL UEC. It would also help in providing legal representation.

The idea had already been discussed at a USCMS meeting and the overall response was favorable. It had not yet been discussed inside US ATLAS.

The next steps to be taken would be to first begin to reformulate the group mission statement through email. Then the idea would have to be discussed with the labs, to be sure that they would not oppose it. Lab users are a significant part of the USLHC community. Hopefully key people would embrace the idea because of the greater good for the US HEP community.

Sarah asked about the evolution of the mission statement. Areas in which the organization might be helpful are standardizing health care, issues in living abroad, etc. These are not technically science, so would we be discouraged from working on these issues. The answer was that our job is to promote science, so we would not be discouraged from these topics.

Al noted that the upside is clear because it gives more structure. As a former member of the DPF executive committee, he said there is a lot of working organizing elections and getting people to run, usually done by the secretary or treasurer. While this must be done regardless, it is more formal as part of APS. Harvey, as a member of the Forum on international physics, commented that he was not concerned with finding candidates, but there are meetings that must be attended, and we would be given sessions at the April meeting according to our membership.

If USLUO did become a topical group, then beyond gathering signatures and rewriting the mission statement, the present executive committee would likely be the founding board for this unit. Would special elections be required or could volunteers be used? Since the change would already require modifying the bylaws, the new four-year term could be instituted at that time. The APS could give guidance about practical and financial details at startup. Typically a unit has 2-3 extra years of funding.

There were questions of whether this would mean taking on a lot of extra bureaucracy just to better raise funds. But it was stated that becoming a topical unit is about more than just funding, as it provides a strong organization. There are about a dozen topical groups currently in DPF, though only two are related to particle physics. It was pointed out that not all topical groups get representation at HEPAP.

An alternative proposal was made to consider finding a university that would collect the membership fees. However, it was felt that most universities would not be interested. For one thing, USLUO is a lobbying organization and universities already have their own lobbying efforts but with different goals. One possibility would be to use the university of the current chair. However that could lead to problems when the chair changed.

As a next step, it was agreed that the membership of USLUO should be consulted for their opinions. If USLUO became a topical group, would they join, contribute, stand for election, etc.? Contact would specifically

be made with Joel Butler, Nick Hadley, and Persis Drell to get their opinions.