IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting
Chicago Downtown Mariott, Chicago, IL, USA, June 27, 2004

Mehul Motani

Attendees: John Anderson, Thomas Cover, Anthony Ephremides, Dave Forney, Marc Fossoirier, Tom Fuja, Andrea Goldsmith, Alex Grant, Johannes Huber, Hideki Imai, Ralf Koetter, Ryuji Kohno, Joseph A. O’Sullivan, Steven W. McLaughlin, Muriel Médard, Urbashi Mitra, Mehul Motani, David L. Neuhoff, Lance Perez, Katherine Perry, Vincent Poor, Lars Rasmussen, Nela Rybowicz, Bixio Rimoldi, Shlomo Shamai, Paul Siegel, David Tse, Alexander Vardy, Han Vinck.

The meeting was called to order at 13:30 by Society President Hideki Imai. The members of the Board were welcomed and introduced themselves.

1. The agenda was distributed. An item related to the funding situation at NSF was added to the agenda. The Board unanimously approved the updated agenda.

2. The action items from the previous meeting in Princeton on March 17, 2004 were reviewed. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with minor amendments.

3. The President presented his report.
   Aaron Gulliver has stepped down as the webmaster of the Society web pages. Mehul Motani has kindly agreed to serve as the new webmaster.
   Technical co-sponsorship was requested by the 4th International Symposium on Turbo Codes to be help in Munich in 2006. The Board unanimously approved Society technical co-sponsorship.
   The Distinguished Service Award for 2004 has been awarded to James L. Massey.
   The President reported on the IEEE TAB meeting in June 2004. He noted that the new periodical proposal for the IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security was deleted prior to being presented. He further discussed the issue of open access to IEEE publications. He noted that the open access issue is still a hot topic and that the IEEE will present its response later in 2004.

4. It was proposed to change the name of the Distinguished Service Award to the Aaron D. Wyner Award in honor of the outstanding leadership and service rendered by Aaron Wyner to the Society. It was noted that this required an amendment to the Society Bylaws.
   The Board unanimously approved the proposed name change and the required change to the Society Bylaws.

5. Muriel Médard presented the Treasurer’s report. The Society’s net worth was reviewed. The numbers for Year 2003 as of May 2004 are as follows: Loans Receivable - 121K, Net Worth - 696K.
   An update of the finances for conferences and workshops from 2003 - 2006 was given.
The Treasurer gave a brief presentation on a snapshot of Society finances. She noted that the Society finances are overall on the mend, but the Society is still on the IEEE financial watchlist.

She noted that in 2003, the Society made almost as much money on conferences as on publications. Despite this, the Society still has lower conference surpluses than other societies.

Regarding membership, it was noted that it was beneficial (in terms of finances) to have members sign up for electronic access only membership.

6. The President appointed the members of an ad-hoc committee on financial matters. The members of the IT Society Finance Committee are Muriel Médard (Chair), Marc Fossorier, Hideki Imai, and Steven McLaughlin.

7. The Board unanimously approved the appointment of Vincent Poor as the next IT Transactions Editor-in-Chief.

8. The IT Transactions Editor-in-Chief gave an update on the Society Transactions. He noted that submissions continue to grow. Specifically, submissions were up 12% in 2003 and 24% in 2004. He also noted that web-based submission process was activated as of June 2004.

The IT Transactions has an impact factor of 2.045 according to the 2002 Journal Citation Report rankings.

An IT-related computer science category names cs.IT was established at arxiv.org.

The issue of guest editors publishing in the special issue they are guest editing was raised and discussed. The suggestion to let the Editor-in-Chief handle these submissions was made.

Ralf Koetter and Muriel Médard discussed the special issue on Network Information Theory and Coding with the ACM/IEEE Transactions on Networking. The main issue now is how to give access to TON subscribers.

The issue of frequency of special issues was discussed. It was noted that special issues can be used to attract non-subscribers. There was also a suggestion to publish a double volume with both regular and special issue articles.

The Board unanimously approved the following Associate Editor appointments: Vinay Vaishampayan (At Large), Anders Host-Madsen (Detection and Estimation), and Kingo Kobayashi (Shannon Theory).

The Board thanked Katherine Perry and Nela Rybowicz for their exceptional service to the IT Transactions and the Society.

It was noted that the response of the editorial board and the other users of the Pareja, a web-based paper submission and tracking system, was positive.

The Board expressed its gratitude to Paul Siegel for outstanding service to the Society and the IT Transactions as Editor-in-Chief.
9. The activities of the IT Society Publications Committee, headed by John Anderson, were then discussed.

It was noted that there was to be an open meeting on publications at ISIT 2004 to discuss how the Society can best improve its publications and the publication process. Several issues such as electronic publishing and reviewer/associate editor delays were discussed. The discussion ended with all agreeing that the Transactions needed to make clear its policies in these and other issues.

→Action Item The results of the open meeting on publications will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

10. Alexander Vardy discussed the establishment of an IT-related category, called cs.IT, at ArXiv.org, an e-print pre-print server.

There was some concern that posting IT articles at ARXiv.org will cut revenue for the Society Transactions and IEEE.

After much discussion, the following motion was put forth: The Board hears and welcomes the formation of a cs.IT category at www.ArXiv.org and forms a subcommittee to discuss further and report at the next meeting.

The Board unanimously approved the motion and formed the following subcommittee: Dave Forney (Chair), Alex Vardy, Han Vinck, and Vince Poor.

→Action Item The ArXiv Study Committee will present a report at the next Board meeting.

11. The issue of open access to IEEE publications was then briefly discussed. It was noted that IEEE is working to formulate its position on this issue and the Board will discuss the matter after that.

12. The Awards Subcommittee report was presented by Steven McLaughlin.

The recipients of the 2004 IT/ComSoc Joint Paper Award are:


13. The 2004 Best Paper Award nominations have been reviewed and shortlisted to three papers. The Awards subcommittee submitted these names to the Board for discussion and selection.

Although the ByLaws indicate that the Board is to vote and select the Best Paper, there was concern that it was difficult for the Board to discuss and select the Best paper at the Board meeting itself. Since the Awards subcommittee actually has gone through a proper discussion of the papers, it was suggested that it make an award recommendation to the Board.

The following motion was put forth: to suspend the ByLaws regarding voting for the Best Paper at the meeting and request that the Awards subcommittee provide more information about the papers and make an award recommendation.
The Board unanimously approved the motion.

→ **Action Item** The Awards subcommittee to present its recommendation to the board regarding the Best Paper award. The Board will vote at the next meeting.

14. The Best PhD Dissertation Prize was discussed. The merit of the award was discussed. It was noted that this had been tried before and had failed.

It was suggested to make more clear the eligibility of candidates.

The following motion was put forth: The Board applauds the idea and requests the committee to come back with a detailed proposal.

The Board unanimously approved the proposal.

→ **Action Item** The ad-hoc committee on Best PhD Dissertation Prize to make a proposal at the next meeting.

15. There was a discussion on the selection process of Best Paper Award. The current process is that the Awards subcommittee shortlists the numerous nominations and presents three candidates to the Board, which selects the winner.

The disadvantage of this process is that it selects the top paper based on committee votes based on the information in the nomination forms alone.

It was suggested that a better way is for the committee to discuss the papers thoroughly and come to a consensus on what makes the top three papers so exceptional. This rationale along with the nominations and votes would make it useful for the Board to make its decision.

It was noted that a change in the selection process of the Best Paper Award required a change in the Society ByLaws.


It was noted that the Society membership has declined 25% over the last two years. This makes membership development a critical issue for the Society.

There was a discussion on proposal to increase membership. Three main areas were highlighted: (i) encouraging graduating students to join the IT Society, (ii) encourage midcareer membership, and (iii) make the IT Transactions more accessible and attractive.

17. Lance Perez reported on the IT Newsletter. He discussed alternative production options for the newsletter. His recommendation is to remain with IEEE.

18. Mehul Motani reported on the Society website. Currently, the website is hosted on a personal desktop machine. He proposed to host the website with a professional ISP. Although this would incur some cost, it would lead to a more stable website and smooth transitions when new administrators take over.

The Board unanimously approved $700 per year for website hosting.

19. The Education Subcommittee has nothing to report.
20. Bixio Rimoldi discussed matters related to Symposia and Workshops.

(a) ISIT 2004 in Chicago: Everything okay.
(b) ITW 2004 in San Antonio: 126 submissions, 50% acceptance ratio, Eight sessions of invited papers, Plenary speakers identified, Registration fee less than $375.
(c) ISIT 2005 in Adelaide: Call for Papers out, deadline of Jan 31, 2005 with decisions by May 2005. Other details being worked out and information will be available on the website.
(d) ITW 2005 in New Zealand: Call for Papers is out, Focus is on Coding and Complexity, will be held week before ISIT 2005, Other details being worked out, All other issues on track.
(e) ISIT 2006 in Seattle: Hotel contract done, website skeleton up, TPC being formed.
(f) ISIT 2007: Originally expected to be in Salzburg, Austria, Facing several problems, Need local co-chair, Other options being explored.
(g) ITW 2003: Cancelled and not to be rescheduled.
(h) Proposal for ITW in 2005: Workshop on Theory & Practice of Information Theoretic Security, November 2005 timeframe, 3 day workshop in Japan, Technically co-sponsored by IACR.
   The Board unanimously approves the ITW 2005 proposal.

21. Tom Fuja presented the report of the Nominations Subcommittee.

He presented the following Twelve names of Society members willing to stand for election to the Board: Giuseppe Caire, Daniel J. Costello, Jr., Marc Fossorier, Aleksander Kavcic, Urbashi Mitra, Krishna Narayanan, B. Sundar Rajan, Ludo M.G.M. Tolhuizen, Mahesh Varanasi, Venugopal V. Veeravalli, Xiaodang Wang, and Kenneth Zeger.

In addition three additional nominations for election to the Board were made: Muriel Médard, Jong-Seon No, and Wojtek Spacnowski.

Two nominations for the Second Vice President were made: Marc Fossorier and Bixio Rimoldi.

The Board unanimously approved all the nominations.

22. The following new business items were discussed.

(a) Venu Veeravalli discussed the funding situation at NSF and specifically of the CISE Directorate.
   The reorganization at NSF/CISE does not look good for IT. Communications and Information Theory are now grouped with Computer Communication Foundations and Computer Networking Systems. In addition, the funding levels have been cut significantly.
   It was noted that the IT community needs to do its own marketing and lobbying to CISE/NSF in order to protect its place in research funding.
(b) Ralf Koetter and Muriel Médard presented the preliminary Call for Papers for the IT Transactions special issue on Network Information Theory and Coding with the ACM/IEEE Transactions on Networking.

The Board unanimously approved the following motion: The Board welcomes the special issue and encourages the distribution of the CFP.

23. It was announced that the next BOG meeting will be held in conjunction with ISITA on 11 October 2004 in Parma, Italy.

24. The meeting was adjourned at 18:30.