PRESIDENT’S REPORT
Muriel Medard
Board of Governors Meeting
Cambridge, MA
July 1, 2012
Main items

- Committee activity updates
- Overall health of the Society
- Society review process
- Highlights from review of Transactions in February at IEEE TAB
COMMITTEE ACTIVITY UPDATES

- Natasha will be stepping down as Secretary after fantastic work – Edmund Yeh has agreed to take on the role
- WithITS:
  - Negar Kiyavash has accepted to take over WithITS from Christina Fragouli
  - The Society thanks Christina for her outstanding work
- The mentoring committee has found renewed energy under Joerg Kliewer, who is leading the effort jointly with Bobak Nazer
- The External Nomination Committee, in its first year, has been very effective:
  - Max Costa
  - Muriel Medard (ex officio)
  - Prakash Narayan (chair)
  - Alon Orlitsky
  - Han Vinck
- Ad-hoc committees:
  - Ad-hoc committee on growth of Transactions:
    - Helmut Bölcskei
    - Emmanuel Candès
    - Abbas El Gamal (Chair)
    - Bruce Hajek
    - David Forney
    - Frank Kschischang
    - Madhu Sudan
    - Alexander Vardy
  - Ad-hoc committee on production cost of Transactions:
    - Helmut Bölcskei
    - Muriel Medard
    - Stefan Moser
    - Alon Orlitsky
OVERALL HEALTH OF THE SOCIETY

- Financial state presents some challenges, particularly regarding investment income (see Treasurer’s report) and increases in IEEE costs
- The quality of our Transactions is widely recognized but the administrative and financial burden is significant (see report from EiC, preliminary report from ad-hoc committee on growth of the Transactions and the report from the ad-hoc committee on production costs of Transactions)
- Technical recognition within and outside the Society is healthy (see First VP report and ENC report)
- Our conferences and schools have a very strong participation and there is healthy interest in organizing them (see conference committee report and Second VP report)
- Membership is slowly decreasing (IEEE-wide issue), chapters may be becoming less active (see Second VP report)
SOCIETY REVIEW

- We are currently going through the process of review of the Society that occurs every 5 years:
  - This February, Transactions were reviewed at the TAB meeting in Arizona
  - The rest of the Society review will take place in the November TAB meeting
  - Working with IEEE on the review – major topic at the BoG meeting in September
  - Input from the officers’ retreat will be useful, particularly regarding vision and strategy
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRANSACTIONS REVIEW

- The review was positive and was approved by TAB
- The quality, as measured by usual metrics, is superb, although there is some reduction in impact over the last few years – cause not entirely clear
- Organizationally, we still depend on the model of the heroic EiC – eventually this may not be tenable
- As a matter of governance, IEEE points out that there must be within the Society a mechanism for appeals above the EiC before progressing to the IEEE
  - The publications board cannot serve that role because it is appointed by the EiC
  - Many societies have several publications, that fall under the purview of the VP of Publications
  - As a stop-gap measure, I have proposed that the President serve in that role – we need to provide a mechanism to satisfy governance requirements
TAB Issues of Interest to Our Society

- New revenue streams seen mostly from new conferences, publications, and an open access mega-journal – these may not be very relevant to our Society
- Our only option is to reduce costs – see production cost ad-hoc committee report
- Issue of quantifying value of membership, since so many members obtain content through their employers – we can provide differentiated cost to our Society members and societies do so
- Issue around accepting funding from government agencies for conferences – there will be further discussion of this
- There will be a cost for technical co-sponsorship that places non-financially sponsored conferences on:
  - Of the order of 1 K per conference, plus a few dollars per paper
  - There will be some associated quality assurance from IEEE
  - This will affect us
  - I have requested that IEEE consider:
    - Allowing a few special cases per Society (Allerton for us)
    - Involving Societies in QA on a volunteer basis