

Minutes of the
Board of Governors Meeting IEEE Information Theory Society
March 14, 2006

Conrad Resort, Punta del Este, Uruguay

reported by Ralf Koetter

Attendees: David Neuhoff, Steve McLaughlin, Bixio Rimoldi, Dan Costello, Muriel Medard, Gadiel Seroussi, Marcello Weinberger, Alfredo Viola, Tor Helleseth, Jody O'Sullivan, Alexander Vardy, Ralf Koetter, Andrea Goldsmith, Mung Chiang

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:48 PM by David Neuhoff
2. The agenda was approved by the board
3. The minutes of the BoG meeting at ISIT in Adelaide were approved
4. Presidents report and announcements:

Dave Neuhoff thanked Steve McLaughlin and Han Vinck for their service and reported on the state of the IT Society. The number and quality of papers submitted to the IT Transactions remains high. The conferences and workshops are well attended and show a financial surplus. A number of excellent papers have been submitted for the relevant rewards and our members are highly recognized in the community. Some concern was expressed about the membership development. Again student membership dropped by about 15%. The society's finances are sound. The Board was reminded that the IT society has been moved to Division X. It was mentioned that the Russian Academy of Sciences has decided to keep IPPI in the RAS Division of Information Technologies and Computing Systems structure. (The Board had sent a letter urging such.) The main challenges are membership, and the structural changes at IEEE. Also, the 5 year review for the IT Society, Transactions and Newsletter is pending. The recent practice of having the society officers meet before the first BOG meeting of the year was brought to the Board's attention.

5. Conferences

Reports were given on the following workshops and symposia:

ISIT 2005 Australia

The organizers have not yet closed the affairs of the conference. The expected surplus is 18% of the budget.

ITW 2005 New Zealand

The organizers have not yet closed the affairs of the workshop.

ITW 2005 Japan

A report by Hideki Imai was presented.

ITW 2006 Uruguay

Gadiel Seroussi reported that the program, logistics and finances are in good shape. 155 participants registered with the largest contingent (38%) coming from Uruguay. The benefits to the local academic and research community were emphasized. The expected surplus is 18% of the budget which is larger than expected. Concern was expressed about the bureaucratic rigidity of IEEE.

ISIT 2006 Seattle

Jody O'Sullivan gave a presentation about the state of the symposium preparations. About 900

papers were submitted to the symposium. The preparations are well underway with all aspects of the organization being unproblematic. The Board encouraged the posting of accepted papers on ArXiv.

ITW 2006 China

Dan Costello reported that the workshop preparations are well underway with all aspects of the organization being unproblematic.

ISIT 2007 France

Muriel Medard gave an account of this symposium. The finances are in the process of being finalized. The remaining organizational issues are in currently being taken care of.

ITW 2007 Norway

Tor Helleseeth reported that the workshop preparations are underway with all aspects of the organization being unproblematic. A special focus of the workshop will be in the area of wireless communications. The budget was approved by the treasurer. **The board approved this workshop.**

Winterschool 2007

A request by the organizers of the Winterschool 2007 for technical co-sponsorship and student support was presented. **The board approved technical co-sponsorship.** No motion for student support was made and the sense of the board was that the society can, unfortunately, not afford to double as a funding agency.

ISIT 2008 Toronto

A short update on the conference preparations was given.

ITW 2008

No workshops are yet planned for 2008.

ISIT 2009 Seoul

Mung Chiang reported on the efforts on behalf of this workshop.

A discussion followed with the theme of making it possible for students to attend conferences at a very discounted rate. Muriel Medard and Andrea Goldsmith agreed to work out and propose an initiative on how to admit local students who are not authors of papers at a very discounted rate.

(Note: An "initiative" is a proposal to spend IT Society reserves for a specific goal. It requires IEEE approval, in addition to Board approval. Initiatives in a given year are limited to 1 to 3% of Society reserves, depending on certain conditions.)

6. The Treasurer's Report was given by Muriel Medard. The financial situation of the society is relatively good. The net worth is about 1000 KUSD which is roughly the same amount as in 1996. The society finances are now healthy enough to allow the use of reserves for various initiatives.

As such an initiative, it was proposed that electronic access (via IEEE Explore) to IT conference and workshop proceedings be included in the regular IT Society membership. The cost is approximately 10K per year. It was moved to propose this as an initiative to IEEE for three years: **The motion was approved unanimously.** The initiative will require IEEE approval.

Further, a motion was presented to maintain the member fees and subscription fees for the IT Transactions for the year 2007 at the same level as now. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

7. Report on IEEE Transactions on Information Theory (V. Poor)

A motion was made to approve two new Associate Editors, Ilya Dumer and Gadiel Seroussi. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

It was suggested that the page budget for the Transactions can likely be kept constant for 2007, i.e. at the same level as in 2006.

8. Student Committee

Andrea Goldsmith reported on the activities of the Student Committee. In particular, the website <http://itsoc-student.ece.cornell.edu/> was presented to the Board. The mailing list provided at this site is very successful. The idea to create a student award was discussed. Andrea was encouraged to bring a proposal to the Board.

9. Ad-hoc Committee on Transactions Growth (Vardy)

A preliminary report on the findings of this committee was given. The final report will be given at ISIT Seattle. The apparently exponential growth rate of the Transactions will create serious practical problems within the next decade.

The committee is considering the following measures to address this issue:

- An all electronic version of the Transactions with a printed version being distributed to libraries. Every month an email with abstracts and links will be sent to subscribers.
- A hierarchical structure with area editors can be introduced in the editorial board in order to help structure the editorial process.
- Limit correspondence items to a maximal number of pages.
- There is still time and no sense of urgency in order to make these changes.

10. IT Society website and online editor

A short report of the state of the website was given by David Neuhoff

11 . New business

Two recommendations from the IT Society Officers meeting were considered.

It was proposed to consider the formation of a standing Conference Committee. The benefits might include a pooling of resources and experience specialized to this task, as well as a reduction in the need for time-consuming discussions at Board meetings. As a first step, it was proposed to form an ad hoc committee to investigate the formation of a standing Conference Committee and make recommendations. **A corresponding motion was approved unanimously.** The committee will be appointed by David Neuhoff.

The issue of member/nonmember registration rebates for workshops and conferences was discussed. The idea is to rebate the difference between the IEEE member and nonmember conference registration fees for people who join IEEE and the IT Society at the conference site. Specifically, a three year trial program was proposed during which the cost of the rebate would be proposed as an initiative paid for from reserves. **A motion to propose such a rebate system to IEEE was made and unanimously approved.** As an initiative it will require IEEE approval.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 11:01PM.