

Minutes of AVS/New England Board Meeting Dec. 11, 2014

Agenda:

Treasurer's Report
Planned Activities
Report of Education Chair /SEW
Report from AVS National Board Meeting NYC
Election of AVSNE Officers of the Board
Planning for Symposium 2015
Attendee and Vendor Survey 2014
Other Business

The AVS/NE board meeting was held at 6PM on MKS Instruments, 6 Shattuck Road, in Andover, MA. Members of the board in attendance (as indicated by the symbol **) were: Cheryl Santarelli, Peter Somssich**, Dick Jacobs**, Jacques LaBrosse**, David Diamond, Earl Ada, Bob Childs, Jim Whitten**, Mike Connors** and Ravi Rastogi Guest:

Treasurer's Report

- Dick J. reported that our bank balance is ~ \$1900.

Planned Activities

- Our Fall Dinner Meeting in November at Lincoln Labs was not too well attended (11 attendees including the speaker). But those who attended enjoyed the talk and there were a few new attendees. We greatly appreciated that help that Brian Callahan of national AVS gave us in support of this event, as well as the coordination that Cheryl provided.
- The board was of the opinion that we should explore the possibility of holding a Spring Event in Worcester in cooperation with Nancy Burnham, who had suggested she would be willing to explore this idea with us. This would not necessarily be an evening event but perhaps a Friday Lunch/Afternoon program that could include 1-2 speakers, and an opportunity for some networking.

Report of Education Chair/SEW

- Although Earl A. was not present, conversations that he had with Peter S. and materials forwarded to our board indicates that our New England teacher was very impressed with the Science Educators Workshop (SEW) in Baltimore and will be using his training in the classroom.

Report of the AVS National Board Meeting NYC

- Jim W. represented the AVSNE board at the AVS National Board Meeting in NYC at the end of July. Jim reported that he was a bit disappointed with this meeting. It seemed to him that the discussions regarding chapter activities were just an afterthought, and there was very little time for the chapters to share their experiences with the national board, so that some attendees had in fact already left to catch planes even before the chapter presentations concluded. On the other hand, the difficulties that most chapters were having with funding and generating attendance at their events seemed to be a common theme. Although some at the meeting acknowledged hearing about these issues frequently, no one offered any new or practical approaches that could help. Of course, our board also understand that even the national AVS is struggling with these issues, however, Jim W. did not feel his attendance was worth the effort. A follow-up conference call to talk more in depth about chapter issues was likewise not very

rewarding. Jim W. waited on the line for more than an hour while other issues were discussed, and before he knew it, time had run out. Both experiences lead Jim W. to conclude that the chapters are on their own, and should not expect much help from the national organization.

Election of AVSNE Officers for the Board

- Peter S. reminded everyone present that if they are AVS members, they could still cast a ballot for AVS New England board candidates until the middle of Dec. The newly elected officers will take office on Jan.1, 2015 and serve for 2 years. That newly elected board can in turn make appointments of anyone who wishes to be involved in the AVSNE activities. Peter S. will send out the election results to the board members as soon as the national office makes them available.

Planning for Symposium 2015

- Peter S. reported that the UMass Lowell Conference Center had contacted him regarding our interest in holding the 2015 Symposium at their location. He promised them that our board would make a decision by Jan.30, 2015.
- After discussing possible dates, the board decided to suggest either June 1 or June 8 (preferred). Peter S. agreed to contact Kathleen at the UMass Lowell center after the holidays and ask her to tentatively reserve those dates for us until we make a decision by the end of Jan.
- Those in attendance discussed what is needed for us to go ahead with a commitment to a 2015 Symposium. We all agreed that vendor support is the key, and that based on the last 2 symposia (2012 and 2014) we would need the firm support in advance of at least 25 vendors. This is based on our expenses from the 2014 event of roughly \$14,000 (not including the Short Courses). Dick J. volunteered to draft and send letters to our regular vendors asking them to commit by Jan. 30 to participating at the 2015 Symposium. Peter S. will provide Dick with a list of the participating vendors from 2012 and 2014. In early Jan. 2015 after the letter has been sent out, each of the board members would be given ~ 6 vendors to follow-up with and personally ask them to make a commitment.
- Jim W. volunteered to reach out to university professors with the goal of engaging one of them to participate as a keynote speaker at the symposium. As soon as we have a date, he can begin this process. One of the topics of interest that was mentioned was “Flexible Electronics”.
- If the board decides to go ahead with the 2015 Symposium, we would sit down with Kathleen to negotiate a contract which could include both the Symposium and a Short Course option
- With regard to the Short Course offerings, Mike C. agreed to partner with Bob C. to put together a strategy for marketing the courses and deadlines for both sign-ups and instructors commitments.

Attendee and Vendor Survey 2014

- Peter S. volunteered to evaluate the 2014-attendee surveys while Dick J. was planning to evaluate the vendor surveys. ** After the Dec. 11, meeting both Peter and Dick have provided the board members with the results of these surveys. A brief summary of the results :

Attendee Survey: 18 of 78 = 23% response rate, most attendees have been aware of AVSNE for a number of years, strong interest for basic vacuum and solar energy short courses, most find vendor exhibition useful, most find technical sessions either interesting or very interesting, most attendees were either not aware of or do not attend our dinner meetings, most would be interested in some type of networking event, a large majority find the AVS as a society relevant to them, the attendance fee did not seem to be an obstacle for most attendees, comments that were provided were very positive, the only criticism provided mentioned the technical session rooms being too cold and too dark

Vendor Survey: 10 of 23 = 43% response rate, a strong majority rated the location and facilities good or excellent, a strong majority stated that the symposium was either successful or somewhat successful for their company, a respondents felt that one day was enough for their business needs, a number of suggestions were made to improve the symposium for vendors(these included better promotion, earlier announcement of event and perhaps shifting the hours for vendor exhibits), 8 of 10 respondents said they plan to attend in 2015, 8 of 10 respondents asked the board to consider other locations (locations mentioned were Hartford CT (5 of 10), Burlington VT(2 of 10) as well as Springfield MA, Portland ME, and Nashua NH.

Other Business

- The next meeting of the newly elected AVSNE board will be on Wed. Jan. 21, 2015 at 6PM, and will be held in the Chemistry Department offices at UMass Lowell, Lowell MA. Jim W. has graciously offered to host us.

Submitted by Peter Somssich on Dec.29, 2014