

**American Physical Society -- Forum on History of Physics**  
**Executive Committee Minutes, Meeting of January 29, 2017.**

**Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.**  
**Congressional Boardroom, 8:00 a.m.**

Present:

Paul Caden-Zimansky (Vice-Chair Elect)  
Alan Chodos (Chair-Elect)  
Robert Crease (Chair)  
Greg Good (AIP Representative)  
Dan Kleppner (Councilor)  
Dan Kennefick (Vice-Chair)  
Cameron Reed (Secretary-Treasurer)  
Aimee Slaughter (Member-at-Large)  
Rebecca Ullrich (Member-at-Large Elect)  
Catherine Westfall (Past Chair)

Unable to attend:

Alberto Martinez (Member-at-Large)  
Ron Mickens (Member-at-Large)  
Don Salisbury (Member-at-Large)  
Alvin Saperstein (Member-at-Large)  
Suman Seth (Member-at-Large)

Crease called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.; all present introduced themselves.

Westfall moved and Kleppner seconded approval of the minutes of the 2016 Executive Committee meeting (Salt Lake City); this was approved unanimously.

Nominating Committee. Westfall reviewed the work of the Nominating Committee, and welcomed Cadden-Zimansky and Ullrich to their new positions. It was remarked that we should try to encourage more students to run for various positions and encourage more diversity among members of the Executive Committee. Suggestions for nominees for this year's election should be sent to Bob Crease, who will chair the committee when he becomes Past-Chair following the APS March meeting. It was pointed out that any student nominees should run against each other.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report. Reed summarized his 2016 report. The Forum ended the calendar year with about \$10,200 in its main operating account. Membership stands at almost exactly 3,500, a slight decrease from the previous year. Chodos explained how APS investment practices operate and reminded those present that no receipts are required for meals claimed on travel

expenses if the APS per diem rates are claimed. It was remarked that we should start using the Heritage Fund monies; the spendable balance stands at about \$30,000. The issue of the slow erosion of FHP membership was discussed; this may be due to a recent proliferation of Forums within APS. Chodos reported that APS is coming considering raising the number of free Forums from 2 to 3. It was suggested that we could have badge numbers of interested members scanned at Forum sessions. (See also Unit Convocation below.)

Councilor's Report. Kleppner summarized some recent actions of APS Council. A new algorithm for allocating APS Fellows has been adopted. This involves allocating Fellowship nomination slots according as member counts which have had the number of student members subtracted; the rationale is that students are not likely to be nominated for Fellowship. In this scheme the FHP allocation is likely to be 5-6 nominees, which for practical purposes will have no effect given our recent levels of nomination activity. Kleppner also reviewed the structure of the APS Council and Board, Nine of 15 Board members are elected by the Council, and the Council Steering Committee meets remotely every two weeks. Decision-making power rests with the Council, while the Board bears fiduciary responsibility for the Society. A very important issue at present is that of the impact of Open Access publication on APS journal revenues. In this context it was remarked that APS membership and meeting fees are very expensive in comparison to those of history societies. Kleppner offered to raise the issue of reduced costs for members of sister societies.

Essay Contest. Kleppner described his proposal for an early-career (i.e., pre-PhD) history of physics essay contest, proposing a prize of \$1000 and coverage of travel expenses to present an Invited talk at the March or April APS meeting. It was proposed that the contest be publicized in APS News, which might also serve as a publication vehicle for winning contributions. Submissions could be by web-based template; a 2000-word limit was suggested. Crease and Chodos will work on developing guidelines.

Program Committee. Chodos described the work of the Program Committee which comprised essentially himself and Dan Kennefick. This led to a wide-ranging discussion of possible sessions for 2018 and 2019 meetings. Suggestions included:

2018:

An "Author in Dialogue" session focusing on David Kaiser's "How the Hippies Saved Physics".  
Parity violation 60th anniversary.  
World War I effects on physics (Moseley, Schwarzschild).  
Doug Stone on Einstein's contributions to quantum physics; the quantum before 1926.

2019:

Centenary of General Relativity eclipse expeditions.  
Post World War I development of acausal physics.  
Post World War I reorganization of scientific societies such as IUPAC.  
Paul Forman on Weimar culture.  
Connections between atomic physics and astrophysics.

Centenary of Rutherford artificial transmutation experiment.  
A session on the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of APS.

Fellowship Committee. Dan Kennefick reviewed the work of the Fellowship Committee. FHP successfully nominated one new Fellow this year, Kathryn Olesko of Georgetown University. It was pointed out that nominees for Fellowship must have been members of the APS since January 1 of the year preceding their nomination. Some possible future nominees were proposed.

Brian Schwartz entered the meeting at 10:00 a.m. A break was declared at 10:10 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 10:25 a.m.; Westfall did not return.

Greg Good distributed copies of the current edition of the AIP History of Physics newsletter.

Staged Readings of Play. Schwartz reviewed this year's staged readings being sponsored by FHP (*Moving Bodies* and *Reykjavik*). Schwartz is now in the six year of his nominal four-year term of organizing these very popular presentations. For the 2019 meeting he is considering a full-fledged performance of Alan Lightman's "Einstein's Dreams". For 2018, a reading involving the theme of "time" is under consideration.

Newsletter. Crease summarized Newsletter operations; he is in his sixth year of a three-year term as Editor. He is willing to continue but would like to identify a successor. Most issues comprise information on contributed sessions and the Pais Prize; he would like to see a more stable flow of contributed articles and book reviews.

Video Recording of Sessions. The issue if video recording of Forum sessions was raised. Chodos investigated this following the meeting, and returned the following comments (edited):

If we go through APS, the cost for video recording a session is \$3000; the cost of an audio recording is about \$200. The difference reflects the fact that a human being (likely a union member) is needed to operate the camera, whereas the audio recording needs only a machine. For the April meeting the slides of every talk are posted online. If we had audio, we could post it together with the slides. The viewer would have to manually advance the slides to correspond with the audio. Finally, there is a deluxe option of capturing both the speaker and the slides on video, and posting them together. The cost per session for this is in the \$5000 range, and reflects the fact that two cameras are needed, one for the speaker and one for the slides. APS uses this method for the April meeting plenaries.

Schwartz left the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Unit Convocation. (12) Cadden-Zimansky reported on the Unit Convocation which immediately preceded the "April" meeting. Some highlights (edited):

Editor-in-Chief Pierre Meystre focused on increasing the journals' international presence, particularly in the pacific rim. To remedy the lack of a natural home for the increasing number of cross- disciplinary papers, PRX will likely transition into a more cross-sub-

disciplinary journal, and a new journal, APS Materials, is slated to be launched in summer. There is pressure, particularly from European stakeholders, to make the transition to Open Access as early as 2020, with strong disincentives for being an early adopter of the author fee model. This year's March Meeting will be the last with a printed Bulletin as an all-electronic bulletin will save \$30k/year. 2019 will bring the all-APS meeting in Boston, though there is little official guidance at present for how this affects meeting planning. The new Forum for Early Career Scientists (FECS) formed this year. With the increasing number of forums, the leadership is leaning towards allowing members three free forums rather than two. The membership offices prefers that information about individuals recruited to become members at meetings be collected into one spreadsheet for submission, with the individual's badge number being the key piece of ID. To this end there exists a phone app, APS Meeting Lead, that allows one to scan meeting badges, as well as dedicated fast-scanners for this purpose that one can get from IT at meetings. The media office indicated it may be more likely in future to send background requests on topics to the FHP for guidance. The new federal administration and Congress informed many discussions at the Convocation, which was preceded by a Congressional Visit Day in which over half the senate offices and 80 representative offices were lobbied by APS members. Finally APS Governance would like to pass along their recommendation that all Forum EC members read the Forum bylaws once a year.

Cadden-Zimansky raised the idea of developing a resource guide to experts on historical topics, and volunteered to begin doing so.

Crease thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their support during his year as Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cameron Reed  
Secretary-Treasurer  
February 4, 2017