Minutes of the IEEE Control Systems Society Executive Committee Meetings
December 10/11/13 2016, Las Vegas, USA

2016 ExCom members

President	Frank Doyle	VP Conferences Activities	Maria Prandini
President Elect	Edwin Chong	VP Financial Activities	Bob Bitmead
Past President	Elena Valcher	VP Member Activities	Sandra Hirche (absent 12/10)
Director of Operations	Ragu Balakrishnan	VP Publication Activities	Fabrizio Dabbene
		VP Technical Activities	Kirsten Morris

Guests: Francesco Bullo (incoming President Elect; absent 12/10), Anu Annaswamy (incoming VPTA), Magnus Egerstedt (incoming VPFA), Li-Chen Fu (incoming VPMA), Thomas Parisini (incoming VPPA, absent 12/10).

Saturday, December 10, 2016, 7:00pm – 9:00pm	**Senna Boardroom – Level 3**
Sunday, December 11, 2016, 7:00am – 9:00am	**Senna Boardroom – Level 3**

CDC 2018 budget	Prandini

The conversation began on December 10 without Andy Teel in the room. He was expected to join around 8:00pm.

Maria presented the current state of the budget for CDC 2018. The latest budget proposed by Andy Teel had the registration rate at $630. There is sensitivity that this is significantly higher than the registration rates at other CDCs held in the US. Therefore, Bob and Maria, after examining the budget, have recommended removing the banquet subsidy provided to student registrants, thus reducing the registration rate to $590 (yet with the required 20% surplus requirement mandated by the IEEE). Andy has some misgivings about this recommendation – he has already committed (with a signed contract) a certain food and beverage (F&B) minimum, and his concern is that reducing F&B costs to achieve the reduction in the registration rate may jeopardize the F&B minimum commitment (Bob Judd is not as concerned). There is also the issue that Andy would like to put together a top-notch experience for the attendees.

The conversation then shifted to the tradeoff between having a conference surplus (i.e., income to CSS) and keeping the registration costs lower (i.e., service to CSS membership). However, this is not a simple tradeoff:

- The surplus (which often is less than the 20% projected with the initial budget) is an important source of revenue for CSS. This revenue is put to good use, eventually finding its way to funding outreach, technical and other initiatives that enrich the CSS community.

- A high registration rate is not only a burden on the wallets of the CSS community, but it also feeds a perception that CSS is now more interested in enriching its coffers. Moreover, the BoG has been vigilant on the issue of registration costs and the registration fees are in line or lower than comparable events.

- The eventual number of registrants and their composition (regular vs. student) plays an important role in the actual surplus figures. The effect of the registration rate on the number of registrants is not well understood.

At the conclusion of this conversation, a show of hands suggested support for advising Andy to lower the registration rate to $590 (5 for, 2 against, 1 abstention, and 1 absent).

Andy Teel joined the meeting at 8:05pm.

He reiterated many of the points already raised in the conversation. He is aware that the registration rate is high for a US-based CDC, but had to set the rate to $630 to project the 20% surplus. Indeed, Andy thought that the rate had to be even higher to actually realize the 20% surplus. Two questions were asked: (i) Is the F&B cost comparable to past US-based CDCs (implicitly: is this the reason why the rate is high?). The answer was that the F&B budget was comparable to the 2014 CDC in LA. (ii) What is the assumption on the number of registrants? The answer was that this was also based on the 2014 CDC; the numbers appears to be similar with the (current) 2016 CDC as well. It was pointed out that the final registration numbers often are significantly higher (the finances however are not settled until years later), but the mix of student versus full registrations also changes. Moreover, the 2014 CDC numbers may have suffered due to competition with the IFAC conference.

It was reiterated to Andy that the 20% surplus is an IEEE requirement, and that the ExCom takes a broader approach to the surplus question, in view of the tradeoffs. Frank then asked Teel to do the following exercise. Set the registration fee to $600. Assume that the F&B minimum is met but not exceeded.

- What is the number of registrants (with the historical mix of student vs. regular registrants) to achieve a projected 20% surplus? The answer was 1684.

- What is the surplus with the originally projected number of registrants? The answer was 7%.

Andy was advised to proceed with setting the registration rate at $600, and prepare a preliminary budget meeting the IEEE requirement for 20% surplus and with the free variable being the number of registrants.

This topic was revisited on 12/11/2016. The motion to approve the CDC 2018 with the registration rate set at $600 was finalized and endorsed unanimously by the ExCom.

CCTA 2020 dates	Prandini

The motion to approve August 24, 2020 to August 26, 2020 as dates for CCTA 2020 was presented and endorsed unanimously. There was no discussion.

Life Sciences Technical Community MOU renewal	Doyle

The ExCom, at the November Boston meeting, had endorsed the idea that Frank would meet with Life Sciences Technical Community (LSTC) leadership and present a course of action. Frank presented some important developments. The summary is that without any apparent loss of privileges to CSS (and other sponsoring societies), the sponsorship cost has been reduced to about $5K/yr. This appears to be a positive development for CSS. Frank then presented the following motion:

- ***Motion: Renew the support of the Life Sciences Technical Community for an additional 5-year period.***

Endorsed by: Executive Committee
Financial Impact: Approximately $5K/yr for next 5 years

Background:
- CSS was founding member of LSI (Life Science Initiative) and LSTC, with initial support (full sponsor) pledged at $15K/yr for 3 years ending 12/31/16.
- Proposal for forward path involves EMBS admin support, and sponsorship reduced to ~$5K/yr for web and other infrastructure support. Level of support will be dictated by number of pledged sponsors (expected to be ≥5).
- Concern that this would become an EMBS dominated activity (e.g., Special Interest Group (SIG) within EMBS), but current board voted for LSTC model for cross-IEEE activities and planning.
- Conference revenue sharing available on an *a la carte* basis (CSS may derive benefit from 2017 event based on current support).

This motion was discussed on 12/10/2016 and informally supported. As it had not been formally endorsed, the ExCom endorsed it unanimously on 12/11/16.

Life Sciences Letters MoU renewal	Doyle

Frank presented the surprising news that EMBS has decided to end its involvement in the LSL. The original model had a steering committee with five votes – EMBS (2), CSS (1), CAS (1), and LSTC (1). The new model thus has the committee with three votes. At this time, Frank recommended that Metin Akay (the EiC) be given the opportunity to collaborate with the CSS community (for which he has expressed enthusiasm). Frank noted that CSS will have 1/3 votes for decision-making, but will have to split profits three-ways (10% LSTC, 45% CSS, 45% CAS) and split losses 50/50, as LSTC has no financial resources. He then presented the following motion:

- *Motion: Renew the support of the Life Sciences Letters for an additional 3-year period.*

Endorsed by: Executive Committee
Financial Impact: Variable +/- $5K for next 3 years

Background:
- CSS was founding financial sponsor of LSL, with initial financial support pledged at $10K/yr for 3 years ending 12/31/16.
- New EiC appointed, with pledge to continue original four themes for journal.
- CAS appears ready to renew, while EMBS is dropping out.
- Journal is running approximately revenue neutral.
- Financial sponsors bear financial liability and share in revenue, for example, revenue sharing might be 45% (half of 90%, balance (10%) goes to LSTC); liability would be 50%.

The motion was endorsed unanimously.

Omnipress contract renewal	Doyle

Frank presented the motion to renew CSS's contract with Omnipress:

- *Motion: To renew the conference multi-year contract with Omnipress publisher for a three-year period, beginning January 1, 2017.*

Endorsed by: Executive Committee
Financial Impact: None

Background:

- By the end of 2016 the contract with the publisher Omnipress will expire.
- Purpose of the contract: make publication services available at a fixed cost for the period of the contract, not binding (the contract will also stipulate that CSS sponsored conferences have a choice to use these services or not).
- This is a joint contract with AACC. Approval for renewal from AACC is pending.
- In March/April 2016, General Chairs and Publication Chairs of latest CSS and AACC conferences (since 2014) were asked an opinion and were quite supportive of renewing the contract with Omnipress.
- The CSS conference publication chair Oscar Gonzalez contacted Omnipress for a 2017-2019 IEEE CDC, ACC, CCTA and other IEEE CSS Event Publications Budgetary Proposal for our review.
- The proposal was reviewed by a task force composed by the CSS president, VPCA and conference publication chair, and presented to the Executive Committee for endorsement at the meeting on Saturday December 10, 2016.
- Summary of most relevant points:
  - A conference may choose to use some or all of the publication services provided by Omnipress. The services include
    - Preparing the Conference Program (e.g., the Final Program and Book of Abstracts),
    - Printing, binding and shipping the Conference Program, and
    - Duplicating, pad printing, and shipping the conference flash drives.
  - Omnipress will work with materials provided by PaperCept and the conference organizers. The contract includes an approximate 9% increase for the next three-year period.

There was no discussion, and the motion was endorsed unanimously by the ExCom.

Review of motions	All

The motions were reviewed and finalized.

Request for support from Bozenna Pasik-Duncan for Women in IFAC lunch	Chong

Bozenna Pasik-Duncan has made a request (informally, and directly to Ed) to support a lunch for women at the IFAC 2017 World Congress. IFAC does not provide financial support for such activities; indeed, even IFAC technical meetings at conferences such as the CDC are not financially supported by IFAC. It is expected that the NMOs bear the burden of supporting such efforts.

Bob recommended that Bozenna be advised to seek support formally from CSS through the outreach budget of CSS. In addition, in view of IFACs policy on supporting such activities, it was recommended that Bozenna be advised to approach the local (French) NMO for support of the women's lunch at the Toulouse meeting. It was pointed out that there was no reason why CSS would support an IFAC event. The outreach program was suggested as a possibility, provided there was some clear CSS involvement beyond mere financial support. Recognition of CSS funding would also need to be part of the outreach bid. In addition, requests for funding should be submitted in the form of a proposal with a budget, not informal requests.

Student funding for non-US CDCs	Li-Chen Fu

Li-Chen raised the issue of lack of NSF funding for non-US CDC conferences. With the current practice of scheduling CDCs outside the US at frequent intervals, this was bound to be a recurring issue. Bob suggested that a proposal should be made in the Fall call for outreach proposals. Bob also pointed out that highlighting this problem had a whiff of US-centrism.

CDC in South America in 2022	Prandini

Mario Sznaier had inquired with Maria about possibly hosting a CDC in South America in 2022, specifically at Buenos Aires. While there was support for this proposal, the suggested response was that we are still in the process of generating a set of guidelines for awarding sites for future conferences. Moreover, there has already been a competing inquiry from Singapore to host CDC 2022.

Program chairs for CCTA 2020	Prandini

Maria informed the ExCom that Amir Aghdam, GC for CCTA 2020, has been seeking input on a Program Chair. He had broached a team comprising Tariq Samad and a PC co-chair. He had two prospects on the PC co-chair – junior faculty member, and Martin Steinbuch. The junior faculty member was deemed too inexperienced to serve in this capacity. There was widespread support for Steinbuch, based on his past editorial duties (journal and conference). In addition, Steinbuch was well connected with the mechatronics community and Philips. There was also the sentiment expressed that given that CCTA was not as large as the CDC, there was no reason to have co-chairs for it. In addition, we were perhaps over-taxing experienced CSS members such as Samad. No decisions were made, but the thoughts of the ExCom were to be communicated back to Aghdam.

CSS joining the Smart Cities Initiative	Morris

The conversation centered mostly on the criteria to be employed in making decisions on CSS's joining new activities. The criteria that have already been identified were to be refined into "What are the questions to ask?" and "What are the tangible benefits?" While these would be helpful, there will always remain an element of judgment in making the final recommendation.

Smart Cities seems to be one initiative that meets all the criteria. Kirsten asked and received from the ExCom affirmation for further exploration of CSS involvement. Anu will move forward with IEEE on the possibility of CSS being a member of the Smart Cities Community.

Other business	Morris

Frank reminded the ExCom about the importance of the 12/13 meeting where preparation for the awards ceremony will be finalized.

Frank also reminded all ExCom members about the importance of updating their respective manuals.

Elena discussed the Spring ExCom arrangements (which she will be hosting). She was concerned about finding suitable hotel accommodations in Venice (they will turn out to be more expensive than anticipated). She pointed out that Trieste was an alternative. She requested arrival and departure information from the attendees so that she can finalize the best offer she can get from Venice hotels. If this best offer were to be unsatisfactory, we will look for alternate locations to Venice to host the ExCom meeting.

Tuesday, December 13, 2016, 7:00am – 9:00am	**Senna Boardroom – Level 3**

Review of the Awards ceremony	*All*

The script for the awards ceremony and the accompanying power point presentation were reviewed, and appropriate modifications made.

Revisiting the question of voting BoG membership (information item from BoG meeting)	Doyle

The feedback from the BoG was:

1. The decision to include the Editor of Electronic Publications ("EPubs editor") was made deliberately, and only in the recent past (a few years ago) to recognize the increasing importance of digital media. The proposed motion appears like a backward step.

2. If the concern was the ratio of elected to non-elected members in the BoG, perhaps we should increase the number of elected members. However, the concern here is that it is already difficult to build a committed pool of nominees, and further increase in the elected membership would be even more challenging.

3. If the concern was that formal oversight of the governance of CSS (through BoG voting) should rest with the CSS community, then the rules could be changed to give the power of the vote only to elected BoG members.

On the first point, it appears that when the position of EPubs editor was elevated to the stature of a voting BoG member, it was envisioned that the activities and responsibility of the office would rise to the level of a journal editor-in-chief. This has not happened, and therefore there were no significant arguments at this time against removing voting privileges from the EPubs Editor. On the second and third points, a number of alternate scenarios were proposed:

- It was reiterated that simply increasing the number of elected BoG members was not a realistic solution. However, we could create the position of "Associate Member" (AM) of the BoG, without voting privileges. However, as BoG meetings are open, it was unclear as to what additional privileges Associate Membership would confer, over a generic CSS member. Perhaps AMs would be included in any email discussions of the BoG (the opportunity to participate in such discussions would not be available to the broader CSS membership).

- Remove voting privileges from all the journal editors (it was pointed out that we will be adding one more EiC to the BoG, as we now have a new journal – Control Systems Letters) and/or the ExCom. Initial reaction was that removing voting privileges from both groups would be a drastic step, as it would ignore the historical perspectives brought by EiCs and the ExCom members (most of them being long-term, active, volunteers of the CSS).

Frank suggested that this discussion be continued at future ExCom meetings, under the leadership of the new President. He will contact IEEE for additional details concerning BoG ratios to inform this discussion.

Other business	Hirche

The allocation of funds to support student travel between CDC and CCTA is currently split 2-to-1 respectively. As the ratio of applications for student support between CDC and CCTA is 10:1, Sandra proposed that the funds be apportioned at a ratio of 5:1. This proposal had unanimous support from the ExCom.