

**USENIX Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
December 5, 2005  
Town & Country Resort Hotel, San Diego, CA  
Minutes**

Attendance:

**Board:**

Mike Jones  
Matt Blaze (via phone)  
Clem Cole  
Alva Couch  
Jon “maddog” Hall (via phone, joined a 9:15 a.m.)  
Geoff Halprin  
Ted Ts’o

**Staff:**

Ellie Young  
Cat Allman  
Anne Dickison  
Casey Henderson (joined at 12:05 p.m.)  
Daniel Klein (joined at 11:05 a.m.)  
Jane-Ellen Long  
Tara Mulligan  
Toni Veglia

**Guests:**

Dan Appelman (joined at 1:45 p.m.)  
Jerry Carter  
Remy Evard  
Trey Harris  
Peter Honeyman  
Doug Hughes (joined at 2:08 p.m.)  
Andrew Hume (joined at 4:22 p.m.)  
Greg Rose (joined at 10:30 a.m.)  
Nick Stoughton

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m., with all of the above present except as noted.

## **Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

Halprin requested that his entire statement regarding SAGE and his objections to the proceedings to decide on its future be added to the October minutes.

**McKusick moved and was seconded by Cole to accept the October 2005 minutes as amended; the minutes will reflect that Halprin requested the addition of his comments.**

**Passed: all in favor**

**Couch moved and was seconded by Cole to accept the August 2005 minutes as amended.**

**Passed: in favor: 7; abstain: 1 (McKusick)**

## **Changes to the Agenda**

Hall requested that awards discussion be moved.

Couch asked to have a discussion about the Configuration Management Workshop added to conferences.

Jones requested a discussion of the Member Services and Student Program Reports in the consent agenda.

McKusick requested review of the committees.

## **Action Items**

Board members reported on their action items, deferring most discussion to items in the agenda.

## **Awards**

Hall reported on the proposal he submitted for redefining the criteria for the Flame Award to include contributions by groups, not just individuals and expanding the scope to include advancements in “computer science,” not only Unix. He also asked for clarification on the autonomy of the committee. The response was that committee’s work is at the behest of the Board, and the Board may choose to exercise oversight, though that rarely occurs.

**McKusick moved and was seconded by Halprin to accept the proposal for new Flame award criteria with the noted grammatical corrections.**

**Passed: all in favor**

Cole and Long offered to rewrite the wording (see item later in agenda). Jones requested that the next round of recommendations for awards occur by the end of January 2006.

## **Report on 2005 Year-End Finances**

Young reported that while we had budgeted for a break-even year, projections as of November indicate that we might have a deficit of \$140K in operations. This was mainly due to lower attendance/revenue at the USENIX Annual Tech Conference. We could, however, come close to break-even depending on how the final numbers looked for onsite registration at LISA and registration/sponsorships at FAST next week. She thanked the staff for their hard work in 2005.

*Break from 10:00-10:15 a.m.*

## **2006 First Draft Budget**

Young went over her report that would be used for discussion purposes. A final budget would be prepared after this meeting for approval in 2006. The budget reflected the following: planning for 7 conferences instead of the normal 8-10; the current level of staffing can handle up to 10; no increases in registration fees or member dues; membership will be flat for all classes. If we went ahead with this and funding the student programs and standards activities, the net deficit might be as high as \$400K. Young did not feel optimistic that USENIX could break even without drastically reducing staff and programs. Her recommendation was to attempt to get USENIX Annual Tech conference's deficit to within \$100,000, increase the funding for SAGE in the next 6 months to help with member retention and new programs, and to have the Board provide direction on the number of conferences we will sponsor in the next three years so she could handle the staffing implications of this. The Board agreed to table further discussion until executive session.

*Rose joined the meeting at 10:30 a.m.*

## **Proposal for Funding Standards Activities**

Stoughton reviewed his report. He is seeking a continuation of funding for POSIX activities. It is unclear whether the Free Standards Group will be able to contribute co-funding to this effort. Stoughton is looking into a C++ binding project, which has a working group already started, and he reported that Linux Standards Base was fully approved as an ISO Standard with no opposition.

**McKusick moved and was seconded by Couch that USENIX fund the standards proposal in Agenda 6, in the amount of \$53,640.**

**Passed: all in favor**

## **Proposal for Funding USACO**

Young reported on behalf of Kolstad that the program is thriving, and won many awards for participants in 2005.

**McKusick moved and was seconded by Cole to fund the USACO program in 2006 for \$15,000.**

**Passed: all in favor**

## **Proposal for John Lions Chair Endowment**

Rose reported on the effort to create an endowed chair in computer science at the University of New South Wales to honor a pioneer in Unix and computer science. Rose said that the donation by Qualcomm that was matched by the UNSW has enabled the endowment to operate for 20 years, but it is not enough to make it permanent. He said that the UNSW is no longer matching donated funds.

**Ts'o moved and was seconded by McKusick that USENIX match up to a total of \$250,000 in donations now through December 31, 2006, for the John Lions Chair in Computer Science.**

**Passed: all in favor**

## **Sponsorship of the CRA Snowbird Conference**

USENIX would receive recognition in materials, as well as getting one free registration, for \$3,500.

**Couch moved and was seconded by McKusick to sponsor the 2006 CRA Snowbird Conference for \$3,500.**

**Passed: all in favor**

*Break from 11:15-11:25 a.m.*

## **Conference Reports**

### **Tutorial Program Report**

Klein reported that the LISA '05 attendance was fairly good, and that two tutorials were cancelled due to low enrollment. He suggested that we review the current remuneration package for instructors. Jones suggested an ad hoc committee of McKusick, Ts'o, and staff to discuss the matter.

### **Current Conference Program**

#### **LISA**

Young reported that attendance at this event is doing well, with approximately 1,100 as of this date. Dickison reported on the marketing for the event, saying that 34% of the attendees are from the Western region of the US. Allman reported that the exhibit floor is now full, though there were many last minute sign-ups, making it difficult to predict

the final outcome. She said that many vendors are interested in holding Birds of a Feather sessions. Young reported that David Blank-Edelman, was an extremely proactive Chair.

Bill LeFebvre will chair LISA 2006.

### **FAST – File and Storage Systems**

Young reported that conference attendance and sponsorship was up over the previous year. Some members of the steering committee were concerned that relevance consideration had to be drawn in a much greater way by the program committee. Some felt that we don't have a way to distinguish the value of systems papers, especially as it fits the agenda of the program and USENIX. It was decided that the board liaison and Young would take this issue up with the program chairs.

### **WORLDS – Workshop on Real, Large, Distributed Systems**

Young reported that we are planning for about 50 attendees at the event, which will be held alongside FAST next week. In 2006, the event will be co-located with OSDI.

### **NSDI – Networking Systems Design and Implementation**

Young said there were a record number of submissions, and papers will be decided on in early January, with authors being notified in time to resubmit to Annual Tech if they wish.

### **Annual Technical Conference**

Young reported that Blaze and Couch will be the liaisons in 2006, and the event will be held just after Memorial Day in Boston. There are currently only two technical session tracks: Systems Practice & Experience (SP&E), and Invited Talks. Tutorials are scheduled every day. Young said there are rooms to add workshops at the event. Couch suggested a one-day workshop on Configuration Management.

*Henderson joined the meeting at 12:05 p.m.*

### **SRUTI – Symposium on Reducing Unwanted Traffic on the Internet**

Young reported that Steve Bellovin would chair the 2006 symposium. Participation will be expanded, though it will remain an invited event. Cole reported that he spoke to Bala Krishnamurthy about offering open registration in the future. It was agreed that the 2006 event would operate under the current plan, and we would revisit this issue in 2007.

### **Linux Kernel Summit**

Ts'o reported that preliminary planning is barely underway. Allman reported that we have \$35,000 in sponsorship so far.

### **E-Voting Workshop**

Young reported that the event was originally going to be held at Annual Tech, but due to a problem with a scheduling it will be held at Security 2006. Ron Rivest and Dan Wallach are pulling it together.

### **Security/HotSec**

Blaze reported that planning is going well. There is a tentative plan to hold a new sub-conference called Hot Security (Hot Topics in Security), which will be by invitation only.

### **OSDI – Operating System Design and Implementation**

Young reported that the CFP is out. She said that a “sponsor czar” has been appointed from the program committee to help obtain sponsors, and they hope to get close to \$100,000.

### **HotDep - Workshop on Hot Topics in System Dependability**

Jones reported that this is an event for dependable systems, and it will be held on November 8, 2006, co-located with OSDI. George Candea and Ken Birman are the co-chairs.

### **SECSE – Symposium in Experimental Computing Systems and Engineering**

Honeyman reported that he is working with Margo Seltzer and others to organize this, and he feels it will be a great venue for presentation of experimental computer science research. He is approaching this as a pilot project.

## **Co-Sponsored Conferences**

### **SANE – System and Network Engineering Conference**

Honeyman said that the organizers are here at LISA in order to communicate with USENIX staff and get tips on conference promotion and operations. The program committee met last week, and papers are selected. USENIX has committed \$20,000 in financial support, with an additional guarantee of \$20,000 should it be necessary.

### **Middleware**

Honeyman said USENIX is providing promotion for the event. He said there is strong Asian and European support for the conference, and it is co-sponsored by IFIP, ACM and USENIX. He requested a new liaison be appointed to replace him, and Cole agreed.

### **IMC –Internet Measurement Conference**

Young reported that in previous years, USENIX has just offered help with promotion and stipends. In 2005, we did the registration, and proceedings, while co-sponsoring it with ACM SIGCOMM. There were 130 attendees. Young was hoping that USENIX would eventually be a full co-sponsor of the event, but it looked unlikely. She will continue discussion with the steering committee about USENIX’s role.

### **VEE – Virtual Execution Environments**

Couch reported that the event will be co-located with PLDI (Programming Language Design and Implementation, offered by ACM SIGPLAN) for the next two years, but suggested that it may do well co-located with OSDI in 2008. The event covers both programming languages and operating systems.

### **Autonomic Computing**

Couch is on the program committee for this event. It focuses on the complexity of large-scale systems. It will be held in Ireland in June 2006, in conjunction with the 3<sup>rd</sup> IEEE International Conference on Autonomic Computing.

*Lunch break from 12:45-1:45 p.m.*  
*Hall left the meeting at 12:45 p.m.*  
*Appelman joined the meeting at 1:45 p.m.*

## **Potential Conferences**

Young said that we should be planning now for 2007 and beyond for new conferences.

The following were suggested as possibilities to explore:

- Industry representatives invited to give talks, but not be required to produce formal papers.
- Web Services: practical applications of Web Services, training tracks around Ajax and LAMP (we would need help from vendors to market them)
- Virtualization was suggested if VEE doesn't expand to gather the Virtual Machines crowd
- Autonomic Computing - though not the IBM version of it
- Embedded Systems targeting engineers, such as GNU, Linux, Free BSD, etc.
- WebSphere at IBM. Birds-of-a-Feather sessions or tutorials at LISA- Ts'o will look into this
- Real-time Linux: it was suggested access to the creators of the technology is something valuable that USENIX offer.

*Hall rejoined the meeting at 2:04 p.m.*  
*Hughes joined the meeting at 2:08 p.m.*

## **Future Conferences**

Young reported that Annual Tech will be smaller in 2006, but we can expand/change the format in the future. She said we should consider moving the event toward a federated model, and possibly co-locating some smaller conferences.

“Conferences on the Cheap” were discussed, such as holding them at universities, though this would limit flexibility in scheduling. It was suggested that these conferences could forego producing proceedings, and have no food and beverage arrangements. The USENIX staff would be responsible only for coordinating the conference Chair, booking the venue, and registration. It was suggested that USENIX propose a specific event and do one on this model.

*Break from 2:55-3:00 p.m.*  
*Executive Session from 3:00-4:15 p.m.*  
*Break from 4:15-4:20 p.m.*

## **Marketing & Sales Reports**

Dickison commented that the free event for all SF Bay Area local groups, BaySUG, was very well received. She is planning to work with Mulligan in the upcoming year on membership retention, possibly including incentives, and doing cross-promotion with other groups (she will write a proposal for this). She is considering starting a user group representative program, which would be similar to the campus representative program.

Allman reported on her sales efforts. She said that about 50% of sponsors are interested in getting in front of the USENIX audience for recruiting purposes, and about 50% for product sales. She would like to start a corporate donor campaign.

## **Executive Director and Management Report**

Young asked that the Board review her written report. She is looking for a representative from USENIX to serve on the CRA Federal Funding of Research Task Force. Young reported that the Audit Committee had taken bids and chosen a CPA to conduct the audit in the spring of 2006, and that the draft budget includes \$50,000 for this purpose.

*Hall left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.*

## **Member Services & Student Programs**

Mulligan reviewed her report, highlighting that while membership has dropped by approximately 10%, the good news is that more members are joining and renewing directly (vs. through conference registration).

Mulligan reported that we continue to fund approximately 50% of student stipend applicants. The number of applications went down in 2005. She said the Campus Representative Program is doing well, with 135 representatives, an increase of 5% over 2004.

## **SAGE**

Jones thanked those who had served on the SAGE negotiating committee in 2005: Andrew Hume, David Parter, McKusick and Young. He stated that the SAGE committee would continue with the following members: Couch, McKusick, Jones, and Young.

Jones reported that after the recent negotiations did not produce a workable agreement that would allow SAGE to become an independent organization, USENIX approached Rob Kolstad about increasing his time to work as the Executive Director. Kolstad declined to continue in that role. USENIX will seek a new, part-time SAGE Programs Manager.



**McKusick moved and was seconded by Cole to thank Rob Kolstad for his dedicated service to USENIX and SAGE.**

**Passed: in favor: 7; absent 1 (Hall)**

Young reviewed her report that listed the current and potential SAGE benefits and services, adding that we've 1) reinstated the benefit of sending the printed booklet in the Short Topics in System Administration series to all SAGE members, 2) added a resume posting option to the jobs board, and 3) we'll begin a redesign of the SAGE Web site. USENIX will keep the SAGE membership classes as they are for now. Young asked the board for future directions.

Suggestions regarding SAGE membership ranged from keeping things as they are, to reinstating the requirement of being a USENIX member in order to belong to SAGE, to making membership in SAGE a SIG check off box without extra dues. A straw poll indicated that most favored making SAGE membership a SIG check off.

USENIX will continue offering informational, educational, and community building benefits and services to SAGE members, such as the LISA conference, the Short Topics in System Administration booklets, the sage-members mailing list, and support for local SAGE groups. Most felt that there wasn't a conflict with the newly formed League of Professional System Administrators (LOPSA).

Jones requested that the "newSAGE"/LOPSA group remove the sentence in their November "Memo to Members" that states that "No one has been serving the members of SAGE for well over a year," as services have been provided by Rob Kolstad and SAGE membership benefits have been consistently delivered by the USENIX staff. Hume agreed to take the request to the LOPSA board.

## **Flame Award Wording Revisited**

Cole and Long presented the new wording for the award criteria motion as follows:

The USENIX Achievement Award (a.k.a. "The Flame") recognizes and celebrates outstanding work in the advanced computing systems community in intellectual achievement, service, and mentorship. This work may be a singular contribution by a group of people or a specific individual, or contributions by a singular individual over time. Strong preference is given to recipients who have not been otherwise recognized.

**Blaze moved and was seconded by Couch to accept the new text of the Flame award.**

**Passed: in favor: 7; absent 1 (Hall)**

## **Approval of First Draft Budget 2006**

**Ts'o moved and was seconded by McKusick to approve the 2006 first draft budget, including the funds for standards activities, USACO, CRA Snowbird, and the John Lions Chair.**

**Passed: in favor: 7; absent 1 (Hall)**

## **Next Meetings**

During executive session, the Board agreed that strategy meetings were needed. The meeting schedule is as follows:

April 1, 2006 (Saturday), in or near Berkeley, CA, strategy session

May 8, 2006 (Monday), in San Jose, CA, during NSDI, strategy follow-up and regular business

May 31, 2006 (Wednesday), in Boston, MA, during Annual Tech, regular meeting

**McKusick moved and was seconded by Couch to adjourn the meeting.**

**Passed: in favor: 7; absent 1 (Hall)**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

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## **Summary of Actions and Motions Taken by USENIX Board of Directors via email from October 27, 2005 – May 12, 2006:**

**On March 15, 2006, it was moved by Cole and seconded by McKusick, that USENIX be a sponsor of BSD Canada 2006 and allocate \$5,000.**

**Passed: All in favor.**

**On April 2, 2006 a proposal from Dan Geer to co-locate and sponsor a first time "Security Metrics" workshop at USENIX Security in Vancouver in August was approved.**

**On April 13, 2006 it as moved by Hall and seconded by Blaze that we raise the registration fees for the Security Symposium by \$20 to cover an anticipated shortfall in revenue for the event.**

**Passed: 7 in favor; 1 abstain (Halprin)**

**On April 26, 2006, it was moved by Blaze and seconded by McKusick, that we raise registration fees for LISA '06 technical sessions by \$20/per day and workshop fees will be \$150.**

**Passed: 6 in favor; 1 abstain (Hall); 1 against (Halprin)**