

**USENIX Association
Board of Directors Meeting
November 5, 2007
Cambridge, MA
Minutes**

Attendance:

Board:

Mike Jones, Chairman
Matt Blaze
Clem Cole
Alva Couch
Remy Evard
Niels Provos
Margo Seltzer
Ted Ts'o

Staff:

Ellie Young
Anne Dickison
Jane –Ellen Long
Toni Veglia (by phone)
Dan Klein(by phone)

Guests:

Nick Stoughton (by phone)

The meeting was convened at 9:05 a.m. and all were present except where noted.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was moved Evard, seconded by Couch to approve the minutes. Passed: All in favor.

Changes to the Agenda

Jones asked to move the membership and student reports from the consent agenda to the regular agenda.

Action Item List

People reported on the status of their actions items and most were covered in the agenda, except as follows:

Cole reported on the awards committee. Blaze noted that it was difficult to participate via email and suggested a conference call might yield better results. Cole suggested using email for pre-awards discussions and the phone for the final deliberation. Cole and Evard will discuss our offering more awards.

Couch reported that Hot AC improved over the previous year. VEE was really solid, and he is serving on the steering committee. They want to stay w/ ACM and keep in cooperation status with USENIX.

Couch also reported that CHIMIT 2008 will co-locate with LISA and Aeleen Frisch is serving as chair. He had also sent out the letter regarding plagiarism and a copy was sent to the Board.

Jones reported that Geer has agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Provos reported that SRUTI was a small workshop and currently there are no plans to hold it again. It was suggested that we notify Bala Krishnamurthy that USENIX is not presently interested in holding SRUTI again unless he can champion it.

Young reported that USENIX supplied funds for sponsorship of AsiaBSD, EuroBSD and BSDCanada, and we would most likely do so again in the coming year .

Seltzer reported that Jennifer Rexford and Gün Sirer have agreed to be co-chairs for NSDI in 2009.

Seltzer also reported that Tushar Chandra and Werner Vogels had agreed to serve on the WORLDS steering committee .

Seltzer thinks there's opportunity with the provenance communities, but it's hard to find the movers/shakers. She will see how the November workshop goes in the UK.

Seltzer and Young got in touch w/ Craig Partridge regarding GENI, but he doesn't yet know how USENIX might assist.

Report on 2007 Budget and Estimates for the Year-End

Young reported on actual figures through Sept 2007, and that she was projecting a \$250K deficit in operations, but this could end up being less depending on how LISA performs. This year's LISA registration was behaving differently than previous venues, with a constant stream vs. a big jump at the various deadlines. She felt we might come close to our budget, which was lower than the previous LISA because of the Dallas venue. Other factors effecting the budget were the strong performance of the stock market (which could mean an overall net income of \$200K or more); savings in G&A and Personnel; and sponsorship revenue was higher than expected.

She concluded that we are continuing the pattern of the past three years of having either break-even or a \$100K deficit in operations. We are relying on the reserve fund to cover these deficits, and we have not had to withdraw from the fund. It is growing and allows us to continue to offer excellent service, without having to raise fees or drastically cut back on staff. She felt that we may be focusing too much on the financial aspect of the conferences, and perhaps we should focus more on the impact the conferences are having on the field, and have the Reserve Fund subsidize them.

This led to a discussion of our possibly using some of the funds to help us invest in the future of the organization. A discussion ensued on what criteria do we use to measure the success of a conference. It was generally agreed that we should continue to maintain a high temperature environment for breathing life into workshops.

First Draft Budget for 2008

Young pointed out that the first draft of the budget reflects a \$200K deficit in operations, and that the biggest difference between '08 and the previous year is that even though we are no longer handling the Linux Kernel Summit, the savings in personnel and additional revenue from having OSDI in '08 will make up for that loss. She recommended that we raise some of our conferences' registration fees slightly to cover some of the higher direct costs associated with venues (mainly catering); monitor closely USENIX Annual Tech's attendance, especially training; try to grow LISA and FAST by 10%; and look for opportunities to expand our program and services. A discussion ensued about the reasons for lower attendance at training; that we should try to attract more Europeans; and we should continue to budget conservatively, but not cut programs to balance the budget.

It was pointed out that we have budgeted \$272K for Good Works which includes student stipends, standards activities, and some sponsorship of non-USENIX conferences, and USACO. It does not account for any new projects.

Stoughton joined the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

Report on Standards Activities

Stoughton said he is looking for essentially the same budget as last year (\$76K). He asked the Board to consider possibly spending more on another C++ project. It was suggested that Stoughton seek sponsorship elsewhere for these additional activities.

Stoughton left at 11:00 a.m.

Proposal on Funding USACO

Young discussed USACO and suggested we increase our funding of this by \$5K (to \$20K). There were suggestions about getting more press for this and doing an announcement/contest at our conferences.

Proposal for 2008 Registration Fees

Young went over the report, saying that the modest increases were necessary to cover the higher direct costs at some venues. Most felt that if we were going to break \$700 it should go to \$725.

It was moved by Cole, seconded by Blaze, that the tech session fees for Annual Tech, NSDI, OSDI, FAST and Security should be raised to \$725; and the rest of the proposal be accepted that would increase the following: LISA three day tech fee to \$730; USENIX Annual Tech tutorial fees by \$10 per day, and student three day tech fees to \$290; FAST student tech session fees to \$285; and OSDI student tech session fees to \$290. Passed: All in favor.

Executive Office Report

Young reported that USENIX is booked out 5–6 years for LISA in order to get the venues we want. We are presently about \$2 million in cancellation fees per our contracts if we ceased operations now. She also reported that after a long absence Marriott was

trying hard to get our business back. This will give us more options in the future and better rates. Young reported that Sun has come through with equipment donations and she issued a special thanks to Hal Stern for his efforts. Long reported that new database system is running parallel with old system, and we won't be bringing everything online until the Web based front end is completed.

Next Board Meeting

Young suggested that it focus on strategy which is difficult since our group is tactical. Most felt that another mass brainstorming session will not be productive. Some suggestions were made for how to make the meeting a success, e.g doing a member survey accompanied by feedback from some of leaders inside and outside our community. A subcommittee was formed to work on the agenda for the meeting. The committee will consist of Seltzer, Provos, Evard and Young. The next board meeting will be held on Feb 29. Young will invite anyone who is running for the Board to attend. Tentative dates for summer board meeting are June 23 and/or 24 in Boston.

Lunch break: Back at 12:30

Marketing Director's Report

Dickison reported on status of marketing efforts including the availability of USENIX talks in MP3 and video format. Evard suggested a best of USENIX video/mp3. Dickison will coordinate a survey of the membership. Dickison also pointed out that once we get the new database system up and running, we'll proceed with an expansion of our campus and corporate rep programs.

Policy on USENIX Conference Proceedings

The group went over the pros and cons for our making the conference proceedings available to everyone upon publication (vs. it being a member-only benefit the first year). The pros were: People will go to our web site and not elsewhere to find papers. It's an opportunity for us to get back in leadership role regarding free scholarship. It will be good PR for us. It will also be good for authors of the papers, and getting online up fast is a plus for entire community.

The cons were: We are eliminating one of the few member benefits offered especially to institutional members. This could also lead to a decrease in USENIX individual members as well. Cole and Couch were concerned about losing a member benefit. Cole suggested that we come up with another value added service. Couch pointed out that people join SAGE to get access to LISA conference proceedings. They won't join if the proceedings are free.

It was moved by Blaze, seconded by Seltzer that USENIX make all proceedings available immediately rather than waiting a year. Passed: 7 in Favor. 1 abstain (Couch).

Suggestions for additional benefits included sending a conference CD of all of our proceedings to institutional members; setting up a more customized Web site "My USENIX" feature; offering a complete set of videos; web. 2.0 stuff, streaming with questions being answered; session chair having access to i-chat system; all videos being available to members and greatest hits.

Long suggested making all *;login;* sys admin articles free to SAGE members.

It was moved by Cole, seconded by Blaze that the sysadmin section of *login*: be made available to SAGE members on our web site. Passed: All in favor.

Couch believes this is a good positive step, but is worried about SAGE member benefits.

Nominating Committee Update

Jones said he hoped to talk to all board members today about the future.

Review instructions to Program Committees

Jones said that an author had brought to his attention that a paper was rejected by a USENIX conference, and one of the reviewers noted that a paper appeared in a web publication that overlapped with the submitted paper (a tech report). Jones asked if we need to point out to program committees that there is a difference between refereed and un-refereed publications. After much discussion, it was decided that Seltzer would work with Jones and circulate to the board a response to the author.

Tutorial Program Report

Klein reports that LISA is doing fairly well considering the venue, but we had to cancel four classes. Klein said he hadn't had any recent conversations with SANS about our doing certification, and he would report at the next meeting. He also felt that we might want to consider a new scheme for remunerating tutorial instructors that would provide an incentive for them to help us market the tutorials. Ts'o requested that he do a financial analysis and come back with a proposal.

Report on Conferences

USENIX Security week. Young reported that USENIX Security symposium has an excellent pipeline of program chairs, and the core leadership is very active. We have Paul Van Oorschot as program chair in '08 and Fabian Monrose in '09. The only issue is the decline in attendance at training. It was felt that the workshops weren't drawing away from training. Provos felt that we needed to do more outreach to solicit interesting papers for HotSec next year. Young reported that Metricon had excellent attendance. The Deter workshop did not do as well as the organizers had promised. Provos would talk to Tal Garfinkel about how to get more traction for WOOT next year. Young reported that the Evoting workshop went extremely well, and that David Wagner did an excellent job as program chair. In 2008, the program would be expanded to 2 days, with David Dill and Tadayoshi Kohno serving as co-chairs.

LISA. Young stated that the upcoming LISA is going well. She was putting together a steering committee with Couch to help with strategic issues.

Young reported that NSDI saw a spike in submissions, and the program chairs were expanding the committee. LEET and UPSEC are being co-located with NSDI.

The board discussed Jeff Mogul's proposal for a workshop for conference organizers. Overall, the board was unenthusiastic about proposal. It was suggested that he request one-page position papers; USENIX will offer a meeting room, but no web site or proceedings.

Young stated that OSDI is in good hands, but she is cautious about co-locating more workshops. Presently there is HotDep, Sysml, and the "diversity workshop scheduled .

USENIX Annual Tech. Young and Klein will pull together the invited talks track again for Boston, and we will reduce the number of days of training. Young felt that with the increase in submissions to the refereed paper track, we would probably do well with tech session attendance in Boston.

Most felt that it was hard to know what to do with the survey results. Many people justify going to the conference by the papers, but end up attending the Invited Talks. It was also noted that the 'hallway track' was apparently less vibrant than in previous years. A discussion ensued about how IT is becoming more process oriented and we cater to people who need to solve problems. It was agreed that this will have implications for LISA, and we need to plan for this. Couch will take this up with the steering committee for LISA.

Linux Kernel Developer's Summit

Ts'o reported that the '07 event went well at Cambridge. In 2008, the Linux Foundation will be hosting a conference in Portland. There is a large overlap between the Linux Foundation tech advisory board and the organizers of the Kernel Summit. He felt that the Linux Foundation might be better suited to host the Summit in Portland and in Japan in 2009. He had discussed a co-sponsorship model for '08, but Young felt it would be too awkward. A discussion ensued about the history of our attempts to engage the Linux community.

Seltzer pointed out that we need to be careful about the audience we serve e.g., it's okay to have academic and non-academic events. Ts'o felt that USENIX made a tactical mistake in how we tried to engage the community early on. The board discussed what to do re future attempts to engage open source world and be conscious of our model. USENIX thought it served the needs of the Linux community, but it didn't because we were also trying to serve the academics. It was agreed that the challenge is finding a new community who doesn't already have services and a home.

Open Fabrics

Clem and Young reported on their discussions with the Open Fabrics Alliance board members about our organizing a workshop for them in the Spring. Most wondered how this fits into the USENIX community. Cole felt that the goal would be to expand our reach and influence in the industrial space, and that there may be other groups in the open source space that we could partner with. The board was amenable to having us proceed with discussions to prepare an agreement to do an experiment with organizing one workshop.

Multicore Workshop

Cole reported that they are working on forming a steering committee. The committee is dealing with the implications of what is going on with multicore and that according to Dave Patterson, it has to be interdisciplinary. We also need to figure out who are the application providers that should be involved. Seltzer thought getting Patterson and Burton Smith to do their talk at USENIX Annual Tech might be a good advertisement for the workshop.

SOSP

Young reported that she talked to new chair of Sigops, Doug Terry, about a reciprocal arrangement for in cooperation status with SOSP as they have with OSDI, and he is amenable.

The board moved into executive session with Young at 5:45 pm. (Dickison, Long, Klein, and Veglia left the meeting.)

Regular session resumed at 6:16 p.m.

It was moved by Ts'o, seconded by Blaze to approve the draft budget, with changes as amended, including increases in registration fees and salary increases. Passed: All in favor.

It was moved by Seltzer, seconded by Cole to adjourn the meeting. Passed: All in favor.

At 6:18 p.m. meeting was adjourned.

Actions via email from Nov 6, 2007 – Feb 15, 2008

It was moved by Blaze and seconded by Couch to have USENIX be a sponsor at the CRA Conference in Snowbird in 2008 at the \$3500 level. Passed: All in favor.

On November 27, 2007 the Board agreed with the response drafted by Jones and Seltzer to Hank Levy regarding the issue about the importance of distinguishing between peer-reviewed and un-reviewed publications in the refereeing process. While considering his suggestion that the Board issue specific guidance to program chairs about this distinction, in the end, it was decided that singling out this particular aspect of established reviewing practices over others is unlikely to be in the best interests of the community.

It was moved by Seltzer and seconded by Couch that the USENIX Association approves the USENIX Association Flexible Benefit Plan, effective December 1, 2007 and that an authorized representative should take any and all steps necessary to effectuate the foregoing actions. Passed: All in favor.

On Jan 28, 2008 it was agreed that the 2008 Xen Summit would be co-located with USENIX Annual Tech.

Secretary

Date