

IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting
Location: New Brunswick, New Jersey

Date: October 5th, 2019

Time: The meeting convened at 9:00 am EST; the meeting adjourned at 2.45 pm EST

Meeting Chair: Emina Soljanin

Minutes taken by: Lara Dolecek

Meeting Attendees:

Sasha Barg (*), Matthieu Bloch, Suhas Diggavi, Alex Dimakis (*), Lara Dolecek, Stark Draper (*), Elza Erkip, Christina Fragouli, Tara Javidi, Frank Kschischang, Vijay Kumar (*), Matt LaFleur (#), Prakash Narayan (*), Henry Pfister (*), Parastoo Sadeghi (*), Emina Soljanin, Antonia Tulino (*,#), Daniela Tuninetti, Aaron Wagner, Gus Wagner (#), Michelle Wigger (*), Greg Wornell (*), Aylin Yener (*), and Wei Yu.

Remote attendees are denoted by (*); non-voting attendees are denoted by (#).

Business conducted between meetings:

The following votes were conducted by email between the Feb. 2019 Information Theory Society (ITSoc) Board of Governors (BoG) meetings and this meeting:

- (1) In August 2019, BoG voted on the new magazine name. After a run off, the following name was elected: bITs: The IEEE Information Theory Magazine.
- (2)

are typically capped at 1k\$. Stark concluded that these options will be communicated back to the organizing committee, and conveyed to future organizing committees. Stark then reported on the attendance statistics collected for the 2019 schools to provide deeper insight into attendee profiles. For example, at the Indian School held at IIT Madras, there were 80 attendees. Stark specified the breakdown by faculty vs. students, gender, geographical location, and by how many times have attendees participated in prior IT schools. He also said that the ITSoc contribution to the 2019 India school was 7k\$ and that the plan is to increase it to 10k\$ in the future. At NAIST 2019 held at Boston University, there were 80 attendees as well. Stark provided statistics for this event as well. ITSoc contributed 10k\$ and there was an additional 10k\$ allocated from Padovani Lecturer funds. NAIST 2019 is sending back 11k to ITSoc; treasurer Aaron Wagner explained that this is in part due to having NSF sponsorship and Padovani Lecturer funds, and that typically schools return back less than 1k\$ to ITSoc. Stark also reported on the attendance statistics for the Australia 2019 school, held at the University of Sydney, and the ESIT 2019, held in the French Riviera.

The following motion was issued:

Motion: To support the holding of the JTG/IEEE-ITSoc Summer School at IIT Kanpur, India in the amount of \$10,000 USD.

The motion passed unanimously.

BoG members thanked Stark for organizing and collecting the statistics. It was also suggested that an exit survey be included in future IT schools, with specific survey questions to be discussed at a later time.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report Frank Kschischang and Elza Erkip [item 3]

Next, Frank presented a report on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The following motion was issued.

Motion: To accept f

To provide clear procedures for handling within-term vacancies of Board-Elected Officers;
To ensure that a second person is copied on email votes.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Frank next presented proposed changes to Article IV.2 regarding appointed officers of the society, which were as follows:

Make it clear that the President-Elect does the appointments annually;
Change time-of-appointment to December 1st, thereby smoothing transitions;
Make the secretary the official society Teller (counter of votes) change suggested by the IEEE.

It was also noted that a previous proposal to make the Secretary non-voting was withdrawn, as it is in fact unconstitutional.

Motion: to ~~approve~~ approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed changes to Article IV.3 regarding ex-officio members of the board. The changes are summarized as follows:

New text centralizes the description of ex-officio members of the Board;
Adds the EiC of the new Journal.

It was noted that a previous proposal to remove Executive Editor as voting BoG member was withdrawn

The motion passed.

Proposed changes to Articles IV. 5 and IV. 6 were minor. Next, Frank presented proposed major changes to Article IV.7 regarding election to the board. These were

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Regions 8, 9,

and 10 ;

To provide a procedure for filling within-term vacancies;

To make it clear that those filling within-term vacancies, not having been elected by the membership, are not eligible for nomination as a Board-elected Officer. Such members

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Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented changes to Article IV. 8 regarding removal of officers and committee members. There was some discussion about the wording of the proposed article and Frank clarified that the suggested wording came from the IEEE.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed proposed changes to Article IV.9 regarding removal of Members of the Board Elected by the Membership. He clarified that this was also an IEEE-suggested clause.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented changes to Article V.4 subsection B regarding Journal Steering Committee and Editor-In-Chief that will codify the leadership of the new journal.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed proposed changes to Article V.4 Subsection A regarding IT Transactions editors. Two suggestions for the revision were presented. The Constitution and Bylaws

Transactions Editor-in-

Motion

was a subcommittee of the awards committee; this change creates a new standing committee, and that no change in Committee composition or responsibilities was being proposed.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Then, Frank presented proposed changes to Article V.12 on the Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award Committee. It was clarified that currently, this committee was a subcommittee of the awards committee; this change creates a new standing committee. It was noted that no change in Committee composition or responsibilities were being proposed.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

It was suggested by a BoG member that up to two awards be issued annually. BoG then suggested that this option could be first done in practice prior to being codified in the bylaws.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article V.13 regarding the Paper Awards Committee. The proposed changes are to rename the current Awards Committee as Paper Awards Committee, to better reflect its mandate, and to remove the responsibility for Massey and Cover Awards; no other change in Committee composition or responsibilities were proposed.

A BoG member commented that a potential issue is that since this a joint award between two societies, rules may change from one year to the next.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII.9 regarding James L. Massey Research & Teaching Award for Young Scholars. The proposed wording mimics the language used for the

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 10 regarding Distinguished Lecturers. Criteria for the selection of Distinguished Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 11 regarding Padovani Lecturer. Criteria for the selection of Padovani Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Lastly, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 12 regarding Goldsmith Lecturer. Criteria for the selection of Goldsmith Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Publications Committee Report Sasha Barg [item 4]

Next, Sasha Barg presented the candidates for the positions of Associate Editors (AEs) of the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. Their biographies are available on the website. AE candidates are: Arya Mazumdar, Chao Tian,

Aaron Wagner [item 5]

recapping the IEEE accounting practices. He reiterated that one key point is that if x \$ is left over from some project in a given year, it cannot just be put in as surplus x \$ budget in the next year, but rather that $x/2$ \$ can be saved for new initiative and $x/2$ \$ go to reserves. He then went over the 2019 general funds. He stated that IT Transactions revenue is slightly higher than expected. He then explained how the surplus can be used towards increasing the number of pages in the IT Transactions. Current length of the publication queue (from acceptance to publication) is 5 months. Officers have previously agreed to increase the annual number of pages from 7600 to 8400, with the cost of 30k\$. The resulting expected surplus is now 60k\$. Aaron next discussed how the estimated surplus for 2019 general fund has increased from 90k\$ in August to 125k\$ in October, due mainly to conference surplus including 2018 events and 2019 NAIST. He then presented IT Transactions trends on a graph, including revenues, costs, and profit, updated from the BoG meeting in July. It was recognized that revenues are going down, but that updated projections may offset this negative trend. Aaron next discussed 2019 special projects. He stated that there were many great ideas and that the projects covered almost what had been budgeted. He also reminded those who contributed to submit the receipts by November. He also provided the list of 2020 Special Projects that were approved, with joint budget of 152k\$. There was nothing to report on 2020 general funds.

The meeting discussion returned to an earlier item regarding N&A Committee membership stated in Article V.4 Subsection A. A BoG member had suggested to change the wording from

Motion: to approve this change.

The motion passed.

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After a lunch break, the meeting resumed.

Information Theory Magazine Steering Committee Report Christina Fragouli [item 6]

Christina provided an update on the status of the IT magazine, on behalf of the steering committee. She went over the projected timeline, and then discussed the status of Phase I. Feedback was received from the Proposal Development Committee (PDC). PDC stated that the discussion

on the name of the magazine.

catchy. There was also some concern amongst the BoG members on the usage of BITS vs. bITS. Another concern was that a vote was already issued via email regarding magazine name, prior to the feedback received from PDC. Emina suggested the following title: IEEE BITS: The Information Theory Magazine.

Motion: to adopt the name of the new magazine as: IEEE BITS: The Information Theory Magazine.

The motion passed.

The second comment from PDC was regarding the Newsletter, as it seemed that there was an overlap in content between the magazine and the newsletter. Christina suggested that the newsletter be focused on the news. It was noted that for example Signal Processing Magazine Area Editor is also Signal Processing Newsletter Editor-in-Charge. It was decided that the role of the newsletter and the separation of the newsletter and the magazine be further discussed at a future BoG meeting.

Christina next went over the next comment from PDC, which was in regards to the number of issues per year. PDC suggested having 4+ issues annually. A BoG member asked how will the impact factor be calculated. Christina clarified that the impact factor will be calculated after 3 years of having 20 papers per year. She also stated that the planned organization is 5 papers per issue, with 4 issues per year.

Information Theory Society Conference Committee Update Vijay Kumar [item 9]

Vijay started by thanking the committee members. He then went over the status of the upcoming IT symposia. ISIT 2020 in Los Angeles, ISIT 2021 in Melbourne, and ISIT 2022 in Helsinki IT 2023 in Taipei has activities and program details actively added. For ISIT 2024 in New York, potential venues are currently being investigated. Vijay then went over the update for the ISIT 2019 Geographical Diversity Student Travel Grant. There were 27 applicants, of whom 26 have received the grant. Approximately 14k\$ has been distributed. It was suggested by the committee that the surplus from 20k\$ be added to the travel grant program of ISIT 2020.

Aaron, as Treasurer, had a comment to clarify that we cannot move 6k\$ from 2019 to 2020 and also clarified that 25k\$ for 2020 had not been approved yet. He stated that this is a new initiative for the IEEE, so cannot add Canada.

Aaron issue the following motion:

Motion: To authorize 25k\$ for the travel grant for ISIT 2020.

The motion passed.

Vijay then resumed his presentation.

Update for ISIT 2020 in Los Angeles was provided by Salman Avestimehr, and it included the following: banquet at Universal Studios is confirmed; contract for AV is finalized and signed; funding commitments from Intel, Qualcomm, and Google have been received.

Update for ISIT 2021 in Melbourne was provided by Parastoo Sadeghi. These included: second visit to the proposed venue; progress towards the PCO contract with the IEEE; starting venue license process with the IEEE; light lunch accommodations for the awards ceremony. Organizers have taken note of the request to make arrangements for all IT Society events while planning ISIT 2021.

Update for ISIT 2022 in Helsinki was provided by Camilla Hollanti and Themistoklis Charalambous. Organizers have taken note of the request to make arrangements for all IT Society events as an integral part of planning for ISIT 2022. Organizers also plan to introduce a

be identified. This prompted BoG to briefly discuss the web presence of ISIT conferences in general. It was clarified by a BoG member that CMS was contracted to do ISITs in the past but that it is only until 2021. Vijay suggested that BoG should make a decision on whether to continue with CMS or try something else.

Next, Vijay went over the Status of Upcoming IT Workshops. ITW 2019 in Sweden had nothing to report. There was an update for ITW 2020 in Riva del Garda, Italy from Marco Dalai: CFP was distributed at ISIT 2019 and ITW 2019; website is ready; a contract within next few weeks with the venue is hoped to be signed; and the conference will likely use EDAS for paper submissions.

ITW 2021 in Japan had nothing to report. Next, Vijay presented the pre-proposal of ITW 2022 in Goa, India on behalf of the conference organizing committee. As a part of the motivation for this conference, he stated that last ITW in India was in Bangalore in 2002, and that the IT society is very active in India with JTG/IT Society Summer School, Conferences, and Seminars. He then went over the members of the organizing committee including General Chairs, TPC Co-Chairs, and Local Arrangements Chairs. He stated that Goa is a very popular destination. He described different transportation means to Goa, a variety of activities to do, including many beaches, and other tourist attractions. Proposed workshop dates are late October or early November 2022, with the exact date being a function of participation, weather, other conferences, and cost. He then went over the proposed venues. The two choices are Cidade de Goa and Grand Hyatt. He presented the pros and cons of each. He also presented the proposed night cruise banquet. Vijay then discussed visas and how that issue was handled by some recent conferences. Regarding proposed ITW 2022, budget is planned for 150-160 participants. He also stated that there is record of past successful sponsorship. Regarding the technical program, 3 parallel sessions are planned with more details to follow in the future. Feedback from the BoG is that the pre-proposal looks great and that more detailed budget needs to be added next.

Arrangements for IT Society Events at ISITs based on the input from Treasurer Aaron Wagner were then presented, and the conference code of conduct was stated.

Goldsmith Lecturer Funding Update Elza Erkip and Wei Yu [item 10]

Elza went over the background of Goldsmith Lecturer Award. She stated that the fundraising had been very successful and it reached 130k\$, with the 10k\$ seed having originated from Sumner Award. There are several committed industry sponsors, along with the IEEE requires 100k\$ in funding for an award to become endowed. It was stated that the current surplus of 30k\$ could be used for new diversity and inclusion activities, which committee will brainstorm in the future.

Padovani/Goldsmith/Distinguished Lecturers Update Wei Yu [item 11]

Wei went over the timeline and eligibility requirements for nominations for Goldsmith Lecturer and stated that the deadline will be moved to January 1st moving forward. He then went over the list of past DLs, and the newly elected DLs for 2020-2021, who are: David Gunduz, Lalitha Sankar, Yossef Steinberg, Changho Suh, and Daniela Tuninetti. He stated that David Tse is the 2020 Padovani Lecturer and that Ayfer Ozgur is the 2020 Goldsmith Lecturer. Wei concluded

his presentation by thanking other Membership Committee members: Camilla Hollanti, Tara Javidi, Stark Draper, and Vincent Tan.

New business including cyber bullying was briefly discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 3.00 pm.