IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting
Location: Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL, USA
Date:

September in Chicago (in conjunction with Allerton). Alon concluded his reports by thanking volunteers who are concluding their terms of service. He thanked retiring BoG members Andrew Barron, Tracey Ho, Nick Laneman, Stephan Hanly, and Alex Vardy. He thanked retiring subcommittee chairs Osvaldo Simeone (Outreach) and Aylin Yener (Schools). He thanked retiring committee chair Nick Laneman (Massey), retiring Transactions Editor-in-Chief (EiC) Frank Kschischang, and retiring Senior Past President Abbas El Gamal. In conclusion, Alon welcomed the incoming Chair of the External Nominations Committee, David Neuhoff, and the incoming Second Vice President, Emina Soljanin.

2) **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Daniela Tuninetti presented her report on the state of the Society's finances. Daniela reviewed the budget for 2016 and the final forecast for 2017.

The budget for 2016 had a target surplus of $61K USD. However, the second-quarter forecast for 2016 forecasts a lower surplus due to reduced revenue from publications. Although there has been a decline in revenue from IEEE Xplore, in parallel, there has been a faster decline in publication expenses, due to lower Transactions page count and thus production costs incurred. The actual 2016 surplus will become more clear once the third-quarter 2016 forecast and actual surplus numbers from ISIT 2016 and ITW 2016 become available.

Given the 2015 operational surplus, the Society had up to $122K USD for 2016 new initiatives (according to the "50% rule"), of which the BoG scheduled $110K USD to spend on Shannon Centennial Events. The Shannon Centennial Committee has at present committed $55K USD and forecasts that it will not spend the full $110K USD amount.

Regarding the 2017 budget, the IEEE has almost approved the Society's proposed budget. The target surplus for 2017 is set to $11K USD. IEEE has also approved for inclusion in the 2017 budget a new initiative (according to IEEE's "3% rule") an expense of $105K USD to continue the set of broad outreach activities started with the Shannon Centennial Events in 2016.

Daniela raised a long-running BoG discussion of getting to a zero surplus, particularly in the context of funding new initiatives. Daniel recapped for the BoG the two IEEE rules that apply to funding new initiatives: the "50% Rule" and the "3% Rule". The "50% Rule" is as follows: if a society has a surplus of $X in a particular year it can spend $X/2 on new initiatives in the following year. The "3% Rule" is as follows: a society can spend up to 3% of its reserves in any given year on new initiatives. However, spending under the 3% Rule

Solomon W. Golomb". The proposers, who would serve as the guest editors are Guang Gong, Tor Helleseth, and Vijay Kumar. This would be a 13th issue of the Transaction, to appear in 2018. There was a discussion of special issues generally, which have been curtailed of late, the pros and cons of special issues, as well as the proposed scope and logistics of the issue. Frank will communicate the discussion points back to the proposers.

4) **Nominations and Appointments (N&A) Committee:** As his first order of business N&A Committee Chair Abbas El Gamal nominated Alexander Barg to serve as the next Executive Editor of the Transactions. The following motion was recommended by the N&A Committee and moved by Committee Chair Abbas El Gamal:

   Motion: "To appoint Alexander Barg as Executive Editor of the Transactions for the term

Motion: "To approve technical co-sponsorship of the 15th Int. Symp. on Modeling and Optimization in Mobile, Ad Hoc, and Wireless Networks (WiOpt 2017), to be held in Paris, France." The motion passed unanimously.

In conclusion, Elza reviewed Committee recommendations intended to reduce conference waste: reduced use of USB sticks to distribute proceedings (which, e.g., at ISIT'16 and ITW'16 were both made available online for the duration of the conference), conference bags, paper programs, and various printouts. This discussion engendered a wider discussion of standardization among ITSoc conferences.

6) **Membership Committee:** Membership Committee Chair Elza Erkip reviewed the makeup of the Committee and its duties, which includes selection of ITSoc distinguished lecturers. Elza reviewed proposed changes to the Distinguished Lecturer program to increase activity, to encourage chapters to contact lecturers, to encourage lecturers to help identify lecturing opportunities, and to improve the nominations process.

Elza reviewed recent activities of the Student Subcommittee (e.g., meet the Shannon Lecturer at ISIT), the Outreach Subcommittee (e.g., ISIT round table mentoring event with 18 mentors and roughly 120 attendees), and the Women in Information Theory (WITHITS) Group (e.g., `Samoan Circle' at ISIT and a lunch event at Allerton). The Outreach Subcommittee also runs the mentoring program and has been surveying current program

be required to submit reports to the Newsletter. Michael noted that the Newsletter's page count this year has been slightly higher than forecast. Therefore, the Newsletter may be slightly above budget. Michael also mentioned the passing of Solomon Golomb, who was a long-term contributor of puzzles to the Newsletter. A collection of his puzzles will be published over the next four issues. Michael is working with Alon, Daniela and Rudi to look into publishing all of Solomon Golomb's Newsletter puzzles as a stand-alone book.

10) **Shannon Documentary:** Writer and director of the Shannon documentary, Mark Levinson, called in to provide the BoG a status update. Mark talked about how exciting it is to bring to life a figure whose work has impacted us all, but who is not so well known. In the historical record there are no film interviews with Shannon, and there is very little footage of Shannon at all. On the other hand, transcripts exist of quite lengthy interviews. Mark characterized Shannon in these interviews as self-deprecating, sharp, playful, and funny. Mark's goal is to recreate what such an interview might have been like had Shannon conducted one on film. This "faux-interview" would anchor the film. Shannon's family has been supportive. His daughter sat down for a long interview and his son contributed as well. Mark's plan is to recreate the toy room in Shannon's house in Winchester, Massachusetts, a house that is still in the family. Mark has nearly finished scripting the faux-interview. He will circulate the script to a couple possible actors in next week. His goal is to shoot this central anchor of film by end of 2016. Following that, there will be documentary work. He is targeting to complete the film in late 2017. Mark's original target length was 50 minutes. This would have allowed the film to be shown in a one-hour television slot. However, the project is growing toward feature length, 70-80 minutes. The BoG asked Mark whether a feature length film could be edited to produce a short film also, of 15-20 minutes duration, for use in other venues.

11) **Pilot videos project:**

Aylin presented a proposal to hold the 2017 Latin American Week on Coding and Information in Brazil. This school will be three days long, will be held at University of Campinas (Unicamp), and will be held in (serial) conjunction with a three-day workshop. The School plus workshop are scheduled to run from 22 to 27 July, 2018. Expected attendance is 60 students, and speakers have mostly already been confirmed. Schools have been held in Brazil in the past, but have not been supported by ITSoc. The current hope is to hold a Latin American school every other year. While the request for funds is quite far in advance, at least in terms of the development of the ITSoc 2018 budget, the organizers are requesting ITSoc support early so it can serve as seed funding to attract other support. The BoG deferred discussion of the level of support till later in the meeting.

14) **Membership Committee Reorganization:** Elza Erkip discussed a possible reorganization of the Membership Committee. She summarized the Committee's duties: selection of the Chapter of the Year, appointment of distinguished lecturers, selection of the Padovani Awardee. The Committee has four subcommittees: (i) Schools, (ii) Student, (iii) Outreach, (iv) WITHITS. Between the Committee and the four subcommittees there are lots of volunteers. The first proposal is to move the Schools Subcommittee out of Membership, either to promote that subcommittee to committee level (due to its high level of activity) or to place it under the Conference Committee. The Committee and remaining subcommittees would then be reorganized to integrate all duties into a single structure. The Committee would continue to be headed by the Second Vice-President. Other members and their duties would include one liaison for chapters, two liaisons for WITHITS, two liaisons for student and outreach responsibilities, and two to three students and postdocs members. It was noted this is the only ITSoc committee on which students and postdocs can serve. Members' terms will be of two years' duration, and will be staggered. The exception will be the student and postdoc members whose terms will be of one year's duration. The Committee suggests to the BoG that it try out such a reorganization for one year and report back before formalizing into the bylaws. There was discussion of the roles and how the new committee structure would work, that a similar restructuring had been suggested in the past, and of the roles of the student and postdoc members. The responsibility for choosing the Padovani Lecturer might be shifted to the Schools Subcommittee. A decision on where the Schools Subcommittee would be placed in the organizational structure will be deferred until the proposed changes are tested for one year.

15) **New publications (JSTIIT & IT Magazine):** Jeff Andrews and Elza Erkip next picked up the discussions of new publications that they initiated at ISIT, respectively, of a special topics journal "Journal on Selected Topics in Information Theory" and of an "Information Theory Magazine".

Jeff first discussed the Transactions in the context of the journals published by sister societies. ITSoc is unusual in having only a single journal. The core proposal is to have a new special topics journal with four to six issues each year, with a sub-to-pub time of under one year, and with a two-fold focus including both hot topics in core information theory and cross-cutting topics. First steps would include establishing a prestigious meta-Editorial board, pro-actively seeking out the first ten special issues, ensuring that at least half of the first ten issues are cross-cutting, and establishment of a culture of quality-over-quantity. Jeff reviewed various benefits to the ITSoc: technical, logistical, and financial.

the magazines of sister societies such as Signal Processing (SP) or Communications (Comm) are well cited. Furthermore, much of the content now delivered through the Newsletter — the President's column, conference reports, a list of upcoming conferences — could rather be delivered through a magazine.

There was a wide-ranging discussion of the examples of the SP and Comm magazines, the way they attract papers from industry, the way they standardize submission formats, the fact that the SP Society also has an electronic newsletter. The consensus was that all ITSoc publications need to maintain the example of extremely high quality publications that the Transactions sets. It was also discussed how a new publication could complement the Transactions, and if papers could be pushed from one to the other as appropriate. Finally, it was felt that the idea of a special topics journal being cross-cutting and fostering outreach to other communities should be very strongly emphasized from the get go, e.g., in the selection of those first ten issues. On the cautionary side, it was noted that ITSoc is about 1/6th o( ) 2 (