

## IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors meeting minutes

Catamaran Resort, San Diego, CA, 02.10.2013, 1-6pm

Edmund Yeh

### Present:

Jeff Andrews, Matthieu Bloch, Giuseppe Caire, Michelle Effros, Abbas El Gamal, Elza Erkip, Michael Honig, Tara Javidi, Negar Kiyavash, Joerg Kliewer, P. Vijay Kumar, Urbashi Mitra, Alon Orlitsky, Petar Popovski, Paul Siegel, Emina Soljanin, David Tse, Rudiger Urbanke, Sergio Verdu, Alex Vardy, Emanuele Viterbo, Edmund Yeh, Aylin Yener.

surplus was then decreased to \$2k due to an increase in the page budget of IT Transactions pages to 8000. Then, in September, the budget was updated to have a surplus of \$179.4k. The explanation given by the IEEE is that this was due to additional income for 2012 from \ASPP India (AICTE) agreement." As a result of this, Aylin requested an immediate increase from \$100k to \$120k for committee budgets. This was approved by TAB. The final projected surplus for 2013 is \$159.4k.

Aylin continued onto the 2012 budget. The forecast for the 2012 budget at the preparation stage was a surplus of \$84.7k (normalized in 2011). As of May 2012, the end-of-year surplus was forecasted to be \$119k. During the summer, the forecast went down significantly (to as low as \$0.7k). By late October, thanks to revenues and reducing the original increase in the Transactions page budget, the surplus was back up to \$66k. As of October 22, the surplus remained at \$66k and the situation was regarded as "unfavorable" by IEEE. However, the surplus has now climbed to \$219k. The additional \$153k seems to have come again from \ASPP India (AICTE) agreement." Aylin commented that forecasts appear to be less than informative, and that we should try to plan the budget as best as we can (at least the parts we can control)

The 2013 Awards Committee consists of Abbas El Gamal (ex officio, Chair), Michelle Eros (ex officio), continuing members Michael Gastpar, Alex Grant, Igal Sason, Emanuele Viterbo, Aaron Wagner, Randall Berry, Ubli Mitra, new members Merouane Debbah, Andreas Winter, Vijay Kumar, Pascal Vontobel, Young-Han Kim, and outgoing members [SPECIAL THANKS] include Ian Blake, Emina Soljanin, David Tse, Greg Wornell.

The 2013 External Nominations Committee consists of Gerhard Kramer, with continuing members Alon Orlitsky, Han Vinck, new members Helmut Bolcskei, Dick Blahut, and outgoing members [SPECIAL

Matthieu continued: the Online Committee has also investigated options to more actively push the table of content of the latest issue of the Transactions. Presently, it is already possible to subscribe to a feed on IEEEExplore: <feed://ieeexplore.ieee.org/rss/TOC18.XML>. Several options are then available to advertise a new issue: 1) Encourage members of the IT community to register to the feed by providing detailed instructions on the subscription process; 2) Create a "mailing list" (through feedburner) to which users can register, which would push the latest table of content to emails; 3) Pull the content of the feed from the IEEEExplore feed and display it on the website; one can imagine complementing this with a news item once the latest TOC is available. Options 1 and 2 can be implemented with minimal effort and without extra development. Option 3 would require some development time (to be estimated).

**ToDo:** The Online Committee will submit a proposal for effective and attractive dissemination of the Society newsletter and IT Transactions Table of Contents.

Finally, Matthieu presented recent analytics on website use and statistics on the Society mailing list.

7. Reports from Schools. Petar Popovski presented the report on the European School of Information

an ITA panel discussion "How to navigate the job market," co-organized with Student Committee, and an ISIT 2013 mentoring event. There are plans to address issues for junior faculty: tenure track, research questions, student recruitment, and proposal writing. Activities for 2014 include a panel discussion at ITA and a mentoring event at ISIT 2014. Joerg noted that we may not be able to cover all activities with our current budget of \$1.5k. Joerg ended by presenting an outline application form for the mentoring program.

9. Negar Kiyavash presented the WITHITS committee report. Recent events include afternoon tea with Katalin Marton at ITW Lausanne. Upcoming events include informal lunch and discussion at ITA 2013, and luncheon and panel discussion at ISIT 2013. The WITHITS website is being overhauled, with content being moved from the EPFL to the IEEE host, and additional historical notes on women in IT, as well as videos and interviews.

10. Alon Orlitsky presented the External Nominations Committee (ENC) Report on behalf of Prakash Narayan. The ENC, a new committee formed in February 2012, consisted of Max H. M. Costa, Muriel Medard, Alon Orlitsky, A. J. Han Vinck and Prakash Narayan (Chair) as its members for 2012.

The ENC is described by the Society bylaws as follows: "The External Nominations Committee shall consist of the External Nominations Committee Chair, the Society President and three additional members. The Chair and other members are appointed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee. Typically the members of the Committee will serve for two years, with staggered terms. The Committee will be responsible for the solicitation, processing and submission on behalf of the Society of nominations for appropriate IEEE awards (such as, for example, the IEEE W. R. G. Baker Award) and, as applicable, for awards outside of the IEEE."

The ENC submitted a successful nomination for the 2013 IEEE W. R. G. Baker Award: E. Arikan, Channel Polarization: A Method for Constructing Capacity-Achieving Codes for Symmetric Binary-Input Memoryless Channels, IEEE Transactions on Information Theory, Volume: 55, Issue: 7, Year: 2009, pages: 3051 - 3073.

The ENC also submitted or coordinated nominations for the IEEE Medal of Honor and the IEEE Hamming Medal for 2013. Also, potential nominees and corresponding nominators have been identified for the IEEE Founders and von Neumann Medals, as also for the Marconi, Kyoto and Okawa Prizes; these nominations are to be considered for submission in 2013.

commemorative stamp for Shannon's centenary.

12. Elza Erkip presented the Student Committee report on behalf of Sriram Vishwanath. Elza is the outgoing coordinator (huge thanks). Student coordinators include Galen Reeves, Mustafa El-Halabi, and Alex Dytso. Recent activities include organized Pictionary at Allerton 2012. The committee (jointly with the Outreach committee) will sponsor a jobs/mentorship panel for students and postdocs at ITA 2013. Panelists will include Giuseppe Caire, Elza Erkip, Dongning Guo, Bobak Nazer, and John Smee (Qualcomm).

The Committee proposes an IT video contest. Applicants would post short (<10 min) videos on Youtube. The theme of the video is to introduce basic information theory concepts (ex: how your phone works, basic coding concepts). A website, which will contain good video examples, will be used to advertise the contest. The contest is timed to conclude during ISIT 2013, with the announcement made on Monday (lunch). Judging criteria will be rating on Youtube. Prizes will include Shannon's collected works, and will be handed out on Thursday (lunch). The committee requests a budget of \$500 for the awards.

In a discussion that followed, it was suggested that the video contest be turned into an initiative, and that the prize amounts be increased.

13. Michelle Eros presented the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Role of the Membership and Chapters Committee. The committee was formed at ISIT 2012, with members Michelle Eros (chair), Abbas El Gamal, Elza Erkip, Michael Gastpar, Negar Kiyavash, Joerg Kliewer, Sriram Vishwanath, and Lizhong Zheng. The committee's charge is to advise the BoG on a proposal to combine the Membership & Chapters Committee (MCC) with Student and Outreach Committees, as well as to define the charge of the new Membership Committee to reflect the activity of the combined committee. The current bylaws on the Membership & Chapters Committee and the Student Committee were presented. The proposed updated bylaws on the Membership Committee, with the two standing Student and Outreach sub-committees, were presented.

In the discussion which followed, it was suggested that the purposes of the committee versus the subcommittees were not clear enough, and that the proposed bylaw language is not specific enough.

**ToDo:** The Constitution and Bylaws Committee will review the proposed bylaws change, and submit text to the BoG three weeks prior to the ITW 2013 Seville meeting.

14. Paul Siegel presented the report of the Ad-hoc Committee on New Awards. The committee members are Abbas El Gamal, Alex Vardy, Andrea Goldsmith, Frank Kschischang, Giuseppe Caire, Sergio Verdu, Paul Siegel, along with Gerhard Kramer, Muriel Medard, and Dave Forney.

Paul described the steps involved in the establishment of a new award, along with possible funding sources. Paul summarized the existing IT awards, and then discussed the Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award. This new award was approved by the IT Society BoG in July 2012. It is to be funded by the IT Society, with an initial gift from Abbas (other gifts are welcome). The next required steps are to 1) approve the proposed IT Society Bylaw with a dollar amount and to 2) submit a completed form for TABARC/TAB approval. Paul presented the language of the proposed bylaw for the Cover dissertation award, with the dollar amount of the honorarium unspecified. Paul also presented the proposed BoG resolution.

Paul continued with the ISIT Student Paper Award. This award was established in 2010 (TAB approved), and is funded by IT Society. A name change was proposed at ITW 2012. The next required steps are to 1) approve with bylaw change and 2) notify IEEE Technical Activities Operations for approval by

TABARC/TAB. Paul presented the language of the proposed bylaw for the Jack Keil Wolf ISIT Student Paper Award. Paul also presented the proposed BoG resolution.

A discussion on the Cover dissertation award followed. At issue is the wording of the proposed bylaw. Some felt that the evaluation committee should consist of people who have advised many theses. Others felt that the workload on the Awards committee (which would be charged with choosing the winners of the award) would be too high. It was noted that there may be overlap between the best dissertation award

Khachatryan for holding an ITW in Armenia.

Finally, Elza raised technical co-sponsorship proposals for NetCod 2014 (ITSoc has provided technical co-sponsorship for NetCod since 2008), and ISITA 2014 (ITSoc has provided technical co-sponsorship for ISITA since 2008).

**Motion:** approval of technical co-sponsorship for NetCod 2014 and ISITA 2014. Motion was passed.

16. Standing items. Aylin calls for more ideas for initiatives and proposals to spend 50% of the Society surplus.

Tony Ephremides has proposed a competition of a technical nature, in which the winner would gain custody of the notes left by David Middleton. In the discussion that followed, it was suggested that the notes should be made publicly available, perhaps after expert reviewing by an ITSoc member.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM.