July 13, 2013, 14:00 – 17:00

0a. Introductions

Attending: Erik De Schutter, Maurice Chacron, Sharon Crook, Gaute Einevoll, Boris Gutkin, Victoria Booth, Jorge Mejias, Alla Borisyuk, Bruce Graham, Marcus Diesman, Volker Steuber, Astrid Prinz, Rob Butera, Udo Ernst, Avrama Blackwell, Jeanette Hellgren Kotaleski; Missing: Genady Cymbaluk, FarzanNadim, Natalia Toporikova.

0b. Approval of Agenda- No additions

1. Legal matters

1a. Election of new officers.

Candidates: Anyone currently on the board (even if rotating off), mandate starts January 2014.

Vice-President: Avrama. Duties: member of executive committee, replace President when conflict of interest, secretary – take notes. VP must be elected by board, so must come from within. Someone can either take on another role, or give up theirs (and then we replace them). Gaute is interested but wants to keep social media. No other candidates.

Gaute left the room. Discussion: He is doing a fine job in social media. Vote: Unanimous.

Treas: Victoria. She will be staying on one more year, but we will elect an assistant for a smooth transition. Over the next year we will be streamlining some of the procedures. Duties: prepares financial statements. Our bank is Bank of America. Mostly online, but Frances Skinner (from Canada) did mailing of checks with deposit slips. So far no one on the board wants to do this. Farzan will be at the next meeting, we can contact Natalia; possibly one of them will want to do that.

1b. New ex officio directors:

Peter Lansky who is organizer for Prague meeting in 2015

Udo Ernst: Liaison comes up for renewal. He assisted with Program Book, and other things.

We plan to codify some of these duties – such as the program book, to have a written record to facilitate future meeting organizers.

Udo is willing to continue in this duty, no one objected to his continuation for one year.

1c. Executive committee 2014: Pres, Treas, VP, Ex-Pres, two other board member, typically one is ProgComm Chair. Gaute will automatically replace Avrama, Astrid is willing to continue, Marcus wants to rotate off. Someone suggested the assistant treasurer, so we will wait till Monday to decide on that. We also have one non-voting member (local organizer). We will appoint Maurice Chacron.

1d. Director elections:

Elections went quite smoothly. This fall will be our third election, so now all regular board members will be elected. We are going to elect 4 new board members to replace the 4 members rotating off. State explicitly that within a year we will be electing a new president, who will be coming from within the board. We have no need for special procedures.

Nomination Committee: Axel Hurst, Erik DeSchutter, MauriceChacron. We need to replace Axel. Duties: go to list of candidate directors and verify they are qualified according to the bylaws: e.g. active member. If there is a tie, the nomination committee can choose the candidate, preferably to enhance gender and location (Europe vs North America) balance. Bruce Graham has agreed to be on Nomination Committee.

2. Members

2a. We now have over 1000 approved members. That doesn't mean all 1000 have paid their dues this year. 634 are current (paid their 2013 dues) and 432 who have not paid. Once you are a member, you cannot login and submit abstract unless you pay your dues (which actually saves you money).

Current policy: people can be non-paying for many years, and then they can choose to become paying members whenever you want. Marcus supports this policy because in Germany you can get reimbursed for membership only during years that you attend meetings. Also there is admin cost for re-applying for membership. There is a small fee for OCNS to have more than 1000 members. There were two people this year who actually canceled their membership (then they won't have to re-pay their membership fee when they register.) We should probably make it clearer that people can actively stop their membership. At that same place we should emphasize that membership + registration is cheaper than non-member registration. Also, that membership benefits the society. Boris suggested possibly a re-instatement fee, but not presently. Also, once we have even more members, we might want to consider purging members who have been inactive for many years. Erik suggested considering even longer term memberships (currently we only have 3). Pro: we have more active members. Con: what if costs go up. Astrid and Erik think that the risk is small compared to advantage. Life membership was discussed: major concern is that we don't know what a life membership should cost.

Erik wants to propose one change: keep track of continuous payment for membership (must be done offline and then uploaded to the website). Who has been a continuous member without gaps? Then, what should the advantages be. For example, travel grants might preferentially go to students who have been continuous members. Probably not good idea for this conference, since for many first time student members this might be their first conference. On the other hand this information could be used for travel support for summer schools. In any event we should begin collecting this information. Access to Encyclopediaof CNS for inactive members was discussed – currently, access by members has not been decided, but we would like to make sure that inactive members do not have access. We also do not want to need to be sending our lists of active members periodically. We need to discuss this with Springer (Update: active members will be able to access the Encyclopedia through the website after login).

2b. Members meeting

Scheduled for Monday, July 15, 2013

We are going to have a presentation for 1000th member. What should the gift be (other than certificate)? Boris will think about something "Frenchy". Erik will announce the next elections. Victoria will give financial report. Astrid will discuss program committee, Maurice will give presentation on Quebec City. Gaute will mention the social media aspect.

2c. Honorary members

Currently we have one: Will Rall.

What should we do with this? No one is enthusiastic about pursuing this. Deciding who deserves this is often complicated. Who decided that we can add someone else when someone is inspired.

2d. Membership drive

Mostly we get new members at the time of meeting registration/abstract submission. We also distribute information at the SFN social, though we don't get many memberships afterwards. We discussed the idea of having a booth at Cosyne. We would probably not get enough new members to pay for the booth. Purpose would be to let others know of our existence and growth.Ranu suggested that if we would have a booth, other math biology conferences would be more likely to provide members. The other concern is that you need someone to sit at the booth. What about IEEE Neural

Engineering – there is more and more modeling at that meeting, so this might be a possible venue. We would need not only a flyer, but possibly a power point, banner, some previous program books. A much less onerous task is for board members to bring flyers to other conferences they go to. E.g. INCF, Bernstein conference. Trinkets, such as bookmarks, etc, might be a better idea, though more difficult to make accessible to board members. A better flyer that discussed member benefits, not just the next meeting, is critical. Perhaps Alla can develop something. Mailing lists: we have retired the old mailing list on google docs. Now we email the active and inactive members, and also conference registrants from the last 3 years. There might be other mailing lists, or we can pay to post on other society websites.We should get Springer to advertise our meeting at their booths.

2e. Social media

We have an OCNS website on Facebook. So far Gaute has posted only a few things, such as news about the meeting, JCNS new issues. We have 142 "likes". Each meeting can have its own Facebook page which is linked – this Facebook page is for finding roommates, etc. We also have a twitter account. First sentence of Facebook page is turned into a tweet. Gaute has been quite conservative about posting. How do we want to expand this? Gaute could tweet from the meeting "fantastic talk by …" What do we want to add to Facebook page? Other Toc? It has to be balanced so it doesn't feel like one clique is posting. Perhaps we want to select from meeting registrant applicants to be "official" bloggers or tweeters, similar to what they do at SFN? This should be on a different account. We could actually implement this for this meeting by announcing it today, and tell interested people to talk to Gaute.

2f. (Extra) Membership applications:finding information for approvals is quite difficult for student applicants. Maybe we should ask that the student gives information on advisor. Erik suggests the additional information field be wider than this. We provide several options for additional information, e.g. lab webpage or department website which has student listed.

3. CNS meetings part 1:

3a. Report on CNS*2013

Astrid provided report on submissions and presentations. Percentages are similar to past meetings, except that percent of people requesting travel award has decreased since we required the expanded abstract. We will discuss that later in the meeting.

Submission deadline information: half of submissions are after original deadline. People expect this extension so we will need to continue doing this. We have begun seeing small improvement in quality of Asia submissions, and numbers from South America seem to be increased. We had 13 withdrawals this year. Some were due to inability to obtain visa. Some Americans did not have funding. Abstract submissions were greater than Stockholm, so our new procedure did not hurt abstract submission process.

Boris: As of noon 730 registrations, so this is the largest meeting we have ever had. This is not the only meeting in this building. 1200 people will be in the building on Mon-Thurs. There will be people using the cafeteria, milling about. That means that valuable material will need to be broken down for the night (not poster boards). For coffee break we might have to ask people about badges. Agnes Jensen is conference secretary, so any questions ask her. Our many volunteers are the orange badge holders. Announcements can be made first 5 min each day, the first 15 min today. Astrid handles this. We have to be out of the building by 8 pm. Monday is the banquet, which is not here and not close. It takes 40 min to get there. Buses will start leaving beginning 6 pm from front of building, but it is possible to take the metro. At entrance of banquet there is name list, and sticker on the badge shows banquet admission. Posters in big hall downstairs, will be numbered, all three numbers will be on the boards at once. Extra poster boards are available.Coffee breaks are in side hall. There is message board near

registration desk. Local organizers need to know to whom they should address each question. Instructions to local organizers are too sparse. Erik plans to develop a set of instructions and Boris will help with this.

3b. Analysis of new registration procedures for abstract submitting authors

Must register before submitting abstract. Didn't seem to have a major effect, but a few practical matters we hadn't considered. We should make some changes for reimbursement procedures. Issues to solve: physical separation between member clicks and abstract submission. For example, two different logins is confusing (this we cannot solve).

If request to cancel registration, need to figure out if there is an abstract coupled with that and withdraw the abstract. So, after closure of abstract submission we should make a combined list to use for this process. Also, after the abstract book info has been submitted, it costs us money, so we need to change our deadline for 90% refund to beginning of May, and reduce our later refund a bit. Make refunds inline with our costs. This year some people canceled because they didn't get an oral: we need to make it more clear they are only entitled to a 90% refund (same as other people withdrawing), and make it clear that 100% is only if an abstract is not accepted at all. We should also post our historical percentage of people receiving orals.

4. Task division within the Board

4a. Reassignment of tasks within the board for 2014

Jeanette leaving (travel, Sharon is assisting)

Volker leaving (membership approval and workshop, but we already have assistants (Farzan for workshop, Jorge for membership))

Marcus leaving (tutorials, Bruce is assistant for tutorials))

Axel and Lars leaving (but Lars was given an extra year so we are not replacing him). Both did website so we need a replacement or two for this.

Discussion about the registration handling Lars did: If people become member after registering, we don't refund the difference. Some people upgrade registration, currently not possible via website. Lars was doing this by phone and entering credit card info. Erik proposes to set up separate form to upgrade registration. It is now possible to automatically send invoice and allow credit card payment. Difficulty is that the form will not know about the previous registration, so people will need to indicatewhat they registered for before. Someone on the board will need to check the information. Natalia has agreed to do that. Prices are complicated, because if people have become a member in the meanwhile, price will be different. Erik proposes that upgrade be only one price – the late registration price (even if before the late deadline). Most upgrade requests are done late anyway. Ranu disagrees with this because of paying a late fee. Erik mentions that this is not a late fee. We would still have student vs faculty and member vs non-member prices and you still get discount for doing more than one event. We would call this "adding event" not upgrade.

4b. Need for a dedicated, stable webmaster, make it an ex officio position?

None of prior board members agreed to take on webmaster position, so Erik has been doing it temporarily. If we do not get a new board member who agrees to bewebmaster, we should email all of our members and request for applications just for this position (they become ex officio member and get their registration paid).This is a quite an involved job. Erik currently does backups periodically, but backups are not done automatically by the service provider so one needs to be careful. This is really content management, which was originally outsourced, but we had to give very detailed technical information. Currently there are two categories of access to board members. Some board members can

edit articles related to the current CNS meeting. Membership approval people have access to member records, they can edit them. Erik proposes an additional category of people who can see forms, but not edit. Udo proposed giving read access to local organizers, but Erik recommend no because the information that is displayed actually "appears" wrong if you don't understand the forms. Erik requested a vote on procedure: that we request for applications just for this position if we don't get elected board member. Vote: Unanimous.

4c. Future task divisions

Covered with review of re-assignment: Webmaster, Travel, Tutorials, Workshops, Membership

July 15, 2013 – 12:00 – 14:00

Attending: Victoria Booth, Erik DeSchutter, Udo Ernst, Bruce Graham, GenadyCymbaluk, VolkerSteuber, BorisGutkin (departed at 1:10), MauriceChacron, Sharon Crook, Astrid Prinz, FarzanNadim, GauteEinevoll, Jorge Mejias, Axel Hutt, Marcus Diesman, Lars Swaber, Ranu Jung, Rob Butera, Jeanette HellgrenKotaleski (arrived at 1:25)

5. Other matters

5a. OCNS sponsored meetings and courses

We currently sponsor 3 summer schools, and we sponsored the "60 years of Hodgkin Huxley" meeting. Summer schools: 6 individuals were supported to attend the Ottawa course, Woods Hole course, and ACCN course, about $2000 each. We discovered that we were too generous to the North Americans going to Ottawa (since only travel was needed), so we are going to cut back on that to not pay more than their costs. For the other two courses we paid tuition to the course directly.

6. CNS meetings part 2

6a. Report on CNS*2014 planning

CNS in Quebec City, Canada, Quebec City Convention Center, July 24-Aug 1, 2014

Great travel destination for tourism; Maurice described and showed some touristy and cultural events, both in the city and regional. Hotels and restaurants with 5-15 min walk. Weather expected at 17-27 C.

Plenary (holds up to 600-700 people) next to Posters. Poster room will hold 100 posters per session. 7 smaller workshop/tutorial rooms (more are available). This is probably enough because we expect a smaller meeting than Paris since it is North America. We have a separate entrance from other Congresses that will be held at the same place/time.

Current budget sheet presented. Committed amounts: $33,805 (after tax refund) which is within ~$500 of budgeted amount. Erik requested that food costs be brought down. Budget had social at ~$100/person, and this needs to be cheaper.Maurice listed two banquet options that will be discussed. Erik, Maurice, Victoria will meet later to discuss budget.

Travel: Direct from New York, Chicago and Paris, or Direct from Europe to Montreal. Price = $500-650 from North America; from Europe $950-1200; from Asia $1200-1500.

6b. Program committee

3 members rotating off. Call went out for OCNS faculty members to volunteer. Received 17 responses, PC will select replacements out of those 17 while keeping geographical, gender and research area balance. Perception is that quality of talks is not as high as at cosyne, and PC is trying to improve such quality. PC looks at reviews, and selects based on those reviews. We don't favor students over faculty. Labs that had oral in previous years are not selected. Also, gender balance and subject balance are considered. No special criteria used for featured orals.Avrama mentioned that maybe students should

not be given featured, or at least make people write extra paragraph on how they will give overview of field. PC wants to send guidelines to everyone about the audience, etc. This will only work if the advisors actually work with the student. Erik wants to add that student should practice in front of advisors. Several people discussed what about inviting the speakers, and then submitters only provide posters. Problem is that may create a cliquish meeting, though some disagree with this. The "orals invited" approach also goes against the spirit of the meeting, which is quite inclusive and distinguishes us from others. Another possibility: can request poster submitters to consider orals if the PC thinks that this is a particularly interesting submission. Problem: this creates a little bit more work for the PC.Gaute mentioned that not all keynotes this year were computational neuroscientists. Astrid mentioned that many computational neuroscientists are quite interested in the data, and several PC members are pushing toward the cosyne model.

Astrid's successor. Anthony Burkitt is most qualified, and he agreed but not for one more year. Astrid has agreed to serve one more year. Astrid will start cc'ing him on emails so that he is shadowing her for a year. Having a good program committee is one of the methods for having a good program.

6c. Tutorials

This year: 9 tutorials. In questionnaire predicted 114, instead we had 222 (double the numbers is "standard"). Consequently some of rooms were too small; always need to assume there will be 2-4x the attendees as specified by the questionnaire. The highly theoretical ones were quite well attended. One presenter wants to switch to every other year. If popular topic we might want to find an alternative tutor. Problems: white board markers with blackboards, half of rooms had no shades, some sockets in room were non-standard. We need to keep an eye out for tutorial quality. We should plan an exit survey. Discussion on whether the survey will be written or web based. Problem of former: someone needs to type it, problem of latter: we expect less response, especially if there is a problem with internet connection. Erik suggested we try the web form the first year and see what our response is. What about slides for tutorials: We asked organizers to provide slides on webpage and then OCNS linked to those websites. Access should be limited to OCNS members (and conference attendees). (Access to Encyclopedia of CNS will be via the OCNS website to limit it to members).

Tutorial budget was 10k this year, and we are proposing 8 K for next year.

6d. Workshops

26 proposals submitted. Ultimately 20 were accepted (5 two-day and 15 one-day) Selection committee was formed to select the workshops. Criteria were number of confirmed speakers, time for discussion, quality of speakers, previous attendance of CNS meetings, topic (relevance, coverage/overlap).

Sent out acceptance/rejection in three stages because number of rooms continued to increase. Organizers were requested to set-up webpages, that were linked to the OCNS site. Several workshops were organized by numerous organizers, and some secondary organizers appear on two workshops.

Total budget: $750 per workshop this year, this was spread evenly this year (instead of unevenly like last year). Organizers had control of budget, but they were suggested to give to students and post-docs, and to use fee waivers rather than travel grants. Difficulty is that the fee waiver is cheaper for student and post-doc. So, do you prorate them or make the waiver $200 for each? One possibility: Split workshop support into two parts (e.g. 1/3, 2/3): one part for fixed number of waivers, every workshop gets some number, other part for competitive travel grants (of same size as main meeting) which are competitive between different workshops. Each workshops organizer must propose their grad/post-doc speaker, and candidate also should write something. Concern: who makes ultimate decision? Could be workshop committee or travel committee. Advantage is that currently the method for awarding these grants is a mess. Disadvantage is the difficulty in deciding (which criteria). Might need to look at the lab

the scientist comes from. If this job was assigned to travel committee, then we would avoid the double dipping problem.We need to make clear that a speaker can receive only one travel grant, except that they can receive registration waivers for both main meeting and workshop.

Improvements: Provide template for proposal – Farzan has done this.

Be clear about deadlines and criteria – reiterate that confirmed speakers are important, though there will always be people who don't read rules. Can put in the template that not all workshops are accepted. What should deadline be? Perhaps we should have two deadlines, but give preference to the ones who meet the early deadline, or only allow second deadline depending on availability.

How many workshops? Keep it at the 7 planned, until we have abstracts submitted. If abstracts are quite high, we can always add additional workshops.

Who should evaluate workshops? Limit it to the workshop board members? Add to the PC? Astrid thinks that the PC probably doesn't want more work. Farzan suggests that PC should only provide input as to theme. Could limit the workshop committee to the workshop board members plus past and current presidents. Alternatively can invite whichever PC members are interested.

Farzan proposed the following rules, which were approved by the Board:

- Each individual can be the organizer or co-organizer on only one workshop.
- The number of confirmed speakers is a criterion for accepting the proposal.
- Overlapping proposals may be asked to be combined. If the organizers do not wish to combine the proposals, only one of the proposals may be accepted.
- Workshop proposals submitted by the December deadline are given priority in acceptance.

Erik suggests that we only let someone propose one workshop or tutorial. Most board members disagreed because the type of information is quite different. Several people who organized several happened to organize quite good workshops. But since there are several organizers, they don't really need to be on multiple workshops. Some were concerned about repeated workshops, but others thought that is fine if they are popular or good quality. This is mostly a concern when we reject some workshops, or if we have only recurring workshops. Perhaps we should monitor the quality – have questionnaire similar to the tutorials, and ask organizers to provide number of attendees.

Erik proposed to decrease the workshop budget from 15k to 10k for next year.

6e. Travel grant

Major issue was overlap between grants to main meeting and workshops, but now that travel will deal with workshop grants, the issue will go away.

With extended abstract requirement, we have had fewer applications for travel grants. We only gave good quality (above threshold) so we had some money left over. Erik asked whether we should increase the award size since flight cost is going up. Ranu reminded us that as of next year we will not have the NSF travel grant money, so we might not have excess next year. Victoria mentioned that most applicants have other sources of support to supplement, and we have a President fund if there are truly needy people. Can we reapply to NSF? Yes, but with previous application Ken Whang indicated we would need to propose something new. We can't just ask for new money to do the same thing.

Budget: Erik proposed decreasing the travel budget from 40k to 30k. This will increase OCNS fraction, but not the entire amount of NSF lost. The decrease also reflects the smaller meeting for next year.

The total decrease of travel and workshop is 15k, which approximately compensates for the NSF loss.

Invitation letters: How difficult are entry visa's for Iranians,Chinese,Indians, etc? Maurice thinks Canada is better than US, but Iranians could take 6 months.

Current procedure: first, an automated system to obtain invitation letter. Some say this is not enough, but bringing their credit card receipt for registration will help. Alla brings up that actually traveling to the embassy costs significant time and money, so you don't want to "try" and have to try again. Alternatively, travel can generate letters with appropriate signature (President, local organizer), e.g. every two weeks. We can automate this, have the registration form generate the information, and then travel will convert that information into a PDF with the appropriate signature. Natalia (who does registration) will generate a list of information for requesters in a spreadsheet, send it to travel, who will do a mail merge type thing to generate the letter.

6f. CNS 2015 and call for CNS*2016: more detailed instructions in call

CNS 2015 will be in Prague – Call for proposals was quite successful and we received quite a number of proposals. Peter Lansky is the main local organizer. A local professional conference organizer has been hired, and Erik had a site visit with this organizer. Concern is that Peter is not as accessible and involved with the OCNS board; on the other hand he has considerable experience. The board may need to interact more than usual with the professional conference organizer. Erik proposed that we improve and formalize how the board interacts with local organizer for future meeting. For example, rules about the budget, which is quite important when dealing with a commercial entity.

In original bid, people propose a budget which is quite informal, and we don't further interact until the bills start coming in. Erik proposes that 1 year before the event, the local organizer submits an itemized budget. We will create a template for that, which will then spur the local organizes to inquire about specific items, e.g. is cleaning included in room rental. Even if prices on each item cannot be finalized, at least we know which items to prepare for. Erik proposes that this completed template be treated as a contract, and local organizer will need to ask permission to add additional items.In budget template we need to distinguish between fixed costs (e.g. rooms) and cost per person (e.g. food). We will also clarify what OCNS does (abstract submission, registration) and what organizers do.

Boris comments: For meetings over 500 people, local organizers should get several estimates from professional management companies, otherwise there is too much work. Then, local organizer main responsibility will be to verify costs and oversee the management company. Develop "playbook" – exactly what was involved in the organization – and provide to future proposers, even before they propose.

Avramasuggested: when registrants determine whether they want program book, inform them whether or not a program on USB will be provided.

Erik suggested: charge for program book.

Boris mentioned: force local providers to give real estimates early – give them a deadline. For example, details by 6 months before. With package deals, verify (pre-negotiate) what is in the package.

Also, he requested clear guidelines on how flexible locals canbe on locally raised funds. Does OCNS want accounting on everything, or just costs that OCNS reimburses. Victoria clarifies: Right now OCNS wants accounting on everything to report on our taxforms. Victoria will inquire from accountants whether there can be other financial activities that we need not claim, but probably not since we need to show that we do not make a profit.Another example: if a satellite event is organized that rents rooms in same venue and local organizers are intermediaries, does this need to be reported to OCNS? Possibly there can be self-contained events. Erik explains that if local organizers have separate funds maybe they could be used for expenses that crop up that weren't originally on the budget. OCNS would like to be more flexible, but we need to verify what is possible with accountants.

Another issue: local organizers need clear guidelines on who is responsible (president, liason, treasurer) for answering which questions. This information should be included in the playbook, and should be provided in the bid so OCNS can better assess the local organizer team ability.

Erik recommends that local organizer appoints one person as a local treasurer, one person for local webmaster, etc. So, the playbook will define certain positions or roles for local organizers.

Another possibility: site visit by a board member after selecting the venue.

Udo recommends that each local organizer (or relevant board members) email him with what things they did and Udo will update the "playbook". Maurice recommends that some of these things (getting quotes) be obtained with the original proposal. Boris mentions that organizers must make clear what are the legal consequences of verbal versus written quotes. In Paris, the written quotes were 3x of the verbal quotes, and then the locals had to make a huge fuss, and then that brought written quote down to twice the verbal quote. Three years ahead it may not be possible to get firm written quotes, but organizers need to be aware of these issues. On the other hand, venue rental can probably be provided ahead of time, whereas food can't. These requirements might decrease the number of bids, but those bids might be better, with more organized teams.

As part of these guidelines, Erik recommend that 1. we provide boundaries and clear guidelines about proposals to local organizers. One: time frame of the meeting. One proposer gave September, and that might be a problem with teaching, etc. One possibility: July; but, that is a bit narrow. What about mid June to mid Aug? Concern with OCNC in June and EU course in Aug. Alternative: softer guidelines: normally meeting is in month of July, and that proposed dates are strongly considered. 2. cost of meeting is quite important. Victoria is going to review average cost per registrant from previous meetings and provide guidance. 3. Professional conference organizer. We have discouraged this previously because of the cost. Maurice mentioned that in Quebec the conference organizer is provided as part of renting the convention center. In Prague the local conference organizer showed some hotel venues to Erik. Some were similar price as university, but the latter's facilities were better. One concern of university is that main hall is too small, so another room with projection will need to be set-up. Hotels did not have bigger halls. University is just outside of old Prague, whereas hotels are in new city. Many hotels around university. One concern – not many restaurants for lunch, so we might need to provide lunch option. Back to the topic: conference organizers can be used, but that does not absolve the local organizers of their responsibilities – they need to supervise the conference organizers.

Rob mentions that not all professional organizers are the same. Some fit really well and then are helpful, but some are not.

Alla mentioned that board needs take into account these criteria, and Erik mentioned that we should make important criteria known to all proposers.

Erik summarized that the new call will include better budget criteria (possibly budget template), guidelines on professional organizer use, strong local organizer team (the scientists) (request a paragraph on that), recommended dates. Also, we are changing the "North American" meeting to a "non-European" meeting, to allow for South America or Asia/South Pacific.

7. Financial Matters

7a. Financial report on FY 2012, estimate of FY 2013

Victoria distributed budget. She is now showing cost per meeting, even if charges came in a different FY. We actually lost money on the student housing. Take home: don't be intermediate for the housing. Projection for this year: Current registrations: 743. So, current income will be slightly higher. Catering is huge expense this year. We are not concerned about losing money, but we are surprised that we will not make money from this meeting. That is the rationale for being more explicit about budget guidelines. This may be more important next year when we lose the NSF grant. We currently have a one year buffer in our account, but some would prefer a higher (two year) reserve. We can aim for this but slowly, because we don't want to increase registration fees. This budget reinforces that we don't have money for paid staff. Other expenses have started to increase, such as member awards to attend

summer schools. HH conference: We collected registration fees and then paid out. We still have 2500 Brit Pounds of their money. We will probably not do such registration arrangement again.

7b. Sponsoring: improving our sponsorship options and services.

We are sponsors for 3 courses currently. We don't have another sponsored meeting this year. We received several other requests – one too late, one turned down.

Issue: Woods Hole contacted two people and told them to become members. Erik wants them to be members at the time of application. It is too late to institute this rule this year, but we plan to enforce this rule next year.

Springer: Encyclopedia of CNS accessible to our members via our website. They requested whether they can get list of email addresses; send email on ToC to members, who can opt out.

This year, we are now asking people whether they agree to receive electronic communication. Concern that we do not have privacy policy. We discussed that we should add check box onto registration form allowing them to opt-in or opt-out about us giving email address to Springer for purpose of receiving ToC.

Rob has information on sponsorship. He took over from Carmen last year, assessed what we've been doing. Identified some missed opportunities.

Current levels of sponsorship

1:$500; logo on program and link on website.

2. $1000; Logo on program and link on website plus flyers

3. $2000; level 1 stuff + small booth (not defined)

4. $3000; level 1 stuff + large booth.

Non-profits get bumped up one level.

What levels do people actually want: other than Springer, they all want level 3, and send only one person.

Many are local and just want name on website.

Proposal: two levels

Level 1: logos and web link ($750)

Level 2: exhibitor: $2500, additional cost if larger setup.

Offer 20% discount to non-profits.

This ends up being similar to what we recover now.

Offer program advertisements separately: $500 for half page, $1000 for full page.

This year Brain Corporation asked for ad, we gave it to them free since they were level 3 and didn't want booth.

Instead of asking companies to inquire about other opportunities, we should give example of possible events, e.g. sponsor the wine and cheese, or the poster session, etc.USB fobs was done last year by Georgia State in Atlanta.

Other ideas: Rob proposes working with local sponsor to identify opportunities and include them in letter to sponsors. Erik mentioned they can sponsor part of banquet.

Ranu mentioned that our costs for sponsorship have to be carefully determined. Which part is tax-deductible and which is not.

Some sponsors might want to do tutorials, e.g. providing coffee and donuts for workshop that is relevant.

Other sponsors: companies who hire our people or produce equipment we use. What about google or IBM?

Logisitics: Name of someone for each conference to keep track of who the sponsors are and what are the logistics. I.e., after the sponsor has paid, Rob will provide contact information of a local organizer who can answer about table size, etc. And local organizer can provide potential sponsor contact to Rob to follow up.

Rob volunteered to create draft sponsor letter, and send it around to the board for review. Erik mentioned to make level 2 at $3000; all agreed. One possible company for next year is blackberry. Also a Canadian patchclamp amplifier company might be interested.

7c. Financial planning for FY 2014

7d. Budget approval.

Travel: 30k

Workshop: 10k

Tutorials: 8K

Continuing support for summer schools

Budget for Quebec meeting

No change registration fees

Charge for program books: cost, e.g. ~$10

All agreed with budget.

Assistant treasurer position: We now have two candidates: Volker Steuber, Natalia Toporikova. Erik recommended Volker due to his experience, and that we can consider Natalia (or possibly other new board members) in two years. Volker stepped out for discussion and vote. Vote was unanimously in favor of Volker.

Meeting adjourned at 4 pm.