Minutes of the WNPPC Steering Committee Meeting
Banff Centre, Banff, AB
Saturday, February 19, 2011

In attendance: Corina Andreoiu, Gordon Ball, Tony Noble, Adam Ritz, Jana Thomson

1. Status of TRIUMF Support

It was agreed that the off-site support provided to the conference by TRIUMF, specifically the handling of contracts with the Banff Centre, the registration portal for the website, and the use of a TRIUMF account for the funds, was crucial for the organization of the meeting. It was also agreed that the on-site support provided by TRIUMF (this year by Jana Thompson) was also extremely helpful. While the on-site role of organizing the registration could possibly be taken over by a couple of grad students, the ability of a member of TRIUMF staff to negotiate directly with the Banff Centre can not be under-estimated. This was particularly apparent this year, where additional negotiations regarding the contracted number of room bookings were carried out by Jana during the meeting.

For meetings to be held in the east, it was agreed that no request would be made of TRIUMF in negotiating or signing a contract with the conference facility - this role being taken over by SNOLAB - nor would there be any expectation of on-site support. However, the use of the registration portal, and general handling of funds would still be very helpful for WNPPC meetings held in the east.

Given that TRIUMF's level of ongoing support for the WNPPC was still unclear (with the position of conference coordinator having been cancelled late in 2010), it was agreed that a request be made to Tim Meyer to clarify the level of ongoing support, emphasizing the importance of the current TRIUMF role as outlined above. (Adam Ritz to follow up).

2. Host rotation

a) The committee received confirmation from Ken Ragan of McGill's plan to host in 2012 in conjunction with SNOLAB.
b) An enquiry was made (in January 2011) to the Guelph group regarding their interest in hosting the 2013 conference. No response has yet been received, but there are extenuating circumstances and this will be followed up during the year.

Shirley Kayama confirmed that a hold exists for WNPPC13 and WNPPC14 at the Banff Centre (in the TCP Pavilion), with contracts required in due course.

3. Funding and Registration

The 2011 attendance figures provided by Jana were:

15 full (early)
8 full (late),
16 student (early)
3 student (late)

Total = 42

However, there were 4 late cancelations and several participants stayed off-site, which had an impact on the room bookings at the Banff Centre. With a contract for 80 room nights, only 68 were attained. However, this year 16 participants were offered a reduced room rate (by $43) due to incomplete renovations in some of the rooms. With these rates raised back up to the nominal room rate, the extra income would almost cover the missing 12 room nights. Corina Andreoiu was also successful in obtaining $1K from SFU to over any additional costs. The final budget will be distributed once the fees from the Banff Centre are known.

At this stage, the costs for the 2012 meeting at Mont Tremblant are not known, thus any discussion of changes to registration fees was deferred.

4. Status of the 2012 meeting, and location

Prior to the steering committee meeting, Ken Ragan distributed some information regarding the proposal by McGill to host WNPPC12 at the Tremblant Convention Centre in Mont Tremblant, Quebec. Tony Noble was able to provide additional information during the meeting regarding the costs for conference packages.

Quote for a single room (3 meals/day): $247/night + tax

This is only slightly higher than the Banff Centre, where the single room cost for 2011 was roughly $220/night. In addition, the impression was given that this rate should be negotiable when a contract for say 40 rooms was considered.

The conference package including rental of the conference facilities, meals for participants, and 2 coffee breaks per day, allowed several options, e.g.

breakfast/lunch/dinner (approx $100/day)
breakfast/lunch (approx $50/day)

These fees appear comparable to those offered by the Banff Centre, particularly with the inclusion of catering for coffee breaks.

There was some discussion about the current McGill proposal to extend the meeting by a day, assuming arrival on the thursday, and having participants stay three nights. The primary concern was the cost of an extra night, but given that the timing of the meeting was switched to begin during the reading break for most institutions (the proposed dates are 23-26 Feb 2012), the committee felt this was an option worth considering for 2012. It was agreed that any overlap with the Lake Louise Winter Institute would not really be of concern in 2012, as it seems unlikely that participants would attend both meetings when the WNPPC was held in the east.

The committee affirmed McGill as the host for 2012 and agreed that Tremblant would provide an excellent eastern location for the WNPPC. Ken Ragan and Tony Noble were thanked for their input. The committee also requests that negotiations now commence with the Tremblant Conference Centre, to ensure that the final figures are known by late March, which is the final date that the current "soft hold" can be released on the Banff Centre.

5. Steering Committee membership

The normal rotation will occur after the conference, with Corina Andreoiu to become chair of the steering committee.

(a) It was confirmed that Tony Noble will continue to act at the SNOLAB representative on the committee.
(b) With the recent appointment of a new Science Director at TRIUMF, the status of the TRIUMF representative will be followed up during the year by Gordon Ball.

6. WNPPC Handbook

A draft handbook was distributed to the committee in advance of the meeting. The basic content was approved, and Jana suggested the addition of some basic budgetary information. (Adam Ritz to provide an updated draft shortly, which will then be passed to Corina Andreoiu and Ken Ragan for the next meeting.)

Agenda:

1. Status of TRIUMF support

Current understanding (to be confirmed) is that:
a) TRIUMF will continue to provide off-site support for WNPPC meetings held at Banff through, covering liability for contracts, handling registration funds, etc.
b) It seems unlikely(?) that TRIUMF will provide any on-site support after 2011 due to the cancelation of the conference coordinator position. This role, at least for registration, could perhaps be taken over by one-two graduate students from the host institution?

2. Host Rotation

Discussion of current rotation plan:

wnppc06 Mathie	Regina	Western Region
wnppc07 Austin	SMU and Dalhousie	Eastern Region
wnppc08 Gay	UBC	Western Region
wnppc09 Noble	Queens	Center Region
wnppc10 Ritz	Victoria	Western Region
wnppc11 Andreoiu	SFU	Western Region
wnppc12 Ragan	McGill	Eastern Region
wnppc13	Guelph?	Center region
wnppc14	Manitoba?	Western Region
wnppc15	??	Eastern Region
wnppc16	Saskatchewan?	Western Region

Notes:
a) Frequency of western hosts reflects the history of the conference in western Canada (Manitoba through B.C.).
b) The eastern region could include Ottawa through Nova Scotia.
c) The center region includes Ontario universities except Ottawa.
d) As agreed at last year's meeting, I have asked Carl Svensson if Guelph would be willing to host in 2013, but have not yet received a response. Note that the 2013 meeting will be the 50th anniversary of the WNPPC.

3. Funding and Registration

A preceived funding gap was identified with regard to limited registration income at the 2008 and 2009 meetings (the 2010 meeting made a small profit, which was carried forward). The registration fees were correspondingly increased slightly for 2011 to ease the funding pressure on the host. The

status of the registration fees should be addressed again, once the figures are known for 2011.

4. Status of the 2012 meeting, and location

McGill (hopefully via Ken Ragan) to provide an update regarding plans for the eastern site in 2012. If there is no McGill rep at the conference, we hope to receive an update by email.

Presumably a final decision to release the hold on the Banff Centre for 2012 will need to be made at the time of the conference.

5. Steering Committee Membership

chairperson from year n-1 or designate (now Ritz)
chairperson from current year n or designate (now Andreoiu)
chairperson from year n+1 or designate (now Ragan)
TRIUMF science director or designate (now Gordon Ball)
SNOLAB science director or designate (now Tony Noble?)

At last year's meeting, the committee approved the addition of a permanent SNOLAB representative on the committee - with Tony Noble, as a past conference chair, the initial rep. However, this position has yet to be formalised through any direct agreement with SNOLAB.

6. WNPPC handbook

A summary of conference information has been compiled, and a draft circulated. The idea is that this handbook can be passed to new conference chairs, as a reference for what needs to be done and the appropriate timeline. The committee is asked to review the draft, providing feedback if necessary, so that the handbook can be adopted for future meetings. It is proposed that the handbook be updated subsequent to each conference if needed, by the steering committee chair.

7. AOB