

BREA Zoom Meeting Minutes 11/14/2023

Minutes recorded by Laura Miller

Contact Information:

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association BREA

BNL Bldg. 400A

BERA Recreation/ Attention BREA Meeting

Upton, NY 11973

Present: A. Moodenbaugh, D. Cox, A. J. Feldman, L. Fishbone, A. Ghosh, V. Ghosh, L. Hanson, M. Israel, J. Lemley, B. Leonhardt, B.Y. Lin, S. McCorkle, L. Miller, M. Rowe, D. Sievers, B. Siskind, E. Sperry

Officers 2022-2024: President: Arnold Moodenbaugh, Vice President: Vinita Ghosh, Secretary: Laura Miller, Treasurer: Les Fishbone, Membership Chair: Beth Lin, Newsletter Editor: Mona Rowe

1. Call to Order, Arnie Moodenbaugh at 1:01 pm
2. Minutes of October meeting. Laura Miller
 - a. October minutes were only recently sent to the board and have not been approved.

Action (by BREA Board): Approve both the October and November minutes at the December meeting.
3. Treasurer Report. Les Fishbone
 - a. Grand total: \$26,020.19.
 - b. **Action:** Les will go to TFCU tomorrow and talk to them about what to do. We will update signatures after the election. Can we sign remotely?
 - c. **Action:** Signature cards will be updated in January
 - d. Checks Les received from Beth have been deposited. Sent a \$106 check to Adopt a Platoon, but it hasn't been cashed.

Motion to accept by A.J. Feldman, seconded by D. Sievers, passed unanimously.
4. BREA contributions. Les Fishbone (Adopt-a-Platoon), Steve Shapiro (Tesla Science Ctr.)
 - a. No change in contributions. Balance of \$84.60 for Adopt-a-Platoon.
 - b. Tesla: They were supposed to give us a list of projects that require funding, but S. Shapiro hasn't heard from them. He will give us an update at the December meeting. Windows are still possible to adopt.
5. Membership Report. Beth Yu Lin
 - a. Number of current members after Oct. 10: 247, number with email: 228. Between the October meeting and today, Beth received four dues' payments.

6. Newsletter. Mona Rowe
 - a. The January-February 2024 newsletter will have an article on the Electron-Ion Collider (EIC). It's BNL's next large project, estimated to cost 1.7-2.8 BILLION dollars. Expected to come on-line in the early 2030's. Yesterday the National Security Administration (NSA) recommended completion of EIC as the highest priority for construction in their long-range plans. International treaty agreement? Unknown, but many cooperative relationships around the world. Thomas Jefferson Lab and BNL were early competitors for the location, but now they are partners.
7. Election of Officers. We encourage you to participate in the election. The election information and ballot are on the second page of the current Nov/Dec BREA News. You may access, then download and print the newsletter ballot page using a link from the BNL webpage <https://bera.bnl.gov/brea/newsletter/>. You may also indicate your choices on a clearly handwritten page or in an email text
 - a. She had 23 votes as of Nov. 14.
 - b. Votes can be sent in by email, don't need to send in a paper ballot.
 - c. Motion to accept by Mark, seconded by D. Sievers, none opposed.
8. CAC Meeting Report. Mark Israel
 - a. **Action:** Mark will provide a detailed report from the September CAC meeting for inclusion in the October minutes and will provide his notes from the October and November CAC meetings for inclusion in the November BREA minutes.

[Update: See Appendices A and B for CAC notes from October and November.]
9. Plan for hybrid in-person/ZOOM BREA meeting. We hope to arrange for the January meeting to be originated from BNL. Because retirees cannot access the BNL internal networks, BREA will need the cooperation of BNL staff to set up the BNL meeting room, ZOOM.gov meeting, and oversee Audiovisual access to the web
 - a. **Action:** Arnie will discuss BREA requirements with Adam Merone
10. Possible informal lunch.
 - a. **Action:** Arnie will attend the December meeting of the informal group and talk to restaurant management about possible scheduling of BREA luncheon.
11. New Business.
 - a. General discussion of Medicare Open Enrollment and BNL retiree health benefits.

- i. Some Medigap and Part D plan price increases were noted. A Florida Medigap F member would have seen a large bump in rate (about 20%, I believe), but used Select Quote Senior fairly efficiently to move to a G plan. For NY Medigap G (AARP/UHC) a 12% increase is proposed.
- ii. Members want BREA officers to ask for an increase in reimbursement amounts, to supplement the position paper we wrote.
- iii. Strategies for obtaining better prescription prices include using GoodRx or similar discount cards when the Part D insurance price doesn't seem competitive. Arnie suggested that Costco provides very good prices at the counter or mail order. Another option might be the new Amazon mail order prescription service.
- iv. **Action:** Arnie and two or three other BREA members (G. Cisco and possibly D. Cox and/or S. Shapiro) will schedule a meeting with HR.

Next meeting: December 12, 2023, via Zoom.

Appendices: October and November CAC notes.

Appendix A: October 12, 2023 CAC Meeting Report - Mark Israel.

The meeting was held on October 12, 2023, and held as a hybrid, both on Zoom, and in person in Berkner B. After administrative matters were addressed, John Hill, the new Laboratory Deputy Director for Science and Technology, was introduced to the CAC.

John presented some background information about himself and spoke about the enduring priorities and science initiatives at the Laboratory. He said that the initiatives will evolve as the Nation's needs evolve, and the new BNL management team will work with the rest of the team to create a new strategic vision for the Laboratory. He emphasized that the current priority at BNL is the Electron Ion Collider (EIC) and that vision going forward.

John then spoke to the importance of microelectronics. Right now, 95% of microchips are manufactured in Taiwan, and the Lab is working to bring that technology back to the U.S. If current trends continue, microchips will use a significant portion of the world's energy production by 2035. Therefore, it is important to make chips to be much more energy efficient. To improve on the existing technology, we need to understand the science behind these tiny transistor structures. To accomplish that, we need very intense, very focused x-ray beams produced by a synchrotron. The Laboratory's NSLS II is a world leader in nanoscale x-ray imaging.

John closed his presentation by stating that, with the science that the Lab can deliver and the challenges it can tackle, this promises to be BNL's most exciting decade yet.

Groundwater Update – Bill Dorsch, Environmental Protection Division

As you may recall, at the September CAC meeting, Jason Remien presented an overview of Volume I of the 2022 Site Environmental Report. At this meeting, Bill Dorsch presented an overview of Volume II, which addresses Groundwater Status at the Laboratory.

Bill discussed the groundwater plume and the treatment systems status, performance, progress, and recommendations. He gave an overview of the remediation systems and spoke about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), time critical removal action (TCRA) and the Operable Unit (OU)X status. Volume II of the Site Environmental Report is posted on the website, and provides detailed information, maps, charts and graphs of the groundwater monitoring and remediation conducted during 2022.

Dorsch stated that NYS Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) equivalency permits are required for all groundwater treatment systems. In March 2023, NYSDEC issued discharge guidance values for Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), Perfluorooctanic acid (PFOA), and 1,4-Dioxane. He said that PFOS and 1,4-Dioxane have been detected in the discharges of several active on-site and off-site treatment systems at levels that exceed the new guidance values. The Laboratory has met with the NYSDEC and other regulatory agencies to discuss this issue and proposed a plan to collect additional PFAS and 1,4-Dioxane data needed to support decisions on whether modification of treatment systems are required. The agencies have agreed with this plan.

Bill said that a draft OU X remedial investigation work plan for PFAS and 1,4-Dioxane was submitted to the regulators on March 30, 2023 and the Lab is working with regulatory agencies to finalize the work plan. A DOE PFAS research and development workshop is scheduled for July 9-11, 2024 at BNL.

The next CAC meeting will be held on November 9th.

Appendix B: November 9, 2023 CAC Meeting Report - Mark Israel

The meeting was held on November 9, 2023 and held as a hybrid, both on Zoom and in person in Berkner B. After administrative matters were addressed, Ann Emrick, the newly appointed Laboratory Deputy Director for Operations was introduced.

Ann started her career at BNL in 1987 as a Biology Associate. From 1992 through 2000, she was an Operations Specialist, and focused on User Administration, Training Coordination, Work Planning & Control, Building Management, and Conference Coordination. From 2000 through 2015 Ann was a Research Operations Manager for Biology, Medical, Environmental and Computer Science. She worked on the Consolidated ESH and Facility Management Program, the Institutional Biosafety Committee, and the R&D Work Planning Program. From 2015 through 2023, Ann was the Directorate Chief Operating Officer for Environment, Biology, Nuclear Science & Nonproliferation, Computational Science, and the Advanced Technology Research Office. She had worked at just about every facility at the Laboratory.

From the Community and Environment perspective, Ann chaired the BNL United Way campaign, coordinated Summer Sundays for Biology, participated as a Science Fair Judge, and worked with many Employee Resource Groups, Breast Cancer help forums, Habitat for Humanity, Food Drives BERA Clubs, and Earth Day events.

Ann outlined her responsibility in carrying out the BNL Mission and Campus Strategy. Those strategic elements are:

- Improve capability of critical core buildings to enable the scientific agenda. This includes projects such as upgrading AP hot cells; repurposing B870 for additional hot cell processing (CARP Project).
- Provide scientific facility reliability through targeted utility and infrastructure investments. This entails addressing highest priority utilities that suffer from decreased reliability, lack of redundancy, and limitations in capacity.
- Enhance safety and effectiveness by optimizing the campus footprint and creating a post-pandemic work environment. This includes improving staff morale through the creation of collaborative spaces, reevaluating the food service model, re-opening the Child Development Center, and enhancing the work environment.
- Ensure sustainability and resiliency to deliver the mission. This includes recently added EV charging stations, proposals for solar panel parking lots, on-site carbon-free electricity, and assuring that new construction meets the DOE Guiding Principles for climate resiliency.
- Renew infrastructure and support scientific users through an innovative public-private concept of Discovery Park and the new Science and User Support Center (SUSC). The latter will include more accessible meeting rooms, streamlined processing for visitors, and externally facing departments gathered in one place.

Cathy S. Cutler, Chair of Isotope Program

Cathy discussed the Isotope Program mission which entails:

- Production and/or distribution of radioactive and stable isotopes that are in short supply; includes by-products, surplus materials and related isotope services.
- Maintain the infrastructure required to produce and supply priority isotope products and related services.
- Conduct R&D on new and improved isotopes production and processing techniques that can make available priority isotopes for research and application. Develop workforce.

-Ensure robust domestic supply chains and reduce U.S. dependency on foreign supply to ensure National Preparedness.

Cathy described in detail the Collider-Accelerator Department BLIP (Brookhaven Linear Isotope Producer) and presented schematics of the Building 801 RRPL facility that includes the Hot Cells and Analysis Labs. She gave an overview of Beta and Alpha emitters, and how they are used for targeted treatment approaches. In particular, Cathy discussed the high potential of the Actinium-225 molecules that have been undergoing human testing (Clinical Stage III phase), hoping to reach the market by 2028. This radioisotope is particularly effective with prostate cancers. The market drivers are (1) Rising demand for clinical application, and (2) Limited supply of other Actinium-225 sources. There is a Tri-Lab effort to leverage the unique capabilities of DOE Isotope Program Facilities to address the Actinium-225 supply. In addition to BNL's LINAC and BLIP, LANL has an Isotope Production Facility, and ORNL has 20 years' experience in the isolation of Actinium-225 from Uranium-233 via Thorium-229.

To increase BNL's production capability, the former HC3 Mixed Waste Facility in Building 870 will be repurposed for additional hot cell installation. This new project is referred to as CARP (Clinical Alpha Radionuclide Producer).

Robert Carter, Nuclear Transition Project Manager

Robert described how Analysis of the Radionuclide Research & Production Facility (RRPL) confirmed that radioisotope inventory is above the Hazard Category 3 (HC3) threshold, but just below the HC2 threshold. Therefore, the facility, which is currently managed under the DOE Accelerator Safety Order, now must fall under Nuclear Safety Management Regulation 10CFR830. This is a change in regulatory code only, not a change to the actual work. This directive now requires rigorous safety analyses, pervasive quality assurance, and thorough documentation. The full transition of RRPL is expected to take about two years. The new CARP Facility will be managed from the start as a nuclear project, so no "transition" will be necessary.

Jennifer Higbie, Environmental Protection Division

Jennifer described the NEPA Process that is necessary for the CARP Facility. Once the purpose and need of the facility was established, an Environmental Assessment was performed. This entailed an analysis of the three possible alternatives: (1) Conversion of Bldg. 870 for Radioisotope Production; (2) No Action; and (3) Development and Construction of a New Facility. The assessment considers Ecology, Water, Land Use/Demography/Social Justice, Socioeconomics, Transportation, Air Quality, Various Hazards, and several other factors. After in-depth analysis, Alternative (1) Conversion of Bldg. 870 was selected as the preferred alternative. The Draft EA will be completed in early December and circulated for review. Final Draft will be submitted to New York State for review, then DOE prepares their determination. The Published Determination and Final EA is expected by the end of January, 2024.

The next CAC Meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2024.