

Fermilab Employee Advisory Group Meeting

October 27, 2011

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM, One East

November 8, 2011

AGENDA TOPICS

1. Management Update
2. Committee report on manager rewards and manager resource center

MEETING SUMMARY

1) Management Update

- Funding for this fiscal year is still on a continuing resolution. Congress is looking to get something done soon, probably not an omnibus funding bill, but the energy budget will be packaged with a number of other bills. Indications right now are that the 2012 budget will pass. Also still waiting to see the 2013 budget from the White House while starting work on the 2014 budget. Pier is spending a lot of time in Washington working on the funding bill, particularly LBNE.
- LBNE is a high cost project, and we are still waiting on that decision. The goal is to follow LBNE with Project X, so LBNE funding is important for Project X as well. If HEP funds LBNE by itself, then the project will take longer and that is not good for the overall schedule of projects at the lab. The lab is working to have LBNE construction start at the end of 2012 rather than 2013 as new starts cannot begin under a continuing resolution. The 2013 budget will certainly be under a continuing resolution until at least January 2013 and the start of the new Congress.
- The Tevatron shutdown went well. There are a lot of things to turn off and they are happening in sequence. The power use at lab is coming down as expected.
- Safety will be a major focus in the coming months. DOE believes that the labs have hit a plateau in safety performance and want to see more improvement.
- Planning is underway for the CDF to be used an education center for the public. This will involve redoing the hall and opening up one end of the detector, and will require a lot of work to make it safe and accessible.
- Groundbreaking for the The Illinois Accelerator Research Center (IARC) building will be December 16. The State of Illinois gave \$20 million toward this project.
- The staff reduction is still a work in progress. Legal constraints prevent sharing any more details at this time.
- A question was asked as to why internal transfers are not being pursued, some are being told that people cannot transfer from other divisions. That should not be the case, and Bruce will check on that. However, any position that was vacated by the buyout cannot be filled by an employee for at least a year, unless

that employee was going to be let go anyway. Positions can be filled with a contractor, however the contractor position that was left behind cannot be backfilled. Overall this is to balance costs--there are real constraints in any action that would drive costs back up. The positions where voluntary buyouts were accepted are all to be left vacant and were approved ahead of time. There is clear tension in the lab between the amount of work that needs to be done and the decreasing budgets. The only real answer is to stretch out project schedules. there needs to be more clarity about this throughout the lab. Communication needs to go through the division and section heads.

- It was recommended that the lab communicate specific policies regarding staffing as well as the bigger picture regarding how all the new work is being managed.
- A question was asked about the effectiveness communication regarding the future of the lab. Pier and Young-Kee have been meeting with staff. An EAG member who attended one of the meetings thought it was excellent. Great presentations by Young-Kee and others, and a good turnout. The small meeting approach allows speakers to focus in on specific issues related to that subgroup. However, not everyone is getting the message. A number of EAG members noted that they had not received invitations and only knew of the meetings from the EAG. Young-Kee sent a message on 10/12 and asked it to be forwarded to everyone, however not everyone in PPD and WDRS have seen it. For engineers, it was communicated through the engineers list serve, but not all engineers are on that.
- Based on the EAG recommendation, scheduling meeting notes are now being produced and getting distributed, and it has really started to make a difference. However, this still needs more time to work fully, and it is not getting down to everyone. EAG members noted that the information seems to be at the right level of detail.
- Bruce met with Harry Davis and Holly Rider from the University of Chicago who identified Susan Annunzio as a possible speaker. Susan had some helpful input on the survey. She noted that an 18% return rate is too low to make policy and a low participation rate is its own indicator of employee attitudes. Most industry use return rates around 80%. Bruce will talk more with her to clarify the intent and constraints on the survey; she does have some interest in coming to Fermilab and this will be pursued further.
- The Physics for Everyone series is starting again. On 11/16 Young-Kee will talk on the future of Fermilab, on 12/7 there will be a talk on Project X, and in January there will be a talk on Mu to E.
- at the next scheduling meeting, Bruce will mention the availability of EAG members to present results of the survey to specific groups at the lab. Some EAG members have already been asked by their groups to present at upcoming meetings.

2) Committee report on manager rewards and manager resource center

The committee discussed existing lab recognition and reward (R&R) programs and presented ideas for additional R&R activities for managers. There is some question about how well the existing programs are understood throughout the lab. A number of EAG members talked about the effectiveness of these programs in their divisions, while others noted that there is a lack of understanding or awareness among some supervisors. It is not so easy to find the applications, and the policies and applications are not in the same place on the web. The committee is suggesting having a single site with a clear link.

The people who administrate the R&R programs believe that everyone knows and is aware of the programs, but clearly this is not the case. Is employee reward covered in management training? Not in the basic training and probably not in Fermilab functions training either. R&R needs to be better explained and stressed in training. Managers do need a central supervisors toolbox of information where training information is aggregated. There should be a centralized location for all awards available at Fermilab across all divisions and functions.

Bruce noted that Kay VanVreede talked to DOE about creating smaller awards as has been suggested by the EAG. Smaller spot awards or any additional tier would require a formal request to DOE for approval. The request would need to include background, rationale, benchmark to other labs, and a cost estimate. There is still a question as to whether we could take a portion of existing awards and shift them to these. Oak Ridge does this, so that could be a good benchmark.

In addition to the ideas presented by the committee in its handout (attached), a number of other ideas were discussed. One suggestion is to create a basic template for an employee thank-you that could serve as a symbol of being thanked and that employees would display. Handwritten, personal notes are most appreciated.

It was noted that awards are now being considered for more than just scientific achievements and higher-level folks, and are now more accessible to all employees. This is widely seen as an improvement.

One suggestion was to create actual plaques somewhere with names to show who is getting these rewards. The committee noted that it was trying to set a framework for what is possible and will work for all departments, and did not want to make prescriptive awards but to provide ideas and flexibility. Another suggestion is something tangible to pass around between people in the group when people do well. Something that takes on an iconic importance often works in groups.

The committee presented its ideas for a draft manager resource website. A key question is how to host and manage the website. It was noted that everyone should be aware of this resource, not just managers. It should just be out there for everyone to see. All other relevant pages should also be linked to this page.

EAG Action Items:

- Aria Soha will distribute a link to the draft web page for review.
- Think about specific recommendations about existing awards, communication, and accessibility, and additional opportunities for smaller awards.
- Explore whether smaller awards can be carved out of the existing structure without have to go through DOE approval.
- Possible recommendation to the lab to seek DOE approval for smaller awards tier.
- The subcommittee will meet with Kay to present their ideas and information.
- Need to check on why unions are exempt from the reward process, and identify the real limitations and restrictions.

Potential agenda items for November:

- Additional information and next steps on reward and recognition, additional feedback on the web site and recommendations
- Possible EAG recommendations related to WDRS initiatives
- Membership and transition