



Minutes for the June 12, 2023 FORNL Board Meeting

Opening – Herb Krause

Herb Krause called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

Attendees:

Officers present: Herb Krause, President; Fred Peretz, Secretary; David Mullins, Treasurer.

Board Members Present: Syd Ball, Ray Garrett, Carolyn Krause, and Steve Overbury.

Adjunct members in attendance: Bob Compton and Jim Rushton.

Announcements – Herb Krause

Due to illness, Tony Mezzacappa's June 6 was cancelled. Notification was sent by MailChimp and posted on fornl.org and Zoom. Nicole Allen of ETEC was informed, the board was separately notified, and a note was posted on the UT Resource Center door. Jim Rushton observed that he did go to the room, and the posting was in place.

Lab Liaison – Katy Brown

In response to a question about UT Research activities at the former Local Motors building facing Pellissippi Parkway near Carmichael Road, Katy Brown provided a link with information on the Tennessee Manufacturing and Design Enterprise (TN-MADE), a 40,000-square-foot manufacturing and design enterprise. This facility is a partnership between UT's new Institute for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing and the UT Research Foundation. As part of the response, Brown noted that ORNL is not directly involved in this facility.

Secretary – Fred Peretz

Minutes for the May 8 board meeting were circulated to the board with the agenda. They were approved and will be posted on the FORNL website.

Treasurer – David Mullins

Financially, this has been a quiet month. No new memberships came in (not even Benevity); the only change is interest. With the ORNL grant, we now have a \$3,400 surplus over expenses for the year.

Membership – David Mullins

As noted above, there were no changes to membership this past month.

Luncheon Lectures - Ellen Smith, Carolyn Krause, Bob Compton

The May 9 lecture was by Ken Tobin, ORAU Chief Research and University Partnerships Officer, covering the ORAU-ORNL partnership and his award-winning, commercialized inventions that have led to semiconductor yield improvements and telehealth diagnoses of blinding diseases.

The June talk, scheduled for June 6 to avoid a scheduling conflict, was cancelled due to illness.



Upcoming meetings:

The July 11 talk will be by Rob Peacher, covering the status and future of the radioactive material processing programs and infrastructure at ORNL. (Fred Peretz)

On August 8, Bruce Moyer, ORNL Chemical Sciences Division, will speak on “Why ORNL Remains a Powerhouse in Separations Science and Technology.” (Carolyn Krause)

Syd Ball will contact Kirk Sorensen of Flibe Energy for a possible September talk on thorium-fueled salt reactors.

Carolyn Krause mentioned the possibility of a talk by Phil Snyder, a theoretical and computational physicist who was recently appointed interim director of ORNL’s Fusion Energy Division. Fred Peretz will contact Snyder once Kirk Sorensen’s schedule is confirmed.

The possibility of rebooking Tony Mezzacappa, UTK Dept of Physics and Astronomy, speaking on gravitational waves from core collapse supernovae, appears remote for the near future. Due to his teaching schedule, Tony cannot speak earlier than 4:00 p.m. on Tuesdays this fall. This is not consistent with the traditional time of the lectures.

Jan Berry was suggested as a speaker by Carolyn Krause, covering nuclear power as a solution for climate change as an MIT-DOE initiative. Berry is a state-level volunteer for Citizens’ Climate Lobby and a certified trainer for the EnROADS program. Several board members were concerned that this is more directed toward advocacy than science and is not directly related to ORNL. It was also observed that interested public may have already attended a recent Science and Theology Lecture and discussion held in Oak Ridge in May, and that adequate training is available on their website. Thus, this topic will be set aside for now.

A talk by Kairos Power, the company planning the Hermes demonstration reactor at the ETTP site, has been mentioned for some time. Kairos considers its technical details proprietary, and there are concerns as to whether they would be willing to include enough detail for an interesting talk. It was suggested that additional details might be released at a future public meeting as part of the NRC licensing process, and this topic will be deferred to the future.

Review of press releases by Carolyn Krause led to several suggestions for speakers. Stephen Hamilton might provide a talk on the use of the Frontier supercomputer for analysis of small modular nuclear reactors. Another possible speaker is Jerry Parks, a computational chemist. An ORNL news release last month described his work in making a landmark discovery of the proteins responsible for the ability of certain bacteria to turn mercury into toxic methylmercury, a discovery mentioned briefly by Scott Brooks in his FORNL talk last year.

Bob Compton suggested a talk by Shawn Campagne, professor and associate department head in chemistry, and Frank Loeffler Governor’s Chair professor in microbiology at UT-Knoxville. Campagne’s group has made a discovery that could lead to decreasing “forever chemicals.” This talk may address a different and/or better approach than microbe approaches covered by a recent talk by Adam Gus.

Jim Rome had earlier suggested a talk on computer security. In addition to Jim giving a presentation, the possibility of identifying an ORNL speaker on this topic has been raised in earlier sessions. Other suggested speakers have been identified in earlier minutes.

Media reports

Newspapers – Carolyn Krause

Two articles on Ken Tobin’s FORNL talk on ORAU and on his ORNL research legacy, including a technology for saving the sight of diabetic patients, were published on the front page of The Oak Ridger on June 5 and 6.



On page 3 of the June 5 edition was an article announcing Tony Mezzacappa's FORNL talk on explosions of dying massive stars (supernovae) and on gravitational waves. Tony was ill and the talk was not delivered.

Carolyn updated the list of and links to ORNL news releases on the FORNL website. She reiterated that this listing can be used as a source of speakers for the monthly meetings.

Facebook – Ellen Smith

Our Facebook page recently had 256 followers. Ellen did observe that users responded to her post on the June meeting cancellation.

Hybrid Meeting – Herb Krause

The June 6 meeting was cancelled due to speaker illness. The next hybrid meeting will be July 13.

Webmaster – Jim Rome

No report on our website was given; no problems have been observed with the site.

AMSE and Bus Tours – Al Ekkebus

Al Ekkebus forwarded information from Tony Schnadelbach, AMSE Director of Volunteers and Public Programs. Tony reports that during May, 12 tours were held with 325 passengers. Feedback from surveys is being used to refine the tours, and recommendations from tour guests are leading to further interest. The bus tour will continue through November, with stops at AMSE, K-25, ORNL Visitor's Center, and the Y-12 New Hope Center.

New Member and Public Outreach – Fred Peretz, Syd Ball, Bob Compton, and Herb Krause

No report on public outreach was given, aside from the continuing need for volunteers at AMSE and MAPR.

The issue of generating volunteerism in the conduct of the FORNL mission from a primarily Zoom audience was raised. Herb Krause will encourage suggestions such as potential speakers at the July lecture meeting. The loss of a lunch option was mentioned as a potential reason for low physical participation; the lunch option may enhance early arrivals and communication between FORNL members. The possibility of bringing in bag lunches for purchase was raised; there is a risk of over-purchase, but the treasurer observed that our financial position is healthy enough to support an experiment. A volunteer is needed to organize such a lunch option.

Community Lectures – Kent Williams, and Bob Compton

Again, Kent Williams is preoccupied with a move and was unable to attend. There was no update on his plans to contact Siegfried Hecker, past LANL Director, for the possibility of a community lecture in the fall.

Other community lecture speakers were considered; Herb Krause observed that it would be useful to identify an interesting speaker for a fall lecture should the Hecker approach not materialize.

History Room – Al Ekkebus

Manhattan Project – Fred Peretz

PDH Certificates – David Fields

Visitor Badges – Syd Ball

No significant reports were given on these topics.



Old Business

No action was taken on defining records. Fred Peretz will present a proposal at a future board meeting.

New Business

No new business was identified.

Closing

The next board meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on July 10, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Peretz
Secretary, Friends of ORNL