

Minutes for the January 13, 2025, FORNL Board Meeting

Call to Order and Amendments to the Agenda – Ellen Smith

Ellen Smith called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

Attendees:

Officers present: Ellen Smith, President; Steve Overbury, Vice President; Fred Peretz, Secretary; and David Mullins, Treasurer.

Board Members Present: Syd Ball, Kathy Gant, Ray Garrett, Carolyn Krause and Alan Lowe.

Adjunct members in attendance: Herb Krause and James Rome.

Minutes of February Meetings – Fred Peretz

Minutes for the December 9 board meeting were circulated to the board. Improvements on the wording of membership list comparisons provided by Steve Overbury were incorporated, along with a few minor editorial improvements. The minutes were approved and will be posted on the FORNL website.

Treasurer's and Membership Report – David Mullins

There were no new expenses in December; miscellaneous minor income sources include interest, Benevity, and one charitable donation. A certificate of deposit was renewed in December at 4.75%. Net cash flow in 2024 was slightly positive for the year, with an increase just under \$1,000.

There were no changes in membership in December. A review of our methods for recruiting new members ensued. It was noted that once again the FORNL brochure is being given to new ORNL retirees. FORNL events are listed on the ORNL internal news. FORNL participates in the annual ORNL Benefits and Wellness Fair. News articles and event announcements are placed in The Oak Ridger. Discussions carried on identifying additional outreach possibilities.

Comparison of the membership roster and the MailChimp list was completed last month; the two lists are now consistent. MailChimp does identify “bounced” emails; several were called out and corrected during the meeting.

ORNL Liaison's Report – Annette Brun and Katy Brown

Annette Brun had a conflict and was not present at the board meeting. Nothing new happened toward an ORNL speakers' bureau during the holidays.

Nominating Committee – Alan Lowe

New board member candidates Roger Macklin and Gloria Caton have agreed to serve, in place of Fred Peretz and David Fields. The process of collecting biographical summaries and pictures for distribution to the membership was discussed. A question was raised as to whether this information should go to the entire MailChimp list, or only to paid-up members. It was observed that since the election was conducted in-person at the annual meeting, there may not be a problem with information being sent to individuals that are not actually current members.

No formal officer recommendations were available at the meeting. Exploratory discussions are now beginning.

Monthly Lectures – Ellen Smith, Carolyn Krause, other board members

David Mullins has borrowed a halo microphone with an attached speaker to test at tomorrow's meeting. (It worked for the speaker but must be held or worn properly.)

There was no talk in December.

The January 14 talk will be by Warren Grice of the Quantum Information Science Section, Computational Sciences and Engineering Division. His talk is titled Quantum Information Science at ORNL and the Quantum Revolution. Ray Garrett will introduce the speaker.

On February 11, Robert (Bob) Hettich, leader of the Bioanalytical Mass Spectrometry group in the ORNL Biosciences Division, will speak on the microbiome (gut bacteria) and his work in analyzing it using mass spectrometry. Carolyn will introduce the speaker.

Steven Jessee, with the ORNL Center for Nanophases Material Sciences, was suggested as a possible speaker for March. A talk on climate modeling (with a possible connection to recent flooding in the area) has been mentioned as an April Earth Day possibility (Ellen Smith). And Jim Rushton had earlier suggested a talk on the U.S. Stable Isotope Production and Research Center (SIPRC) being constructed at ORNL.

The current list of potential speakers is being maintained as a Google online spreadsheet used for recruiting and scheduling prospective speakers. The worksheet has been updated for 2025 and can be viewed and edited using the link https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ETI6DIem5_jf_0rNfZUfHf5PycV11b2vIOpNT6KFjH0/.

Community Lectures – Kent Williams

Michael Smith of the ORNL Physics Division was mentioned as an excellent public speaker, on topics ranging from space to artificial intelligence. No specific plans for a spring lecture are currently underway.

Outreach:

Website and Web Content – James Rome

No new activities on the website or web content were reported.

Brochure, Poster, and Promotional Materials – Fred Peretz and Syd Ball

There was no update on promotional materials. As noted earlier, the brochure is now being inserted into ORNL retirees' packets.

Volunteer Opportunities and Needs – Partner Organizations:

AMSE and Public Tours – Alan Lowe

Alan Lowe reported that he hopes to initiate meetings with DOE soon in preparation for starting the 2025 bus tours this spring. AMSE has entered into an agreement with CROET to operate a welcome center at K-25 Portal 4. Construction of the new interpretive "platform" adjacent to the K-25 Atomic History Museum at the original K-25 building site is progressing well. At present, though, there is no firm date given for its opening.

AMSE is also preparing for local activities during October's Nuclear Science Week in partnership with the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History (located in Albuquerque).

Manhattan Project National Historical Park – Fred Peretz

Fred had nothing new to report on the National Historical Park so far this year. Ellen questioned whether park headquarters was being moved from Denver to Santa Fe; Fred will check with park rangers on this topic.

STEM Education

No report.

Education Support

No report.

Media reports:

Newspapers – Carolyn Krause

The news release on Warren Grice's talk at the January 14 FORNL lunch meeting has been published on The Oak Ridger website and should appear in the print edition Tuesday.

The articles on Seaborg Award winner Laetitia Delmau's talk on radioisotope separations in November and Ivan Selin's November talk and discussion with the audience about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its future regulation of advanced reactors appeared in the print and website editions of The Oak Ridger in December.

An article on Don Spong's ORICL lecture class talk on fusion research by government labs and new companies, as well as the prospects for commercial fusion power, appeared in the January 7, 2025 edition of the print and online The Oak Ridger.

Only the article on the September talk by Zili Wu has been submitted but is yet to appear in The Oak Ridger.

Facebook – Ellen Smith

There was no update on the FORNL Facebook page. Links to recent news articles should be posted on the page.

Old Business:

There was no additional old business; nominating committee actions were reported earlier.

New Business

There was no new business raised.

Closing

The next board meeting will be held at AMSE at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, February 10, 2025. Steve Overbury and David Mullins will not be available.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Peretz
Secretary, Friends of ORNL