



Minutes for the August 7, 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; Ellen Smith, Vice President; David Mullins, Treasurer; and Fred Peretz, Secretary.

Board Members Present: Syd Ball and Carolyn Krause.

Adjunct members in attendance: James Rome, Jim Rushton, and Kent Williams.

Announcements – Herb Krause

The loan of the operating FORNL video projector (suggested by Chuck Coutant in a July 19 email and approved conditionally by the FORNL board in an email vote) is no longer needed by ORCMA as reported by Coutant, ORCMA Treasurer, on July 24.

Syd Ball has background screens previously used for FORNL publicity activities. These have not been used for many years, the publicity materials are out of date, and Syd would like to transfer or dispose of the screens.

UT-Battelle, LLC, has appointed Stephen K. Streiffer to be the next director of Oak Ridge National Laboratory. He currently serves as interim director at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and will join ORNL in October.

Lab Liaison – Katy Brown

Katy Brown and Carolyn Krause communicated via email. In response to one of Carolyn's July questions, Katy agreed to explore the possibility of ORNL badges for FORNL members again. Carolyn also asked about the potential availability of Susan Hubbard, Deputy Director for Science and Technology, as a FORNL speaker. Katy asked about potential topics and timing; this discussion is likely to continue in the future.

Secretary – Fred Peretz

Minutes for the July 10 board meeting were circulated to the board with the agenda. They were approved and will be posted on the FORNL website.

Treasurer – David Mullins

There was not much financial activity in July. One new annual membership was received, and interest and Benevity were paid into our account. The only expense was a Paypal fee. Net cash flow for the year is \$3,700 in the black. Jim Rome will send David bills for Mailchimp.

Membership – David Mullins

One additional annual membership was received. Through July 2023 there are 55 life and 44 annual members.



Luncheon Lectures - Ellen Smith, Carolyn Krause, Bob Compton

The July 11 talk was by Rob Peacher, a consultant supporting ORNL via Strata-G, titled “Radioisotope Processing Facility (RPF), ORNL’s Planned Facility Designed to Meet Growing Demand for Radioisotopes.” There were 20 attendees at the presentation, with another 40 present via Zoom. Per ORNL and DOE request, no slides or the recording of the presentation will be posted on the FORNL website.

Upcoming meetings:

On August 8, Bruce Moyer of the ORNL Chemical Sciences Division, will speak on “Why ORNL remains a powerhouse in separations science and technology” (Carolyn to introduce).

On September 12, Kirk Sorensen, leader of Flibe Corp in Huntsville, AL, will speak on thorium based small molten salt reactors and similar topics in advanced nuclear energy (Syd). This talk may be delivered in person or via Zoom. A board vote indicated that even if the talk is presented via Zoom, the group will meet at ETEC. (It was later determined the talk will be delivered in person.)

A talk by Phil Snyder, a theoretical and computational physicist who was recently appointed interim director of ORNL’s Fusion Energy Division, has been proposed for either October or November. Fred Peretz has contacted Snyder, but no response has been obtained yet. Fred will follow up.

Matt Lindsey (ORNL Cyber Operations leader), another ORNL expert, or Jim Rome were proposed to speak on computer security. (Jim’s PowerPoint, “2023 security talk,” was sent to board members on July 10.) Herb described differences between talks by Matt and Jim. A general preference was expressed for Jim’s talk.

Mali Balasubramanian, who spent many years at Argonne’s Advanced Photon Source, was identified as the current leader of ORNL’s Emerging and Solid-State Batteries Group in the Energy Science and Technology Directorate. He guides his team in exploring potential new materials and systems for electric vehicles and other battery applications.

The board consensus was that we should focus on two of the three above talks (Phil Snyder, Mali Balasubramanian and Jim Rome) to fill out the current year. (Subsequent to the meeting, Phil Snyder did agree to talk in October; Jim Rome will be invited to speak in November.)

In response to Herb’s request for general membership input on FORNL talks or other activities, an email was received suggesting a talk on the upgraded SNS achieving record-breaking neutron fluxes. John Galambos, project director, was recommended as the speaker. It was observed that although significant, this announcement is an intermediate milestone for the project, and a talk by Galambos might be considered once the SNS Proton Power Upgrade project is complete. The talk could address more than the details of accelerator upgrades, expanding toward the impact of PPU on neutron research at ORNL.

Other potential speakers identified during this and earlier board meetings include:

- Peter Fuhr; conducting research on the use of drones for fighting wildfires and for enhancing cybersecurity.
- Jonathan Harter; conducting research on automated electric vehicle battery recycling using robots.
- Jerry Parks, a computational chemist addressing issues with COVID and mercury contamination.
- Stephen Hamilton, addressing the use of the Frontier supercomputer to speed the design of a safe, reliable, efficient small modular reactor.
- A speaker on a six-lab task group (including ORNL) identifying scientific grand challenges where artificial intelligence plays a major role in making progress toward solutions in transportation, autonomous laboratories, national security, and the development of next-generation novel materials.



Carolyn made a proposal for the program committee and anyone on the board interested in proposing speakers for next year, suggesting that a list of six speakers that the board would like to hear in 2024 be identified. Invitations could be sent to each one to ask if they are interested in speaking to FORNL, and to select two or three dates from the second Tuesdays of each month in which they would be available to give a talk. The other six speaking dates could be held open for new topics identified during the year. Carolyn Krause and Ellen Smith agreed to consider this approach.

Media reports

Newspapers – Carolyn Krause

The news release announcing Rob Peacher’s talk on the planned Radioisotope Processing Facility appeared on *The Oak Ridger* website on July 10 and the article covering his talk appeared in *The Oak Ridger* print edition and, on its website, last Thursday, August 3. The news release announcing Bruce Moyer’s talk tomorrow is posted today, August 7, on *The Oak Ridger* website and should appear August 8 in the print edition.

Carolyn updated the Friends of ORNL website with the latest news releases on the ORNL website.

Facebook – Ellen Smith

Ellen commented on the use of the “friends” feature in Facebook to send notifications to new recipients.

Hybrid Meeting – Herb Krause

Preparations for tomorrow’s hybrid meeting are complete. Herb Krause will set up and host, record, and handle in-house questions following the talk. Steve Overbury will co-host and handle Zoom chat questions. Carolyn Krause will introduce the speaker, after an outreach message by Fred Peretz. Dave Mullens will collect dues.

Webmaster – Jim Rome

No issues identified with the website.

AMSE and Bus Tours –Al Ekkebus

AMSE hosted a total of 10 public tours in July; fewer tours were held this month due to the July 4th holiday and ORNL's Take Your Child to Work Day. All tours were full, for a total of 341 attendees. There was an increase in visitors who bought bus tickets wanting to learn more in preparation for the Oppenheimer movie release. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an AMSE lead guide or a guide assistant, please reach out to Tony Schnadelbach at tschnadelbach@amse.org.

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

Fred mentioned tnAchieves as a volunteer opportunity. The tnAchieves nonprofit administers the Tennessee Promise last-dollar scholarship program providing final coverage for tuition and mandatory fees at any of the state's 13 community colleges, 27 colleges of applied technology, or other select institutions offering two-year degree programs. As part of the program, prospective students are matched with volunteer mentors to assist with the transition from high school to college. Volunteer mentors are now being solicited, generally through October, with training and student assignments in late fall.

Jim Rushton added that Roane State Community College has just initiated a nuclear technology program, facilitated by a \$100,000 donation by UT-Battelle. Funds from UT-Battelle will purchase instruments, sources, and tools for the college’s Nuclear Measurements Lab. Students will receive an associate degree or a certificate in Nuclear



Technology and will be prepared for a broad range of activities such as medical isotopes, fissile material handling, waste handling and disposition, and support for companies and sites developing nuclear reactors and fuel. Fred Peretz observed there are similar programs at Chattanooga State Community College supported by TVA.

Community Lectures – Kent Williams, and Bob Compton

Last month Fred Peretz contacted Steve Arndt, currently a Distinguished R&D staff member at the ORNL performing research involving advanced reactor design readiness and formerly a senior scientist with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, as a potential community lecture speaker. Arndt has not responded, and Fred will make another attempt.

Carolyn Krause suggested that Lynne Parker, a former ORNL researcher and now Associate Vice Chancellor and Director of the AI Tennessee Initiative at UTK, would be a good speaker for a community lecture. Carolyn will pursue this contact (after the meeting, Parker did agree to speak).

The location for the next community lecture was also discussed. ORION is booking a speaker for October 16, but has not coordinated with FORNL prior to making this choice. This makes using ORION's standing reservation for the Community Room at Roane State difficult for FORNL to use. A suggestion was made that better coordination with ORAU might lead to the use of Pollard Auditorium (although it was later found that renovations to Pollard probably defer that option into next year). Further work on identifying a lecture location is needed.

History Room – Al Ekkebus
Manhattan Project – Fred Peretz
PDH Certificates – David Fields
Visitor Badges – Syd Ball

Requests for visitor badges were passed on to Katy Brown. No significant reports were given on the other topics.

Old Business

Last month, the possibility of a simple “sandwich tray” option to add a low-effort lunch to the “luncheon” lectures was raised. Although a dedicated non-officer volunteer was preferred, Fred Peretz suggested that if it were kept simple enough, he would at least start the effort. The topic was discussed further, with the suggestion that we should not go too small and appear cheap. Other restaurant options were suggested; Fred pointed out his willingness to initiate the effort was limited to the sandwich tray approach. Without a long-term volunteer coming forth, the topic remains open. Herb Krause will continue to solicit a volunteer for re-starting a lunch option at the monthly meetings.

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 September 11, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Peretz
Secretary, Friends of ORNL