

**USENIX Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
April 13, 2012  
Berkeley Office, CA  
Minutes, 7/31/12**

**Attendance:**

**Board:**

Clem Cole, Chair  
Margo Seltzer  
Brian Noble  
David Blank-Edelman  
Alva Couch  
Niels Provos  
John Arrasjid

**Staff:**

Andrew Gustafson  
Anne Dickison  
Casey Henderson  
Jessica Horst  
Toni Veglia  
Camille Mulligan  
Anthony Riley  
Dan Klein - by teleconference

**Guest:**

Glenn Samson

*8:40 a.m. - Meeting begins, all present except Klein and Samson*

**Seltzer moved and Arrasjid seconded that the minutes from the December 1, 2011, meeting be approved. Passed: 7 in favor, 1 absent (Blaze)**

**Action Items**

Blank-Edelman said that Hackid was interested in co-locating with a USENIX event. Cole said that Dennis Ritchie's family was happy about USENIX's plans for a memorial for him. The memorial planned is an endowed chair in Ritchie's name.

Couch said he would look at Jane-Allen's consistency pass of the policies document. He said the big topic at the CRA Leadership Summit was documentation of paths to computing careers. He will attend Snowbird'12, and the board will appoint his replacement as CRA liaison in June.

Cole reported that IEEE has approached USENIX about working together, and the EDs are following up.

Provos said he'd asked a contact at Google to consider sponsoring USENIX at a higher level. Seltzer said she would revisit the pilot area reading group with Thoughtbot when she had time. Dickison reported that USENIX's community manager, Rikki Endsley, had joined the ;login: advisory committee.

## **Liaisons & Committees**

It was noted that when conference chairs contact the staff, most often the board liaisons are not included in the email. Noble said that the board liaisons want to know the full picture of what is transpiring with the committees, and asked that the liaisons be given HotCRP accounts for the events. Cole asked that going forward the board liaison's email address be added to the program chair alias. Dickison and Henderson said they'd inform future program chairs about this change.

*9:08 a.m. - Samson joins the meeting*

Cole will ask Eric Allman to replace Ted Ts'o on the audit committee. He also said he'd continue to chair the awards committee after leaving the board. It was agreed that a standards committee was no longer needed. Seltzer will replace Cole on the "upgrade of office" committee.

Blank-Edelman said he'd be liaison for LISA'13. The board appointed Wallach as liaison for CSET'12, Fedorova as liaison for HotPower'12, and Roland as liaison for CHMIT.

## **Report on USENIX Endowment Portfolio.**

Samson reported that as of April 10, the Reserve Fund had a gain of 6%, but due to volatility, he was cautiously predicting about a 1% gain for the rest of 2012. He said that since the European market was in flux, he suggested getting out of that market for a few quarters, and the board agreed. Samson said the portfolio was rebalanced to stay in target range because the equities had outperformed. Current allocations are 56% equity, 31% fixed income, and 13% cash equivalents.

## **Conferences**

Provos reported that CSET was doing well. Couch said the HotPower program seemed to be geared towards PhD students. Seltzer suggested that adding content about system administration of HVAC data center planning should be considered for LISA.

## **Conference Registration Fees**

Henderson said the new policy of not requiring students to pay a non-member registration fee was not reflected in the policies document. **Noble moved and Cole seconded that there be no student member registration category, and student members and non-members pay the same conference fee. Passed: 7 in favor, 1 absent (Blaze).**

Dickison proposed raising the 2012 OSDI registration fees to match those of our other 2012 events. **It was moved by Seltzer and seconded by Arrasjid that OSDI'12 tech session registration fees be raised to \$770. Passed: 7 in favor, 1 absent (Blaze).**

*9:34 a.m. - Break*

*9:40 a.m. - Samson leaves the meeting*

*9:42 a.m. - Meeting resumes*

## **The Project**

Henderson reported that the new USENIX website was launched in February, knowing that some features would be incorporated later. Staff and consultants have spent a lot of time firefighting since the launch. She said the Salesforce/Drupal integration was working well. Henderson has begun working with new local consultants who, after conducting a site audit, will proceed with the outstanding work and maintenance.

Some of USENIX's usability testers reported difficulty in locating conference videos. Henderson said there were links from the old static website to the new site to take them to the videos' new location.

Cole suggested possibly having Drupal folks participate at a USENIX event. Dickison said that Endsley had recently attended DrupalCon and had some ideas.

Provos asked if the new website can promote our open access policy and collect donations to support this. Henderson said this was coming soon and fundraising would be discussed later in the agenda.

*10:10 a.m. - Dan Klein joins the meeting*

### **Education**

Klein said he was seeking new ideas for LISA tutorials, and discussed having a volunteer from the LOPSA community assist him with tutorial selection. Dickison said she'd spoken with Matt Simmons, who was excited about working with USENIX. She pointed out that Simmons is already the blog coordinator for LISA, and the two groups are already working together. She said it was a good time to make this collaboration official by having a LOPSA member become Klein's USENIX tutorial selection assistant. It was the sense of the board that this was a good plan.

Cole suggested that the ODCA, or Open Data Center Alliance, be contacted about participating at a USENIX event, with the idea that people in the Cloud community can give input to the ODCA members about what they should build. He said there were a lot of large companies in the ODCA, and they would benefit from attending events where they can engage with the USENIX community.

Klein said he will chair a Configuration Management Summit on Tuesday of FCW. He suggested putting a button on our website asking for new tutorial suggestions.

*10:25 a.m. - Klein leaves the meeting*

### **Budget**

Henderson said that she and Dickison want to capitalize work done on the new system/website in 2011 and 2012. The auditors had mentioned this during the 2010 audit, when the staff was planning the project. Dickison and Henderson view the new website as an asset, since it's providing the infrastructure that allows USENIX to roll out new services and garner more revenue. They will discuss capitalization with the auditors.

Seltzer said she's like to see the total dollar value of USENIX's support of student stipends, including the free registrations awarded, in the budget. Veglia said she'd look into it, and that it might be necessary to show this in another report of as a footnote in the financial statements.

### **Systems**

Henderson reported that Riley had been working with a consultant to assess our systems to recommend upgrades/replacements needed due to long-deferred maintenance of our old equipment. Riley plans to move more services off of our local machines, including DNS. Riley said one of his primary concerns is the cost of supporting HotCRP traffic.

Henderson said that HotCRP has begun to allow video submissions, which could consume a huge amount of disk space in a small period, and makes moving to a scalable solution such as Rackspace potentially extremely expensive. She said that she is watching the new website's current Rackspace instance to monitor its use for the remainder of the

year, alongside monitoring the new video submissions, before making a final call about HotCRP's ultimate future. Splunk was suggested as a resource, and Blank-Edelman said he'd close the loop with Splunk and Riley.

Provos suggested the videos be hosted on YouTube, as unlisted videos embedded on our site. Henderson said the videos were exclusively submissions for the program committee, so they were best kept in HotCRP. Provos, Noble, and Blank-Edelman will look into seeing if YouTube can be used for conference videos submissions.

Riley said that USENIX email was moving from Sendmail to Google Mail, necessitating a configuration change of the alias file so it will work with Google Mail. Blank-Edelman said he would help Riley with this. Cole suggested Riley look into CrashPlan for backups. Blank-Edelman asked about sponsors who might be willing to donate equipment for conferences, and Cole and Arrasjid said they'd get the names of contacts to approach at EMC and NetApp.

#### Sponsorships

Mulligan reported that sponsorships were on track to meet budget estimates. She noted that some chairs are very pro-active in getting sponsorships for their events. She is developing a payment policy for vendors who hold hospitality suites at USENIX events. She asked for suggestions for increasing OSDI sponsorship. Mulligan described how she wants to work on year-round USENIX sponsorship support.

Dickison said that Schwartz was working on promotional videos where prominent people in the USENIX community speak about why USENIX is important to them. These videos will be available on our website. She also said that Endsley was providing new web content.

11:45 a.m. - Break for lunch

12:53 p.m. - Meeting resumes

#### Discounts and Student funding

Noble said the number of discounts and free registrations USENIX gives away is too high, and suggested that going forward, no discounts be offered to program committee members, invited talk speakers, or paper authors, except in the case of hardship. Provos said that we can tell attendees that USENIX's open access policy means we don't earn money by selling proceedings, so we need more support from conference revenue. Seltzer said to tell attendees that USENIX is running on a deficit, and the policy will be reconsidered when USENIX is doing better. She suggested that the advisors with stipend applicants should be encouraged to use their university funds to pay for their students to attend USENIX events.

Noble asked about holding events at less expensive venues, as discussed at previous meetings, and Horst said that NSDI'13 would be at one such hotel and we can see how that works out.

**Noble moved and Seltzer seconded a motion to approve the 2012 budget as stated with the directive to reduce discounts as advised. Passed: 7 in favor; 1 absent (Blaze).**

*1:40 p.m. - 1:50 p.m. Break*

#### Revenue Streams

Dickison said that the 13 tutorial videos Schwartz had recorded will be sold on the website with different fees for owning the video, viewing it online, or viewing it at a scheduled time with the speakers participating. She's hoping to sell them this year, and is thinking of having a corporate version.

Henderson and Dickison plan to do more fundraising. A "Donate" button will be put on the homepage, and people will be asked to support open access by supporting USENIX. Noble suggested reaching out to faculty with the message that if they are committed to open access, then they should join USENIX or renew their memberships.

Blank-Edelman said to "back the ask" with talking points on good things about USENIX has done. Cole suggested getting credit for things USENIX has done by telling people how USENIX has touched their lives without their knowing it. Seltzer suggested drafting a USENIX story line that the board can help fill in. She'd like to ask the community to tell us what USENIX has done for them, and include some responses in the story line. Cole said to highlight that we are a 501(c)(3) scientific organization.

The Board's sense was that the fundraising would be for operational, rather than capital, funds. The staff will figure out what tax documentation is needed. Mulligan talked about getting direct donors outside of the corporate world, and bequests were mentioned as a donation option. Blank-Edelman noted that getting individual donors and grants was very labor intensive, and Noble said to not underestimate how much work goes into getting just one large donation.

Mulligan asked what the board thought about having sponsor ads on the USENIX website. Couch said that if USENIX wasn't endorsing products, then vendor neutrality would not be breached. Dickison and Henderson will explore this option and get a mock-up of what the ads might look like. Veglia will ask Appelman about the legal ramifications would be relating to our 501(c)(3) status by hosting ads for for-profit companies.

Seltzer said there were a lot of good ideas, and they should be investigated to see which are good strategic decisions to follow up on. The EDs will get back to the board. Noble said effort should be expended to get quick returns.

*2:45 p.m. – 2:55 p.m. Break*

### **Future of Workshops**

Seltzer asked the board about what criteria to use to measure the success of a workshop. Blank-Edelman said to look at how young/old a workshop was, and that young workshops may increase attendance over the years; Seltzer said maybe a workshop shouldn't be cancelled after only one time.

A "workshop in a box" was proposed. This would be a set of instructions to give workshop chairs telling them how to produce a workshop, including some tasks that were formerly done by staff. Dickison expressed concerned that if results weren't up to par, it would reflect badly on USENIX. Henderson said that going forward she would like to give a clear message to all program chairs about what was expected of them, and some things could be automated, but she felt the staff still needed to spend time to make sure the papers were up to the usual USENIX academic standard.

Noble asked the staff for ideas on making workshops less costly to hold, and for data on any difficulties with workshops that the board could help with. Provos and Noble said

the board liaisons should make sure program chairs respond to the staff, as well as giving their cell phone numbers to their USENIX board liaison. Henderson said the liaisons will receive copies of pings to program chairs, as they'll be added to the email aliases.

Blank-Edelman what the plan was to eliminate workshops that were teetering. Seltzer said that attendance of at least 50 should work, and if an event does not grow, it should be cancelled. Cole said the homework for the next meeting is for all board members to come up with criteria to measure viability of a workshop.

## Conferences

### HotPar

Dickison suggested rethinking events that are hemorrhaging money, like HotPar at UCB, and asked if it was time to move HotPar to FCW? Henderson suggested that we explain to the attendees that the event was moving to ensure longevity and prestige because it was not viable as a stand-alone event.

### LISA

Horst said that the LISA'12 tech sessions must be shortened because the hotel contract doesn't guarantee our meeting rooms around the clock. The hotel will hold Christmas parties in our meeting space in the evenings, so the sessions will have to end about an hour early so that A/V can be torn down by 5:00 p.m. Set up will begin again early the following mornings. Blank-Edelman suggested moving the attendees to the exhibit space when the sessions end, and running this situation by past chairs for ideas on what to do.

### FCW

Henderson said there would be a "Women in Advanced Computing" event on the Tuesday of FCW, and more events were still needed. She and Dickison had spoken with the Berkman Institute about an event on Law and Technology, and were waiting to hear back from them. She asked for more program ideas.

### EMC & USENIX FCW

Seltzer proposed working with EMC to co-locate their "University Day" with the FCW HotStorage Workshop. She said a similar arrangement with NetApp at FAST has worked quite well. Cole said he liked the idea of working with industrial partners to bring them together with academia at our events. Noble suggested the formation of an ATC steering committee to further this goal. Arrasjid said it was a good approach, and that VMware might want a similar arrangement with HotCloud.

Dickison said that HealthSec had 30 submissions.

4:35 p.m. – Regular meeting ended

4:45-5:15 – Executive Session

## Next Meeting

Will be held on June 11, 2012 at FCW in Boston.

Actions taken by the Board after the December 1 Meeting, not recorded in December minutes:

**On Jan 29, it was moved by Couch and seconded by Noble to raise the NSDI'12 member "early" registration fee to \$770, raise the student registration fees to \$425, and the workshop registration fees to \$375. In addition, USENIX will raise student registration fees for all events to \$425 (except LISA), raise 1-day event fees**

**(workshops, special tutorials) to \$375 for everything (except LISA), and give the Executive Director freedom to adjust conference reg fees for other events to match FAST/NSDI if deemed necessary. Passed: 6 in favor, 2 abstain (Seltzer, Blaze)**

Note: Subsequent to January 29, the ED(s) and staff corrected student registration fees to \$445, the amount charged at FAST, for all events (except FCW and LISA). Also, ED(s) and staff broadened the range of one-day fees to between \$250-\$375/day for all events (except at FCW and LISA).