Conference Call Minutes
Tuesday, March 15, 2005

Present: Yuriy Gusev, Steve Jennings, Andrey Ptitsyn, Bill Slikker, Weida Tong, Dawn Wilkins, Stephen Winters-Hilt, Jonathan Wren, Roger Young

Minutes from the December 7, 2004 were approved as corrected.

<u>Committee Reports</u>

Resource Committee. Steve reported that he, Bill and Andrey were scheduled to have a conference call with Sun Microsystems in two days.

Steve also spoke with BJ Morrison McKay, Executive Director of ISCB. She is very interested in MCBIOS becoming an ISCB Chapter, and will soon speak with Michael Gribskov, President of ISCB. Currently we are a regional affiliate of ISCB, but there are some advantages of becoming a chapter, such as coverage under the ISCB insurance. Another advantage of becoming a chapter is increased advertising, mailings and publicity. On the other hand, it may be possible to remain a regional affiliate and obtain a rider on their insurance policy. Jonathan volunteered to contact Larry Hunter, who is head of the Rocky Mountain chapter to see what the relationship between the chapter and the society is like.

Student Council. Steve reported that Nihshanka was trying to organize an access grid meeting for the students.

Finance Committee. Weida is going to work with Steve to take over the finances. It was recently noticed that award checks for a few of the student award winners from the 2004 conference had not been issued, but this has now been corrected.

Communications committee. Steve has worked with Vinay Ravindrakumar to update the MCBIOS web site. All committee members were asked to go through the web site and make suggestions. Several members noted the slowness of loading images. The conference committee needs to supply information for the conference page.

Technology committee. The committee is still basically on hold. Jonathan has an idea for a project to use the Google API to automate the identification of software and/or hardware tools at bioinformatics core facilities. Steve is interested in becoming part of a grid network, and will investigate that when attending a regional conference in Kansas City in the first part of June.

Membership committee. After a lively discussion on the logistics of signing up members, it was decided that Roger Young will use the form from OKBIOS (www.okbios.org) to design a form for the MCBIOS web page. Roger Hall can probably set the membership form up like the registration page for MCBIOS 2004—the form can be filled in on the web, stored in a database, and the information given back to the new member with instructions to print out and send in the form with a check or credit card information. UALR has the facilities to accept checks (made out to MCBIOS) or credit cards and put the proceeds into the "agency" account. The registration procedure for MCBIOS 2005 needs to be worked out, as well as how to make the funds available to the 2005 organizing committee. This is really a conference committee issue, but membership to MCBIOS and registration for the conference can probably be handled together. The procedure will change if/when we become a chapter of ISCB since they have their own facilities.

Local Society Reports

Oklahoma. They have a planning meeting scheduled for next month to begin organizing OKBIOS 2005, which will take place in the fall.

Louisiana. They are preparing for MCBIOS 2005. Stephen has submitted a grant proposal to the Louisiana Board of Regents and part of that grant, if funded, will be to support MCBIOS 2005 and hopefully a co-located conference on cheminformatics to be held just before or after MCBIOS.

Central Arkansas. Plans are under way for several service projects, some technical events and a fall picnic.

Publications

Jonathan reported that they are a bit behind schedule due to late submissions and extensions. In total, 15 papers were submitted and reviewed. Once the revised papers are returned, they will be re-reviewed. Payment for publication was discussed. There are two options—BMC would prefer that MCBIOS collect the payments ($400/paper) and submit a single payment to them, or BMC will bill each author directly, giving them 30 days to pay. With the second option, MCBIOS will still be responsible for paying BMC if the authors do not. After some discussion, it was decided to have BMC bill the authors separately. Some authors may have an easier time getting their institutions to pay (or reimburse) if the bill comes directly from BMC.

Jonathan asked whether it would be an option to allow presenters at local society meetings to submit papers for consideration in the MCBIOS publication (proceedings). The advantage is that it has the potential to increase participation at the local level, but it might go against encouraging participation at MCBIOS itself.   After some discussion the decision of the board was to continue using the publication for MCBIOS participants. Some options, such as offering travel funds to attend MCBIOS for the top paper presenters at local society meetings, were discussed and could be further explored.

The board gave approval to spend $400 to include a "Preface" paper which will summarize the 2004 conference, introduce each of the papers and promote the upcoming conference. Bill and Jonathan will write the paper.

Conference

Plans are underway for MCBIOS 2005 in Baton Rouge on November 17th-18th. A request has been made to obtain support from Louisiana BRIN and a response is expected in April. The facility (Pennington Center) has been confirmed and may not require a charge for use. Possible keynote speakers were discussed, including Winston Hide (University of Western Cape, South Africa), Steven Brenner (Berkeley) and Sean Eddy (Washington University), who Stephen thinks he can get for 2006.

Possible theme idea: open source, high performance biology.

Discussion of a theme, keynote speakers, and timetable will continue offline. Andrey was encouraged to put together a local committee or find a conference planner to help him.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50.