



Minutes for the September 11, 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, Al Ekkebus, Ray Garrett, Carolyn Krause, and Steve Overbury.

Adjunct members in attendance: Bob Compton, James Rome, and Kent Williams.

Announcements – Herb Krause

Public details and gifting information for the 2024 Tennessee Science Bowl and the Southern Appalachian Science and Engineering Fair (and its Virtual Science Club) will be released in September.

Lab Liaison – Katy Brown

No report this month.

Secretary – Fred Peretz

Minutes for the August 7 board meeting were circulated to the board with the agenda. They were approved and will be posted on the FORNL website.

Treasurer – David Mullins

David Mullins observed that we had not filed the Tennessee state tax exemption form for several years. The form was downloaded, filled out, and mailed along with supporting documentation in late August. On September 1 we received notification that our application was rejected, identifying us as a 501(c)(9) organization rather than a tax exempt 501(c)(3). We are now responding to the state with documentation from the IRS that clearly states we are a 501(c)(3). In addition to a letter from several years ago, the IRS web site shows that we have been filing our Form 990N for the past several years as a 501(c)(3). David observed that he had filed our 990N for the past year earlier in this year.

David also noted we had a one-dollar donation “from PayPal” this month. He stated that we had been using a “free” version of PayPal; but are now having to pay a \$40 quarterly fee for its use.

Membership – David Mullins

Two renewing annual and one lifetime memberships were received. Through July 2023 there are 56 life and 46 annual members.

Luncheon Lectures - Ellen Smith, Carolyn Krause, Bob Compton

On August 8, Bruce Moyer of the ORNL Chemical Sciences Division, spoke on “Why ORNL Remains a Powerhouse in Separations Science and Technology.”



Upcoming meetings:

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.

On October 10, Phil Snyder, a theoretical and computational physicist who was recently appointed interim director of ORNL's Fusion Energy Division, will speak on current fusion research activities within the division and their relationship to overall progress on fusion energy.

The November 14 talk will be from James Rome, "How to Keep Your Computer (and You) Safe," addressing threats and mitigation measures in today's electronic communications world.

There will not be a lunch meeting or talk in December.

The first meeting and talk in 2024, held on January 9, will be from Mali Balasubramanian, 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.

This schedule confirms talks into 2024. The speaker team is continuing to work toward a goal of having a list of a half-dozen potential speakers to draw on, avoiding issues with finding a last-minute speaker.

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.

Media reports

Newspapers – Carolyn Krause

The article on Bruce Moyer's talk on chemical separations last month is expected to be published soon on the front page of The Oak Ridger, according to the news editor. A news release on Kirk Sorensen's talk tomorrow on thorium molten-salt reactors appears in today's Oak Ridger on page 8 and is on the Oak Ridger website. Carolyn also updated the Friends of ORNL website with the latest news releases on the ORNL website.

Facebook – Ellen Smith

Ellen Smith posted an announcement on tomorrow's talk on our Facebook page and tagged it for her "friends."

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. Syd Ball will introduce the speaker, after an outreach (nominating committee) message by Herb Krause. Dave Mullens will collect dues.



Webmaster – James Rome

No issues were identified with the website.

AMSE and Bus Tours – Al Ekkebus

This August, AMSE and DOE hosted 13 public facility bus tours with a total of 410 passengers. Passengers came from across the country, and we saw interest grow due in part to the release of the Oppenheimer movie at the end of July. Guests seemed more prepared for these tours, whether they saw the movie or did additional research on their own before arriving, with interesting questions asked of our guides.

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

Two volunteers are needed for the ORNL Benefits & Wellness Fair to be held on October 19, 2023, between 10:00 am and 1:30 pm. Syd Ball, who staffed this last year, will be in France but agreed to help a volunteer with the display should we use the same format. Herb Krause volunteered to attend, with support from Fred Peretz and Carolyn Krause. Herb will get with Syd to gather materials from last year, including the laptop, poster, and possibly printed material. Herb will register our attendance at <https://benefits.ornl.gov/fair/>.

Community Lectures – Kent Williams, and Bob Compton

The next Community Lecture will be held on October 26, at 7:00 pm, at the Y-12 New Hope Center Auditorium. Dr. Lynne Parker, Associate Vice Chancellor, and Director of the AI Tennessee Initiative at UTK, will discuss artificial intelligence research and opportunities in the State of Tennessee. Refreshments will be served in the lobby starting about 6:30 p.m. Kent Williams agreed to contact Judy Dodd Catering; we agreed that the caterer should provide less food than at the last Community Lecture. A \$500 security deposit is used to hold the auditorium reservation.

Lee Riedinger was suggested as an appropriate person to introduce Lynn Parker. Carolyn Krause will contact Riedinger (after the meeting, Lee did agree to do the introduction.)

History Room – Al Ekkebus

Manhattan Project – Fred Peretz

PDH Certificates – David Fields

Visitor Badges – Syd Ball

No report.

Old Business

Last month, the possibility of a simple “sandwich tray” option to add a low-effort lunch to the “luncheon” lectures was raised, but a desire for an expanded version was expressed. No volunteer has been identified for this activity.

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

New Business

The nominating committee for 2024 officers was raised as new business. Our bylaws and further practical advice from past board members are being used as guidance; recommending that the board appoints three elected board members soon and designate one as the “convenor.”



As a practical matter, board members that might be reelected (those with terms expiring in 2024) along with current or potential officers should not serve (Al Ekkebus, Ray Garrett, Herb Krause, Dave Mullins, and Ellen Smith will complete their terms in 2024). Syd Ball, David Fields, Carolyn Krause, or Steve Overbury would be candidate board members for the committee. Syd and Carolyn agreed to serve. Steve Overbury was also recommended but had to leave the meeting before the topic came up. Herb will check with Steve (and Steve did subsequently agree to serve). The board voted to approve the committee, contingent on Steve agreeing to serve. Carolyn Krause agreed to convene the committee, with support from past convenors.

By the beginning of October, the three board members on the committee will identify two FORNL members not currently on the board to serve on the nominating committee. During October, the convenor will arrange and lead committee meetings to establish a slate of board members and a proposed list 2024 officers. This effort must be completed and approved by the board by December 2023, so the candidates can be listed in an annual meeting announcement in January.

Closing

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Peretz
Secretary, Friends of ORNL