

Minutes for the February 10, 2025, FORNL Board Meeting

Call to Order and Amendments to the Agenda – Ellen Smith

Ellen Smith called the meeting, held in the AMSE Conference Room with a Zoom option, to order at 9:39 a.m. A quorum was present.

Attendees:

Officers present: Ellen Smith, President; and Fred Peretz, Secretary.

Board Members Present: Ray Garrett, Carolyn Krause and Alan Lowe.

Board Candidates Present: Gloria Caton and Roger Macklin.

Adjunct members in attendance: Annette Brun, Herb Krause, Jim Rushton, and Kent Williams.

Minutes of February Meetings – Fred Peretz

Minutes for the January 13 board meeting were circulated to the board. The minutes were approved and will be posted on the FORNL website.

Treasurer's and Membership Report – David Mullins

We received dues from ten annual members (either renewals or new members). Our cash flow for 2025 is positive. A microphone/voice amplifier identical to that used at the January meeting was purchased and passed over to Herb Krause (at a cost of \$37.25). Experience has shown the microphone needs to be kept close to the speaker's mouth.

As a reminder, Kent Williams needs to file our registration with the State of Tennessee.

ORNL Liaison's Report – Annette Brun and Katy Brown

There was nothing new to report from ORNL. The laboratory is still working on establishing a speakers' bureau.

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

The January 14 talk was 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.

The February 11 talk will be by Robert Hettich, leader of the Bioanalytical Mass Spectrometry group in the ORNL Biosciences Division. He will speak on the microbiome (gut bacteria) and his work in analyzing it using mass spectrometry. Carolyn will introduce the speaker. As noted earlier, Herb Krause has the new microphone/speaker unit for local use at the lunch meetings. It is being tested and prepared for use with the February talk.

The March 11 talk will be by Stephen Jesse, with the ORNL Center for Nanophases Material Sciences.

Alan Lowe has been communicating with Mark Buckner on science initiatives with the Oak Ridge High School, and will explore a date in May or further into the summer.

Ellen Smith is exploring whether Ethan Coon or Shih-Chieh Kao would be able to speak on climate modeling in April, with a possible focus on recent flooding events. Carolyn Krause will contact Joshua New for a possible talk on modeling tools for energy use in buildings. Jim Rushton is recommending a talk on the U.S. Stable Isotope Production and Research Center (SIPRC) being constructed at ORNL. A talk associated with celebrations of the

High Flux Isotope Reactor's 60 years of operation is also possible later this year; Annette Brun notes that ORNL is planning a major event in recognition of this achievement.

The current list of potential speakers is being maintained as a Google online spreadsheet that can be accessed as https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ETI6DIem5_jf_0rNfZUfHf5PycV11b2vIOpNT6KFjH0/.

Community Lectures – Kent Williams

Annette Brun observed that the new Secretary of Energy, Chris Wright, is planning on visiting all 17 national laboratories this year. A visit to Oak Ridge might offer an opportunity for a community talk, although his schedule may be too tight to accommodate such a talk. A video might be another option.

Alan Lowe suggested that Ashley Stowe at the NNSA Oak Ridge Enhanced Technology and Training Center might have interesting material that could support a community lecture. Alan also suggested a talk on the Baker School on the University of Tennessee campus.

Earlier thoughts included Congressman Chuck Fleishman, ORANO, and Kairos.

Renovations to the Pollard Auditorium should be progressing, and it should be a viable alternative for community lectures over the next year.

Nominating Committee – Alan Lowe

New board member candidates Roger Macklin and Gloria Caton, replacing Fred Peretz and David Fields, both attended the board meeting. Officers for the 2025-2026 term remain unidentified, except for David Mullins as Treasurer. Officer selection will be a key objective of the March board meeting.

Fred will assist Alan with completion of the nominating committee report.

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.

Volunteer Opportunities and Needs – Partner Organizations:

AMSE and Public Tours – Alan Lowe

A meeting with DOE is being held this Wednesday to plan for the 2025 bus tours. AMSE is proposing a start in early April, although that remains tentative pending DOE and ORNL concurrence.

The next exhibit at AMSE will be Presidents and Science, beginning with George Washington. The next K-25 reunion will be held on April 26. The K-25 tower structure is nearing completion; AMSE is planning on the operation of both the tower and the Portal 4 orientation center. There is also a proposal to add a rail spur that would allow railcars from the Southern Appalachian Railway Museum to be displayed near the AMSE facilities. Finally, planning is underway for activities associated with Nuclear Science Week in the fall.

Manhattan Project National Historical Park – Fred Peretz

Fred reported that as of now, there are no issues with staffing at the Oak Ridge unit of the Historical Park. Both rangers have permanent status and should not have to reapply for their positions. Other sites may be impacted, as several positions are presently staffed on an interim basis.

STEM Education Support – Science Bowl Dinner

The Science Bowl dinner will be held on February 21; as a sponsor FORNL is offered two seats at the dinner. No one has expressed availability at this time; Ellen will continue to check with other board members.

Media reports:

Newspapers – Carolyn Krause

An article on Warren Grice’s talk at the January 14 FORNL lunch meeting has been published on The Oak Ridger website but has not yet appeared in print.

The news release on Bob Hettich’s talk on February 11 has been submitted to The Oak Ridger and will hopefully appear in print tomorrow (which it did).

Facebook – Ellen Smith

Ellen reported limitations on the number of “invitations” that can be sent for the lunch lectures, but also reported good feedback on the use of Facebook for invitations.

Old Business:

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

New Business

Ellen will not be available for the March lecture and needs a volunteer to pick up lunches. She has a supply of drinks, chips and cookies. Alan Lowe offered to have them brought over if she would drop them off at AMSE, and if necessary, can arrange an order pickup at Panera.

Closing

Ellen suggested another in-person meeting may be needed in March but will not be available on March 10. Ellen will poll existing and new board members to set a time, date, and location.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Peretz
Secretary, Friends of ORNL