IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting
Location: New Brunswick, New Jersey

Date: October 5th, 2019

Time: The meeting convened at 9:00 am EST; the meeting adjourned at 2.45 pm EST

Meeting Chair: Emina Soljanin

Minutes taken by: Lara Dolecek

Meeting Attendees:

Sasha Barg (*), Matthieu Bloch, Suhas Diggavi, Alex Dimakis (*), Lara Dolecek, Stark Draper (*), Elza Erkip, Christina Fragouli, Tara Javidi, Frank Kschischang, Vijay Kumar (*), Matt LaFleur (#), Prakash Narayan (*), Henry Pfister (*), Parastoo Sadeghi (*), Emina Soljanin, Antonia Tulino (*,#), Daniela Tuninetti, Aaron Wagner, Gus Wagner (#), Michelle Wigger (*), Greg Wornell (*), Aylin Yener (*), and Wei Yu.

Remote attendees are denoted by (*); non-voting attendees are denoted by (#).

Business conducted between meetings:

The following votes were conducted by email between the Feb. 2019 Information Theory Society (ITSoc) Board of Governors (BoG) meetings and this meeting:

(1) In August 2019, BoG voted on the new magazine name. After a run off, the following name was elected: bITs: The IEEE Information Theory Magazine.
(2) In August 2019, two new AEs for IT Transactions were approved: Miguel Rodrigues and Ronen Talmon.
(3) In September 2019, Christina Fragouli was elected for the position of the 2020 2nd Vice President, Wei Yu was elected for the positions of the 2020 1st Vice President, and Aylin Yener was elected for the positions of the 2020 President.

At 9:00am local time, ITSoc president Emina Soljanin called the meeting to order.

Attendees introduced themselves. Emina thanked everyone for coming in person and remotely, and members from Region 10 for dialing in. Emina next went over the agenda and explained why it was in the presented order.

Motion: A motion was made to approve the agenda. The motion passed.

President's Report – Emina Soljanin [item 1]

President Soljanin presented President's Report. First, she discussed Elections & Nominations. She reminded that the BoG elections will close on November 27, 2019. Within term vacancy election will be held, due to resignation of one BoG member. The two candidates for the N&A committee are Giuseppe Caire and Emanuele Viterbo. Both of these nominations obey the rules on the selection process. Emina next provided updates from various committees, including External Nominations Committee that has arranged a nomination of Katalin Marton for the Emmy Noether Lecture; the Online Committee that now has two new members; and the ad-hoc Movie Committee that now has been working with the Shannon movie director on distribution. The movie already has 4 successful screenings. On behalf of the Online Committee, Brian Kurkoski thanked the Board for recommendations. It was recognized that the Shannon movie screenings have been very popular. The screening in Queens was in the middle of the week and under heavy rain, yet nonetheless, the turnout was excellent. The same was reported for the screening in Switzerland. Andrea Goldsmith reported that the screening in California at the California Science Museum was also outstanding: there were 700 attendees in a room with capacity of 400.

Next, Emina reported on the status of JSAIT. The deadline for the 1st issue on deep learning has been extended to October 15th, 2019 with the expected publication in April/May 2020. The deadline for the second issue on quantum information science is currently set to February 1st, 2020 with the expected publication in July/August 2020. It was recognized that the current timeline is rather optimistic.

Emina concluded her presentation by going over possible topics for further discussion, including best practices for ensuring adequate appearances at conferences and for protecting and defending IT community from cyberbullying.

She also reminded the attendees to submit the travel reimbursement forms from today's meeting to Matt LeFleur.

Schools Subcommittee Report – Stark Draper [item 2]

The next presentation was given by Stark Draper who provided an update on behalf of the ITSoc School Committee. Stark thanked Wei and Parastoo for serving as the other two committee members. Stark stated that there were already 4 ITSoc Schools held this year and that 4 are being planned for 2020, of which 3 are already approved. He added that the India School in 2019 had its first female keynote speaker, Michelle Effros of Caltech. He conveyed that when putting together their proposal (which was approved at the July 2019 BoG meeting) the East Asian IT school asked for clarification regarding providing honoraria for speakers. Stark noted that India has a norm of providing speaker honorarium. A BoG member stated that this has been a topic for a while, and that the IT Society generally does not have funds specially allocated for honoraria. Yet, if this item is deemed essential for the success of the conference, then honoraria can be given as long as the funds for the honoraria come from non-ITSoc sources. Another BoG member suggested that one way to cover the cost would be that the speaker be given a choice of the honorarium or the travel reimbursement since the latter can be budgeted for using other sources. Some BoG members also stated that at their universities it is common practice to offer the choice of the honorarium or travel reimbursement for invited seminar speakers, and that these

are typically capped at 1k$. Stark concluded that these options will be communicated back to the organizing committee, and conveyed to future organizing committees. Stark then reported on the attendance statistics collected for the 2019 schools to provide deeper insight into attendee profiles. For example, at the Indian School held at IIT Madras, there were 80 attendees. Stark specified the breakdown by faculty vs. students, gender, geographical location, and by how many times have attendees participated in prior IT schools. He also said that the ITSoc contribution to the 2019 India school was 7k$ and that the plan is to increase it to 10k$ in the future. At NAIST 2019 held at Boston University, there were 80 attendees as well. Stark provided statistics for this event as well. ITSoc contributed 10k$ and there was an additional 10k$ allocated from Padovani Lecturer funds. NAIST 2019 is sending back 11k to ITSoc; treasurer Aaron Wagner explained that this is in part due to having NSF sponsorship and Padovani Lecturer funds, and that typically schools return back less than 1k$ to ITSoc. Stark also reported on the attendance statistics for the Australia 2019 school, held at the University of Sydney, and the ESIT 2019, held in the French Riviera.

The following motion was issued:

Motion: To support the holding of the JTG/IEEE-ITSoc Summer School at IIT Kanpur, India in the amount of $10,000 USD.

The motion passed unanimously.

BoG members thanked Stark for organizing and collecting the statistics. It was also suggested that an exit survey be included in future IT schools, with specific survey questions to be discussed at a later time.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee Report – Frank Kschischang and Elza Erkip [item 3]

Next, Frank presented a report on behalf of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The following motion was issued.

Motion: To accept all minor revisions en masse.

The motion passed unanimously.

The following items were addressed in detail. Major revision to Article IV.1 regarding nominations and elections. The revised text now provides a formal definition of past junior and past senior president. It was suggested by a BoG member that the wording "email ballot" be changed to "electronic ballot" and change the wording to be consistent everywhere and to allow for future flexibility. Major changes to Article IV.1 are:

- To provide clear definition of "Board-Elected Officers" (this terminology clarifies to the reader, particularly at the IEEE, that the Officers are selected by the Board, not by the Membership);
- To return ballots to Secretary (who acts as Teller), not President — change suggested by the IEEE;

- To provide clear procedures for handling within-term vacancies of Board-Elected Officers;
- To ensure that a second person is copied on email votes.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Frank next presented proposed changes to Article IV.2 regarding appointed officers of the society, which were as follows:

- Provide clear definition of "Appointed Officers";
- Make it clear the that President-Elect does the appointments annually;
- Change time-of-appointment to December 1st, thereby smoothing transitions;
- Make the secretary the official society Teller (counter of votes) — change suggested by the IEEE.

It was also noted that a previous proposal to make the Secretary non-voting was withdrawn, as it is in fact unconstitutional.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed changes to Article IV.3 regarding ex-officio members of the board. The changes are summarized as follows:

- New text centralizes the description of ex-officio members of the Board;
- Adds the EiC of the new Journal.

It was noted that a previous proposal to remove Executive Editor as voting BoG member was withdrawn.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed changes to Article IV.4 regarding under-represented regions. It was stated that BoG has 26 members and that the current text specifies an under-represented region (among regions 8,9, and 10) as the one having at least T% of the electorate with at most one elected board member. It was suggested that the latter text be change to " fewer than N elected Board members or Board-elected officers." The current practice is T=5 and N=2. A BoG member proposed the following change to have T=10 and N=2.

Motion: to set T to 10 and N to 2.

The motion passed.

Proposed changes to Articles IV. 5 and IV. 6 were minor. Next, Frank presented proposed major changes to Article IV.7 regarding election to the board. These were

- To replace "historically under-represented" (which is not defined) with "Regions 8, 9, and 10";
- To provide a procedure for filling within-term vacancies;
- To make it clear that those filling within-term vacancies, not having been elected by the membership, are not eligible for nomination as a Board-elected Officer. Such members are referred to as "Board-elected Members."

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented changes to Article IV. 8 regarding removal of officers and committee members. There was some discussion about the wording of the proposed article and Frank clarified that the suggested wording came from the IEEE.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed proposed changes to Article IV.9 regarding removal of Members of the Board Elected by the Membership. He clarified that this was also an IEEE-suggested clause.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented changes to Article V.4 subsection B regarding Journal Steering Committee and Editor-In-Chief that will codify the leadership of the new journal.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed proposed changes to Article V.4 Subsection A regarding IT Transactions editors. Two suggestions for the revision were presented. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee was split on whether or not to include the phrase "augmented with the present

Transactions Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor;" if included, the EE/EiC would be given a formal say in choice of the incoming EE, otherwise not. However, the committee was in agreement about the other parts of the revision. Accordingly, the motion before the Board was split into two parts: the first to put forward the parts not in dispute, and the second (if the first motion passes) to put forward the phrase in dispute.

Motion: to approve the changes common to both suggestions.

The motion passed.

A lengthy discussion ensued about the merits of making the Editor-in-Chief and Executive Editor voting members of the N&A committee for the purpose of choosing a new Executive Editor, with some members speaking in favor of and some in opposition to the motion.

Given the discussion, President Emina issued the following motion.

Motion: to change the agenda with Wei and Elza presenting last.

The motion passed.

The following motion was issued:

Motion: to include EiC and EE as voting members of the N&A committee.

The motion failed.

Next, Frank presented changes to Article V.7 regarding Membership Committee, consisting of the following changes that reflect ongoing practice: Membership committee will now consist of five members: 2nd VP, Chairs of two subcommittees, two liaison members; the current three subcommittees now reduced to two. It was noted that this was the only place where WIThITS is mentioned in the bylaws.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank discussed changes to the responsibilities of the subcommittees. Proposed changes to the subsection A regarding the Student and Outreach Activities Subcommittee reflect the merging of the current Student Subcommittee and Outreach Subcommittee into a single subcommittee, with the IEEE Young Professionals Liaison now being a member. It was noted that there was some stream-lining of language, but no change in the responsibilities of the Committee.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Proposed changes to the subsection B regarding the Schools Subcommittee were to specify the structure of the committee. It was noted that there was some stream-lining of language, but no change in the responsibilities of the Committee.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Proposed changes to the subsection C regarding additional responsibilities of the Membership Committee included minor reorganization of the description of Committee activities, but no major change in Committee responsibilities, and the introduction of the Goldsmith Lecturer into the awards selection duties.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Frank next discussed Article V.8 regarding the formation of the new Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

After that, Frank presented changes to Article V.9 that codify the practices for awarding the Shannon Award.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Analogous changes were proposed to Article V.10 that codify the practices for awarding the Wyner award.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article V.11 on the James L. Massey Research & Teaching Award for Young Scholars Committee. It was clarified that currently, this committee

was a subcommittee of the awards committee; this change creates a new standing committee, and that no change in Committee composition or responsibilities was being proposed.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Then, Frank presented proposed changes to Article V.12 on the Thomas M. Cover Dissertation Award Committee. It was clarified that currently, this committee was a subcommittee of the awards committee; this change creates a new standing committee. It was noted that no change in Committee composition or responsibilities were being proposed.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

It was suggested by a BoG member that up to two awards be issued annually. BoG then suggested that this option could be first done in practice prior to being codified in the bylaws.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article V.13 regarding the Paper Awards Committee. The proposed changes are to rename the current Awards Committee as Paper Awards Committee, to better reflect its mandate, and to remove the responsibility for Massey and Cover Awards; no other change in Committee composition or responsibilities were proposed.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

The next topic was the proposed revision of Article V.14 in regards to the current Fellows Committee. It was proposed that the name of the committee be changed from "Fellows Committee" to "Fellows Evaluation Committee" as was suggested by the IEEE; wording to include "Recommendation by the President" is an IEEE requirement, as was the five-year term limit.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

The following topic was the proposed revision of the article VII.6 regarding the IEEE Communications Society and Information Theory Society Joint Paper Award. Proposed language changes were made to be in line with current practice.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

A BoG member commented that a potential issue is that since this a joint award between two societies, rules may change from one year to the next.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII.9 regarding James L. Massey Research & Teaching Award for Young Scholars. The proposed wording mimics the language used for the Goldsmith Lecturer, and for the consistency with it, criterion of "young" was proposed to be changed from "40 years old or younger" to "within 10 years of Ph.D."

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 10 regarding Distinguished Lecturers. Criteria for the selection of Distinguished Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Next, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 11 regarding Padovani Lecturer. Criteria for the selection of Padovani Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Lastly, Frank presented proposed changes to Article VII. 12 regarding Goldsmith Lecturer. Criteria for the selection of Goldsmith Lecturers was codified.

Motion: to approve these changes.

The motion passed.

Publications Committee Report – Sasha Barg [item 4]

Next, Sasha Barg presented the candidates for the positions of Associate Editors (AEs) of the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory. Their biographies are available on the website. AE candidates are: Arya Mazumdar, Chao Tian, Marco Tomamichel, and Ligong Wang.

Motion: to appoint the 4 candidates as new AEs.

The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – Aaron Wagner [item 5]

Aaron Wagner in his capacity as the Society's Treasurer presented his report. He started by recapping the IEEE accounting practices. He reiterated that one key point is that if x $ is left over from some project in a given year, it cannot just be put in as surplus x $ budget in the next year, but rather that x/2 $ can be saved for new initiative and x/2 $ go to reserves. He then went over the 2019 general funds. He stated that IT Transactions revenue is slightly higher than expected. He then explained how the surplus can be used towards increasing the number of pages in the IT Transactions. Current length of the publication queue (from acceptance to publication) is 5 months. Officers have previously agreed to increase the annual number of pages from 7600 to 8400, with the cost of 30k$. The resulting expected surplus is now 60k$. Aaron next discussed how the estimated surplus for 2019 general fund has increased from 90k$ in August to 125k$ in October, due mainly to conference surplus including 2018 events and 2019 NAIST. He then presented IT Transactions trends on a graph, including revenues, costs, and profit, updated from the BoG meeting in July. It was recognized that revenues are going down, but that updated projections may offset this negative trend. Aaron next discussed 2019 special projects. He stated that there were many great ideas and that the projects covered almost what had been budgeted. He also reminded those who contributed to submit the receipts by November. He also provided the list of 2020 Special Projects that were approved, with joint budget of 152k$. There was nothing to report on 2020 general funds.

The meeting discussion returned to an earlier item regarding N&A Committee membership stated in Article V.4 Subsection A. A BoG member had suggested to change the wording from "augmented with" to "in consultation with."

Motion: to approve this change.

The motion passed.

After a lunch break, the meeting resumed.

Information Theory Magazine Steering Committee Report – Christina Fragouli [item 6]

Christina provided an update on the status of the IT magazine, on behalf of the steering committee. She went over the projected timeline, and then discussed the status of Phase I. Feedback was received from the Proposal Development Committee (PDC). PDC stated that the title needs to start with "IEEE" to be compliant with IEEE practices. This led to the discussion on the name of the magazine. BoG members noted that having "BITS" in the title would be catchy. There was also some concern amongst the BoG members on the usage of BITS vs. bITs. Another concern was that a vote was already issued via email regarding magazine name, prior to the feedback received from PDC. Emina suggested the following title: IEEE BITS: The Information Theory Magazine.

Motion: to adopt the name of the new magazine as: IEEE BITS: The Information Theory Magazine.

The motion passed.

The second comment from PDC was regarding the Newsletter, as it seemed that there was an overlap in content between the magazine and the newsletter. Christina suggested that the newsletter be focused on the news. It was noted that for example Signal Processing Magazine Area Editor is also Signal Processing Newsletter Editor-in-Charge. It was decided that the role of the newsletter and the separation of the newsletter and the magazine be further discussed at a future BoG meeting.

Christina next went over the next comment from PDC, which was in regards to the number of issues per year. PDC suggested having 4+ issues annually. A BoG member asked how will the impact factor be calculated. Christina clarified that the impact factor will be calculated after 3 years of having 20 papers per year. She also stated that the planned organization is 5 papers per issue, with 4 issues per year.

Christina next described the topics needed to be addressed in Phase II. She first went over the proposed Magazine Oversight chart, and then over the structure of the Steering Committee. It was noted that the minimum number of the magazine oversight leadership can be reduced for practical reasons. She went over the appointment terms and responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief, Senior Editors, and Area Editors.

The following motion was issued.

Motion: to approve Magazine Oversight structure and submission of Phase II proposal by Dec. 5, 2019.

The motion passed.

Children's Book update – Christina Fragouli [item 7]

Christina next provided an update on the book *Information in Small Bits: Information Theory for Kids*. She went over the Amazon ad campaigns and website renewal; publication advertisements; book fairs and festivals where the book will be displayed; and the status of the paperback copies.

Cover Award Committee – Christina Fragouli [item 8]

Christina next presented Cover Thesis Award Committee update. She stated that number of submissions are steadily increasing, and the submissions are more spread out in terms of areas. Currently the number of awards is 0 or 1. Proposal is to make it up to 2, since given the increased diversity in represented technical areas, individual contributions may be hard to compare. It was recognized by a BoG member that having a few more awards for the junior members of the IT community would be very beneficial.

Information Theory Society Conference Committee Update – Vijay Kumar [item 9]

Vijay started by thanking the committee members. He then went over the status of the upcoming IT symposia. ISIT 2020 in Los Angeles, ISIT 2021 in Melbourne, and ISIT 2022 in Helsinki have forthcoming updates in today's meeting. ISIT 20023 in Taipei has activities and program details actively added. For ISIT 2024 in New York, potential venues are currently being investigated. Vijay then went over the update for the ISIT 2019 Geographical Diversity Student Travel Grant. There were 27 applicants, of whom 26 have received the grant. Approximately 14k$ has been distributed. It was suggested by the committee that the surplus from 20k$ be added to the travel grant program of ISIT 2020.

Aaron, as Treasurer, had a comment to clarify that we cannot move 6k$ from 2019 to 2020 and also clarified that 25k$ for 2020 had not been approved yet. He stated that this is a new initiative for the IEEE, so cannot add Canada.

Aaron issue the following motion:

Motion: To authorize 25k$ for the travel grant for ISIT 2020.

The motion passed.

Vijay then resumed his presentation.

Update for ISIT 2020 in Los Angeles was provided by Salman Avestimehr, and it included the following: banquet at Universal Studios is confirmed; contract for AV is finalized and signed; funding commitments from Intel, Qualcomm, and Google have been received.

Update for ISIT 2021 in Melbourne was provided by Parastoo Sadeghi. These included: second visit to the proposed venue; progress towards the PCO contract with the IEEE; starting venue license process with the IEEE; light lunch accommodations for the awards ceremony. Organizers have taken note of the request to make arrangements for all IT Society events while planning ISIT 2021.

Update for ISIT 2022 in Helsinki was provided by Camilla Hollanti and Themistoklis Charalambous. Organizers have taken note of the request to make arrangements for all IT Society events as an integral part of planning for ISIT 2022. Organizers also plan to introduce a "sustainability chair.'' A person who would handle the web page for the Conference was yet to be identified. This prompted BoG to briefly discuss the web presence of ISIT conferences in general. It was clarified by a BoG member that CMS was contracted to do ISITs in the past but that it is only until 2021.Vijay suggested that BoG should make a decision on whether to continue with CMS or try something else.

Next, Vijay went over the Status of Upcoming IT Workshops. ITW 2019 in Sweden had nothing to report. There was an update for ITW 2020 in Riva del Garda, Italy from Marco Dalai: CFP was distributed at ISIT 2019 and ITW 2019; website is ready; a contract within next few weeks with the venue is hoped to be signed; and the conference will likely use EDAS for paper submissions.

ITW 2021 in Japan had nothing to report. Next, Vijay presented the pre-proposal of ITW 2022 in Goa, India on behalf of the conference organizing committee. As a part of the motivation for this conference, he stated that last ITW in India was in Bangalore in 2002, and that the IT society is very active in India with JTG/IT Society Summer School, Conferences, and Seminars. He then went over the members of the organizing committee including General Chairs, TPC Co-Chairs, and Local Arrangements Chairs. He stated that Goa is a very popular destination. He described different transportation means to Goa, a variety of activities to do, including many beaches, and other tourist attractions. Proposed workshop dates are late October or early November 2022, with the exact date being a function of participation, weather, other conferences, and cost. He then went over the proposed venues. The two choices are Cidade de Goa and Grand Hyatt. He presented the pros and cons of each. He also presented the proposed night cruise banquet. Vijay then discussed visas and how that issue was handled by some recent conferences. Regarding proposed ITW 2022, budget is planned for 150-160 participants. He also stated that there is record of past successful sponsorship. Regarding the technical program, 3 parallel session are planned with more details to follow in the future. Feedback from the BoG is that the pre-proposal looks great and that more detailed budget needs to be added next.

Arrangements for IT Society Events at ISITs based on the input from Treasure Aaron Wagner were then presented, and the conference code of conduct was stated.

Goldsmith Lecturer Funding Update – Elza Erkip and Wei Yu [item 10]

Elza went over the background of Goldsmith Lecturer Award. She stated that the fundraising had been very successful and it reached 130k$, with the 10k$ seed having originated from Andrea Goldsmith's Sumner Award. There are several committed industry sponsors, along with several more outstanding requests, thanks to Andrea's commitment. Elza stated that the IEEE requires 100k$ in funding for an award to become endowed. It was stated that the current surplus of 30k$ could be used for new diversity and inclusion activities, which committee will brainstorm in the future.

Padovani/Goldsmith/Distinguished Lecturers Update – Wei Yu [item 11]

Wei went over the timeline and eligibility requirements for nominations for Goldsmith Lecturer and stated that the deadline will be moved to January 1st moving forward. He then when over the list of past DLs, and the newly elected DLs for 2020-20201, who are: David Gunduz, Lalitha Sankar, Yossef Steinberg, Changho Suh, and Daniela Tuninetti. He stated that David Tse is the 2020 Padovani Lecturer and that Ayfer Ozgur is the 2020 Goldsmith Lecturer. Wei concluded

his presentation by thanking other Membership Committee members: Camilla Hollanti, Tara Javidi, Stark Draper, and Vincent Tan.

New business including cyber bulling was briefly discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 3.00 pm.