

## **Minutes of the USSCI Board meeting**

**Location: Online through Zoom**

**Dec 18th, 2024- 3:30 to 4:30PM (EDT)**

### **Board members present**

- **ESSCI:**
  - Paul Papas (Chair)
  - Mike Burke
  - Michael Mueller
  - Jacqueline O'Connor
  - Perrine Pepiot
- **WSSCI:**
  - Guillaume Blanquart
  - Nicole Labbe
  - Bret Windam
  - David Lignell (Vice Chair)
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- **CSSCI:**
  - Ramanan Sankaran
  - Ya-Ting Liao
  - Steve Son
  - Waruna Kulatilaka

### **Board members absent**

- **CSSCI**
  - Rob Tranter
- **WSSCI:**
  - Erica Belmont

### **Non-board members present (from 14<sup>th</sup> USNCM host committee)**

- Sili Deng (MIT)
- Brandon Rotavera (UGA)
- Albert Simeoni (WPI)

1. Meeting started at 3:30PM EDT. The Chair, Paul Papas, presided the meeting.
2. The main item of discussion was the USNCM meeting, presented by Paul, as the host chair. The 2024 USNCM is hosted by New England institutions. It is organized by multiple institutions instead of a single institution. In addition to the hosting committee, there are other organizers and volunteers helping with the publications, posters, students etc. As on 12/18, 213 full presentation abstracts have been submitted and 194 abstracts are in a started state. 8 WiP posters have been submitted. The abstract submission deadline is 12/22.

Meeting hotel is Westin hotel and the room block requires 684 room nights. The sponsorship (as of 12/17) is a total of \$40k with \$20k additional NSF support being set aside now for an early career workshop and possible student travel support. The summary budget estimate was presented, which at an estimated 550 participants will finish the event with a profit of \$47,800 (assuming no hotel losses). The budget estimate included the 10% MA rebate for holding the meeting in March, and the sales tax waiver because of the CI nonprofit status. Discussion followed around concerns around the eventual hotel room block pick-up based on historical attendance and hotel nights. The board recognized financial risks for the meeting, including lower than planned attendance and penalties for not meeting hotel block allocations. Potential savings can come from not doing boxed lunches, which will cost \$55 each, for section meetings. The section meetings can be held around the break time thereby not requiring lunch to be provided. However, the USNCM has traditionally held the section meetings on Monday along with lunch. The board will continue to discuss the options available to reduce expenses to reduce any loss risk at the meeting, including catering costs which represent the major meeting expense. The host committee is looking at renegotiating the hotel contract to get credit for excess food and beverage overage (currently the F&B minimum is set at \$100k) as well as to continue to explore more sponsorship opportunities, etc.

The board will meet again in January to continue the discussion based on updated numbers for abstract submissions.

3. David Lignell (Vice Chair; Chair of Early Career Combustion Investigator Award Committee) gave an update on the early career /young investigator award. The quality of submissions was very impressive and the award decision has been made.

4. Michael Mueller presented an update from the publication committee, on the plans for publications after the USNCM. The fire community will have the option to publish in a special issue of their Fire Safety Journal.

5. Meeting adjourned at 5pm EDT.