

**MINUTES
LOUISIANA OPTICAL NETWORK INITIATIVE
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

May 12, 2009

The Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) Management Council (MC) met at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, 2009, in the Board Conference Room 6-242 in the Claiborne Building, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Dr. Les Guice, Chair of the LONI Management Council, called the meeting to order. A roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Council Members Present:

Les Guice, Chair
Ed Driesse
Lee Bairnsfather
Bob Fudickar
Steve Landry
Laura Levy
Michael Stubblefield
Charlie McMahon
Joel Tohline

Council Members Absent:

Bea Baldwin
Bradley Ebersole
Greg Speyrer

Guests:

Brian Voss, LSU
Randy Ward, LETA
David Lemoine, DoA/OCS
Honggao Liu, LSU
Susie Welch, IBM
Justin Driesse, IBM
Derald Kirkland, OTM
Lonnie Leger, LSU
Carl Brandt, LSU
Henry Chu, ULL
Brett Brock, CISCO

Randy Walker, LSU
Beth Courtney, LPB

APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2009 MINUTES

On a motion from Dr. Steve Landry, seconded by Mr. Charlie McMahon, the LONI Management Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2009, LONI Management Council meeting.

NLR AND INTERNET 2 UPDATES

Mr. Charlie McMahon, Vice President of Information Technology and CTO for Tulane University, presented an update on the National LambdaRail (NLR). He mentioned that a NLR Board meeting will be held in June at which Louisiana will be asked to commit to continued membership with NLR. Mr. McMahon said that NLR is trying to lower the fee cost for each participant.

Discussions revolved around the cost of remaining in NLR versus the costs of replacing those services with Internet 2. He has requested that Mr. Lonnie Leger, LSU, provide the costs associated with this possibility. When the opportunity arose to join NLR, our research needs were met at that time. As we look forward, Internet 2 has put in a new network that provides many of the services offered by NLR. There are more similarities today than before between NLR and Internet 2. It is likely not to be cheaper remaining in NLR. In his opinion, it is time for Louisiana to withdraw from NLR.

Mr. McMahon continued by giving an update on the successful leveraging of Internet 2. He said there were two competitive choices to meet our national networking objectives. Mr. McMahon said the bylaws of NLR were changed last year which adversely affected Louisiana. The bylaws were changed to state that if a participant does not continue making member contributions every year, the participant no longer has the right to vote on the NLR Board. Mr. Voss inquired if NLR could make another change in its bylaws and remove ownership rights. He anticipates other current members will drop out of NLR in July 2009. He said that Duke University dropped out of the North Carolina Consortium; therefore, North Carolina was not able to make its payment and lost its voting rights. The North Carolina Consortium may be able to

contribute in the upcoming year due to lower fees. New Mexico has not made the last of its contributions to NLR, and Texas is having the same discussions as Louisiana and may not contribute in July.

Dr. Steve Landry of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette said that as we partner with Mississippi and possibly Arkansas, we are broadening our capacity to have high resiliency with Internet 2.

Dr. Joel Tohline, Interim Executive Director of LONI, said he was in favor of moving to Internet 2 instead of remaining a member of NLR assuming that the monies paid to NLR can be rolled into expanded capabilities in Internet 2.

Mr. McMahon reminded the MC that the Board of Regents is the NLR member and will make the final decision on membership.

CHIEF ADVISOR REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Landry thanked Dr. Honggao Liu, Director, High Performance Computing at LSU, and Mr. Lonnie Leger, LSU, for the LONI weekly updates. He requested that both updates be emailed to all members on the MC. Dr. Guice suggested the Dr. Liu provide a snapshot of usage statistics for high performance computing by institutions in his updates. Dr. Tohline suggested a monthly update on these usage statistics.

Dr. Michael Stubblefield, Southern University, asked for an update on the Coushatta Indian Tribe project and the possibility of extending support to them. Mr. Leger said the tribe had approached McNeese State University regarding assistance in getting a connection.

Dr. Landry remarked that the amount of energy and personnel being demanded on individual campuses by the IBM P5s are relatively high and need to be evaluated due to tough budget times ahead. He said that as utilization is looked at on a regular basis, it may be time to think about the impacts of losing the computational power and whether we have researchers and

codes that are dependent on that architecture. He mentioned that it may be time to either decommission the P5s or replace them.

Mr. McMahon asked Dr. Liu to give the MC information regarding utilization for the last six months so they will have the proper data to analyze Dr. Landry's query.

Dr. Landry talked about the critical link in the northern part of the state. There is a meeting scheduled on Thursday, May 14th with AT&T regarding the AUP. Mr. Leger will attend this meeting. Dr. Guice asked Mr. Leger to follow-up with Dr. Landry after the meeting with AT&T. Dr. Landry said he will be making recommendations to find a way to close the loop whether the AT&T issue is settled or not.

Chair Guice mentioned that there has been no replacement of the Chief Scientist since the departure of Dr. Ed Siedel. However, he said there have been continued research successes and opportunities coming out of LONI. Dr. Guice reported that during the past two days the NSF EPSCoR Cybertools project External Review Board has been in Baton Rouge participating at an "all hands" meeting. Dr. Tohline said the Review Board was made up of individuals from Cal Tech, Georgia Tech, Washington, SUNY, and Texas A&M. He said the NSF program manager was here and very impressed. Mr. McMahon inquired about future grant opportunities. Dr. Guice said the next round of EPSCoR Research Infrastructure Improvement (RII) award will be 5-year projects at \$4 million a year. In anticipation of the EPSCoR RFP, an RFP has been issued by LA EPSCoR for pre-proposals. There is another project called EPSCoR RII Track II which bridges the cyber infrastructure across Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama to focus on disaster management, emergency response and cyber security. This is a \$6 million grant over three years. The project involves 15 universities and if successful could be a national model for multi-state collaborations. Louisiana has not won the grant yet, but we are optimistic. There are other

opportunities coming from NSF and NIH to support cyber infrastructure. Louisiana has a great reputation among these funding organizations. Our faculty are energized in pursuing these grants.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

Dr. Tohline said there is still a great need to advertise for a permanent Executive Director of LONI. Efforts to advertise needs to be coordinated with LSU's efforts to fill the position of Director of CCT. The MC will wait until the new fiscal year to advertise for an Executive Director.

He reminded everyone that one year ago during the hurricane season, the MC agreed that if the Governor's Office needed the Queen Bee machine, it would be available. It was used heavily during the hurricane season. Specific processes have been established for this year should it be necessary to allocate the machine for hurricane tracking. The interim director of the Hurricane Center would contact Dr. Liu and would give authority to turn a large portion of the machine over to the Governor's office. Queen Bee would be the primary HPC system, but LSU would have a backup system for a different power grid than Queen Bee.

On motion of Mr. Charlie McMahon, seconded by Dr. Steve Landry, to authorize an emergency procedure to dedicate resources for storm surge modeling in the instance that the Office of Emergency Preparedness needs Queen Bee. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Tohline said he and Dr. Liu have kept the Allocations Committee completely in the loop. He said there is a proposal from the Hurricane Modeling group requesting what they expect the needs will be -- how many processors, how much run time for different modeling efforts -- and the proposal was sent to the Allocations Committee. Mr. McMahon said that providing the needed service during emergencies is not disruptive to researchers most of the time.

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. Guice said there are several focus areas in the strategic planning that was initiated in January.

1. Long term sustainability of LONI by looking at our budgeting and what our needs are going to be. Dr. Laura Levy, Tulane University, is assisting with this effort.
2. K-12 issues and what role LONI should play. Opportunities are perhaps coming up with stimulus funding to support network expansion and development to achieve the goal.
3. Defining LONI's economic development activities and goals.

Mr. Leger introduced Ms. Carol Mosley from the Department of Education (DoE) to speak on focus area #2. She works with K-12 schools on e-rate funding, distance learning and educational technology issues. The DoE is moving into a realm of planning for technology and its uses to create 21st century classrooms. The DoE is providing direction that will take K-12 to another level. They want students to have access to distance learning and internet based learning along with the capability to take courses in local schools, other schools in the state, and from colleges and universities. There is also a need to expand workforce development and career readiness programs. She was interested in how K-12 can be connected with LONI. The Department is trying to build upon their virtual schools. But when courses are taught on the internet and some schools have no internet services, students are not able to access virtual schools. For example, course testing is mandated by law and done on line. There were problems because many schools do not have internet access.

A discussion ensued regarding the strategy the DoE is employing to push e-rate out and how LONI interacts with the e-rate strategy. Ms. Mosley said ideally that each school would like about 100 meg of internet. The average district – there are 72 districts – currently has about 10 megs they share between all the schools in its district. The DoE has looked at models in

Mississippi, Arkansas, North Carolina and worked with New York. The discussions then shifted to which entities qualify for e-rate funding and if LONI can accept e-rate funding. Ms. Mosley said that LONI could be an applicant with the DoE to receive funding. Dr. Guice felt the MC should move forward on any proposal activity that should be pursued with stimulus funding. He said that linking K-12 would give Louisiana a competitive advantage, but wondered if this could be done without having any negative impacts on current research operations.

Dr. Tohline said the staffing side of LONI would have to increase and a funding mechanism needs to be found. Ms. Mosley said they have three Delta districts that are trying to combine their IT staff. Dr. Landry said the abstract sounds good, but more information is needed. There was concern from the MC about audit procedures for e-rate programs

Ms. Beth Courtney, Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) said she would like to have a snapshot of where are the gaps and how LONI and internet connectivity can be sustained for education purposes. She mentioned that our schools are better connected than our communities.

Chair Guice said that the Commissioner of Higher Education would be informed on the issues of responsibility in terms of accounting support and the need to make commitment on personnel should we move to support DoE and the e-rate program.

Dr. Tohline is in favor of pursuing the investigation of how LONI would fit into a K-12 partnership and then decide whether LONI should pursue it. Dr. Stubblefield suggests that first a pilot program be created. Mr. McMahon was concerned with understanding how the revenue matches with the expenses.

Dr. Landry noted there are many states that have made good investments of e-rate. He inquired about the expectations of K-12 in the next two years if we have an opportunity to leverage e-rate and connect all our schools to a central capacity.

Ms. Mosley said the states of Florida and Georgia have expanded their distance learning, and their model is to move to true learning. Dr. Landry said he recently saw a presentation from a Georgia e-school that went from several hundred participants to 4,000 participants. He inquired if this is what Louisiana is envisioning.

Ms. Mosley said virtual schools are just one aspect. She said that in the next school year, students in Rapides Parish will be looking at teachers and courses that can be selected from **any** school in the parish. It is a luxury for students who can go to a 1 to 1 school (*one computer to one student with no books*). Everything is done on a laptop; every child has an internet connection.

Dr. Guice said after more information is received from DoE, it may require an additional meeting of the MC to take action. It is likely that a proposal will need to be submitted before the next regularly scheduled LONI meeting.

Mr. Ed Driesse, State Chief Information Officer, suggested that concentration be directed toward the next three steps, and this would help the MC prioritize the stimulus funding needs.

Dr. Guice reminded everyone that Dr. Stubblefield was chairing a strategic planning effort to define economic development for LONI. He said a report should be given at the next Council meeting.

PUBLIC EVENTS IN SUPPORT OF LONI

Chair Guice requested that any events showing LONI as a success should be brought to his attention. He stated that perhaps LPB could do a feature on LONI. Ms. Courtney said that June 15th is LPB's capitol day at the rotunda and perhaps they could feature LONI on this day. Dr. Guice asked Ms. Courtney to contact Dr. Tohline about LONI's participation in the June 15th Capitol Day.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before LONI Management Council, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.