

MAA Wisconsin Section

Emergency Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 13, 2020

Present: Kseniya Fuhrman, Ken Price, Clare Hemenway, Jonathan Kane, Laura Schmidt, Balamurugan Pandiyan, Wesley Hough, Ben Collins

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM by Chair, Kseniya Fuhrman. The meeting was conducted online using Meeting Via Webex. The meeting was convened to consider the cancellation of the 2020 Wisconsin Section Meeting and the consequences of doing so.

The committee discussed a motion by Laura Schmidt to cancel the 2020 Wisconsin Section Meeting due to major disruptions in academic schedules due to measures taken in response to the spread of the coronavirus. In particular, the Department of Mathematics at the University of Wisconsin – Stout, where the meeting was scheduled to take place, withdrew their offer to host the meeting at the scheduled time of April 24 – 25, 2020. Other considerations included the fact that most teachers in the university system and at some private colleges were being asked to offer their current courses in an online or other distance learning fashion that would minimize face-to-face contact with students. This effort would be a major distraction from preparations for the meeting. The motion passed.

The committee then discussed the option of holding a smaller meeting online so that students and some faculty members would have the opportunity to present talks to an online audience. This idea was finally dismissed because it was felt that any such meeting would be poorly attended and not worth the major effort it would take to arrange.

The committee considered substituting for the meeting a presentation contest for students. The idea was to give graduating seniors who had planned to make a presentation at the section meeting a forum to make their presentations. Again, it was decided that the amount of work needed to arrange and run such a contest would outweigh the limited benefit it would provide.

The section by-laws require the holding of an annual business meeting at an annual section meeting. These requirements cannot be met in 2020. It was decided that the section should hold an online business meeting at 10 AM on the same morning that the original business meeting was scheduled to take place, Saturday April 25. At this meeting the section membership would hold its annual election for chair-elect and approve dates and location of the 2021 section meeting. MAA Headquarters had suggested that they could host such an online meeting using the Zoom meeting platform. Because the main job of the chair-elect is to serve as program chair for the annual meeting, Ken Price offered to remain chair-elect for an additional year so that he would be program chair for the 2021 meeting. Kseniya Fuhrman offered to remain in her

chair position for an additional year. Because this arrangement would be contrary to current section by-laws, it would need section approval at the proposed online business meeting. UW – Stout has offered to host the meeting in 2021, but dates for that meeting still need to be determined. UW – Whitewater had offered to host the 2021 meeting, but they would be willing to postpone being host until 2022.

The committee then considered the steps that it will take to cancel the meeting. Secretary/Treasurer, Jonathan Kane, would contact MAA Headquarters to have them post the cancellation on their website and to distribute an e-mail cancellation notice to all Wisconsin Section members. He would also reimburse any payments made to the section in meeting registration fees. This would be made easier by the fact that virtually all payments received so far were done by way of PayPal which provides an easy mechanism for reimbursing payments. There would be a small cost from PayPal for reimbursing each of these payments. Jonathan will also work with MAA Headquarters to set up the online business meeting. Public Information Officer, Ben Collins, would make appropriate changes to the Wisconsin MAA website. Chair-elect, Ken Price, would contact invited speakers to cancel their invitations. It was assumed that invited speakers would be able to cancel their travel plans without cost to them, but that the section was able to reimburse them for any losses.

The meeting was adjourned 5:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Jonathan Kane
Secretary/Treasurer