

Midwest Symposium on Circuits and Systems Steering Committee
Minutes of meeting held in Seoul, Korea, Monday, August 8, 2011

Steering Committee members present: Majid Ahmadi, Jong-Moon Chung, Igor Filanovsky, Jose Delgado-Frias, Paul Furth, Shervin Erfani, Randy Geiger, Takao Hinamoto, Ken Jenkins, Manuel Jimenez, Donald Lie, Sherif Michael, Wasfy Mikhael, Saeid Nooshabadi, Carla Purdy, Nader Rafla, Gabriel Rincon-Mora, Mohamad Sawan, Michael Soderstrand

Guests Present: Abdel Moataz Mahmoud Abdelwahab, Tae Wook Kim

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Prof. Soderstrand., who welcomed the attendees. Prof. Mikhael circulated an attendance sheet and a Steering Committee membership list for updates. Prof. Purdy agreed to take the meeting minutes.

The minutes from the 2010 meeting in Seattle were approved.

Prof. Jenkins presented the treasurer's report. Funds have been transferred to a holding account at Penn State. Since the Steering Committee is nonprofit, there are no service fees and no interest. This will minimize paperwork. The balance transferred from the Michigan State account was \$24,315.62. The Committee received \$1,150.00 from MWSCAS 2009 and \$1,510.00 from MWSCAS 2010 and sent \$6,000 to the Ecole Polytechnique, Montreal, to cover its portion of the shortfall from MWSCAS 2007. The account balance as of August 1, 2011, is \$20,975.62. The treasurer's report was accepted by the Committee.

Prof. Sawan thanked the Committee for their help with the 2007 shortfall. He reviewed the main reasons for the shortfall to assist future organizers. Expenses were higher because of the 50th anniversary commemorative DVD's. Attendance was lower than predicted, and many attendees chose cheaper lodging, instead of the Symposium hotel, making session room rental fees higher.

Old business:

2010 Symposium: Prof. Delgado-Frias reported on the 2010 Symposium in Seattle. The Symposium was publicized through email using lists from the last four MWSCAS meetings. A total of 466 full papers were submitted, and 321, from 38 countries, were accepted for presentation in seventeen tracks (202 for lectures, 119 for posters). All papers had at least 2 reviews and most had 3. Papers were managed by Mr. Tom Wehner of epapers, whose experience with past MWSCAS conferences was very helpful. Abstract booklets and Proceedings CDs were prepared by Ms. Tia Fulmer of The Printing House, who also facilitated timely submission of the final papers to IEEE Xplore. There were 302 paid participants (159 IEEE members, 11 nonmembers, and 132 students), and \$1,510.00 of the surplus has been sent to the Steering Committee. The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Niraj Jha, Princeton, and there was a special plenary session honoring Dr. M.N.S. Swamy and His Profound Contributions on His 75th Birthday. Four tutorials were presented on Sunday. A modest fee (\$25 per tutorial) covered copies and other tutorial expenses and helped predict attendance. Prof. Delgado-Frias did not have the exact attendance numbers for the tutorials. This would be useful information for future organizers. All ten presenters in the student paper contest received participation certificates. The top three received cash awards (Matteo Agostinelli, University of Klagenfurt, first, \$500; Bhavin Shastri, McGill, second, \$300; Marcos Turqueti, Illinois Institute of Technology, third, \$200). The Myril B. Reed Best Paper Award for 2009 was presented by 2009 General Chair Hector Perez-Meana to Niklas Zimmermann, Bjorn Thorsten Thiel, Renato Negra, and Stefan Heinen for "System Architecture of an RF-DAC Based Multistandard Transmitter". Also, Dr. Nicola Setti, CASS president, presented the 2010 Darlington Award for best IEEE TCAS paper to Prof. David J. Allstot and Dr. Sudip Shekhar for "Strong Injection Locking in Low-Q Oscillators: Modeling and Application in a Forwarded Clock I/O Receiver." Dr. Setti also presented the Regions 1-7 Chapter of the Year Award to the IEEE CASS Santa Clara Valley Chapter. The 2010 Myril B. Reed Award will be presented to Matthew Turner and John Naber for "The Design of a Bi-directional, RFID-based ASIC for Interfacing with SPI Bus Peripherals." Prof. Mikhael thanked Prof. Delgado-Frias and his committee for the well-organized and successful conference and led the Steering Committee in a round of applause.

2011 Symposium: Prof. Chung, 2011 General Co-Chair, presented the 2011 Symposium preliminary report. One aim of the organizers was to provide a conference which was affordable for students and very student-friendly, with Yongsei University as the venue, inexpensive dormitory accommodations, and free internet access. Publicity was generated through newsletters and emails. As of August 8, there are 383 paid registrations (281 IEEE members, 70 nonmembers, 28 students, and 4 accompanying guests). There were a total of 526 submissions (323 regular and 203 invited) with 224 regular submissions (69.3%) accepted for presentation. Prof. Nooshabadi, Technical Program Chair, thanked the track chairs and Prof. Rafla, Special Session Chair, for their wonderful work. Selected authors will be asked to submit extended papers for publication in one of three journals--*World Scientific Journal of Circuits, Systems and Computers*; *Elsevier Microelectronics Journal*; and *Elsevier International Journal of Electronics and Communications*. Three keynote speakers will also give talks. There were 168 student papers submitted, and 8 were chosen for presentation in the student paper contest. All contest participants have been invited to attend the banquet. A special table will be reserved for them. Prof. Nooshabadi thanked Prof. Yong-Bin Kim, Student Contest Chair, for his wonderful work. Four tutorials were planned, but two were canceled because of low registration. The Symposium banquet will be held at the Grand Hilton Hotel, Seoul. In addition to the student paper awards, five awards will be presented there, including the Myril B. Reed Award for the 2010 Symposium. There were some problems with credit card registrations, due to government restrictions designed to reduce fraud, but they were all resolved. Prof. Nooshabadi apologized for any difficulties in this area. The Symposium is on track to have a surplus of \$19,648. This is partially due to the generosity of Yongsei University, which is funding many Symposium activities. Prof. Nooshabadi also noted a number of steps taken to increase participation. These included soliciting invited papers from researchers at leading institutions. In addition, authors of accepted papers who did not have travel funds or who ran into visa problems could have their paper presented by a colleague who was attending or could send a poster. This seems to have reduced the number of "no-shows". Prof. Nooshabadi asked

for the sense of the Committee as to whether this practice was beneficial, and Prof. Mikhael noted that his remarks contained several valuable ideas. Prof. Mikhael thanked the organizers and noted that this symposium will go down in history as a very successful one. He led the Committee in a round of applause for the organizers.

2012 Symposium: Prof. Rafla, 2012 General Chair, discussed plans for the 2012 Symposium. The venue will be the Grove Hotel, Boise, Idaho, a 4-star hotel. Dates will be August 5-8, and a traditional schedule will be followed. On Wednesday, technical presentations will end at noon and a rafting trip will be organized for attendees. There is good transportation to Boise, with direct flights from many cities, including Chicago, Minneapolis, Detroit, Houston, and Atlanta, and there are many local attractions. Prof. Rafla would like additional volunteers for the Organizing Committee, especially younger members who can gain experience. He presented a preliminary budget based on 350 registrations and 250 attendees. Paper management and publications will be facilitated by epapers and The Printing House, respectively. Meals and social events will be in the hotel. Prof. Ahmadi noted that the administrative costs should be \$4000, not \$1,000 as shown. He wished Prof. Rafla success for 2012. Prof. Mikhael also expressed his hopes for a successful symposium and reminded the organizers to take advantage of the expertise of the Steering Committee members. Prof. Rafla would appreciate comments on the budget.

New business:

2013 Symposium: Prof. Mikhael noted that Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy was not able to attend the meeting. He has not received recommendations from her for 2013 and beyond. It is important to make a decision about 2013 so the organizers have sufficient time to prepare for the Symposium. One proposal for 2013, from Michigan Tech, has been distributed. There may be an additional proposal from a group in Peru. They made a tentative proposal last year, but no formal proposal has been received. There was a proposal from Ohio for 2012, but they have not made a proposal for 2013. Prof. Mikhael reiterated his standing offer to host the Symposium in Orlando if there is no other suitable proposal. Prof. Soderstrand noted that it is important to decide on the 2013 site and that the Committee might need to be more proactive in helping potential organizers to put together a formal proposal.

Prof. Nooshabadi's proposal for Michigan Tech had been emailed to the Committee. Proposed dates are August 4-7. Prof. Nooshabadi has met with his dean, who is supportive, and he has begun researching transportation options. Several people with extensive experience in conference organization and with MWSCAS have agreed to serve in key organizing positions. General Co-Chairs will be Prof. Nooshabadi and Prof. Jenkins. Technical Program Co-chairs will be Dr. David Wentloff of the University of Michigan and Dr. Shiyun Yu of Michigan Tech. The proposed venue will be on the Michigan Tech campus, Houghton, Michigan, in the Upper Peninsula. The setting is scenic and the facilities are excellent. There are many attractions nearby, including many related to the area's history as an important mining center for copper and iron. There are affordable hotels near by, and the organizers expect to be able to negotiate even better rates for attendees. All hotels have free internet access, and shuttle service to the Symposium sessions will be provided. The technical program will focus on the MWSCAS tradition of providing a graduate-student-friendly environment and encouraging high graduate student participation, while also attracting top international researchers. This will be facilitated through early identification of highly qualified track chairs, who will work together to manage paper submission and who will invite key session chairs, who will in turn be encouraged to invite prominent authors to submit to their sessions. Thus sessions will be built from both invited papers and submitted papers, and session chairs will be very familiar with the papers presented in their sessions and will be able to establish a high-quality graduate-student-friendly environment in each session. A traditional schedule will be followed. There is air service from Chicago as well as scenic drives from Lower Peninsula Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Prof. Nooshabadi provided a preliminary budget, based on 250 attendees, and plans to apply for seed money from IEEE CASS.

A lively discussion of the proposal followed. Most comments focused on the accessibility of Houghton and the 1982 Symposium held there. This symposium attracted a very small number of attendees and was not, in the opinion of those present who had attended it, a success. Two concerns were raised, transportation and the infrastructure in Houghton.

Prof. Filanovsky noted that transportation in 1982 was a disaster. In 1982 there was only one flight per day, now there are two. Michigan Tech is 8-9 hours from both Detroit and Chicago, Duluth is about 4 hours away. And if someone needs to spend 10-14 hours on a plane to get to Michigan, they are unlikely to want to add a 4-8 hour drive to their trip. Prof. Nooshabadi thinks it will be possible to arrange for extra flights and/or bigger planes before and after the conference. He will discuss this with the airport manager. It would also be possible to arrange shuttle buses from neighboring cities. He and his committee are exploring options. Prof. Mikhael noted that there are probably two choices, having the Symposium in a larger city or arranging a shuttle.

Prof. Geiger noted that there were also problems with the infrastructure in the city in 1982, including taxi service. Prof. Soderstrand noted that those who attended the 1982 Symposium have mixed feelings about Houghton. The area was beautiful, but there were few hotels and transportation between the airport and the hotels was impossible. Prof. Nooshabadi reiterated that the venue would be at the university and noted that transportation within Houghton is no longer a problem.

Prof. Mikhael suggested holding the Symposium in a bigger city such as Detroit. Prof. Nooshabadi said that his university would like to host the Symposium as a key event. His administration and colleagues would not be enthusiastic if the Symposium is not held at Michigan Tech. Also, there are many financial advantages to holding the Symposium at Michigan Tech. Prof. Geiger raised the possibility of working with another university in Michigan. Prof. Nooshabadi has not approached any other university for assistance, his university is willing to help with support for the conference. Prof. Soderstrand noted that the Committee needs to make a decision. Adding a Co-Chair from another university is one option. But hopefully the situation in Houghton has changed. Prof. Furth noted that for a local conference, a location at a small city in the Midwest is fine, but there is an image problem. An international conference might not be able to attract people. Prof. Sawan noted that we need to clarify whether it is better to hold the conference at a university

or a hotel. The tradition in recent years has been to choose a hotel. A hotel is easier logistically. Prof. Mikhael noted that the Houghton proposal is the only one currently on the table and Prof. Nooshabadi urged that a decision be made. He promised to work with the Committee to address the issues of concern. Prof. Geiger suggested that the organizing committee be better identified and that they then reconsider the venue. But Prof. Nooshabadi said there was not really any flexibility in the location.

Prof. Soderstrand asked for a motion to accept the Houghton proposal. Prof. Ahmadi made the motion and Prof. Jenkins seconded it. The vote was 4 in favor, 4 opposed, with the rest of the members abstaining, and thus the motion did not pass.

Prof. Mikhael suggested that Prof. Nooshabadi add more details to the proposal to address the issues raised in discussion and resubmit it to the Committee. An email vote could then be held. Prof. Nooshabadi will discuss the issues with his colleagues and inform the Committee of the results of the discussion in about a week. Prof. Ahmadi offered to help with selecting a venue in Detroit if the Symposium is held there. Prof. Nooshabadi indicated that he would prefer to have the conference at Michigan Tech, since this would be beneficial to his university. Prof. Geiger noted that we must do what is best for the Symposium. Prof. Furth indicated that he would like to hear opinions from Committee members in Asia or Europe. Prof. Nooshabadi noted that he lived in Korea until recently and that he doesn't consider the extra travel time to get to Houghton a problem. Prof. Soderstrand stated that if there is a flight to Houghton, that should be acceptable. Prof. Mikhael encouraged Prof. Nooshabadi to take time to investigate the possibilities and then to come back to the Committee with a solution. Prof. Nooshabadi indicated he would do this. In particular, he will talk with his colleagues about the role of Michigan Tech and the possibility of holding the Symposium in Detroit. He will also talk with the airport manager and further investigate possibilities for transportation. Prof. Mikhael clarified the two points to consider: (1) adding someone from Detroit or Windsor to the organizing committee and changing the venue; (2) clearly laying out the transportation options if the proposed venue is Houghton. He requested that Prof. Nooshabadi explore both of these options. Prof. Soderstrand noted that there were many abstentions from voting. Prof. Mikhael requested that any emails about this issue be sent to the entire Committee.

Additional discussion addressed possible alternative proposals for 2013. It was suggested that Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy may have more information and should be queried before a decision is made. Prof. Rincon-Mora also noted that there is a need for the whole Steering Committee to share any information which would help to decide on the 2013 venue. The following motion was approved:

1. Within the next two weeks, Prof. Nooshabadi will send a revised proposal to the Committee. The proposal will discuss the possibility of moving the venue to Detroit and will provide more information on transportation to Houghton.
2. For one week, Steering Committee members can discuss the issue by email. Comments should be sent to the entire Committee.
3. Prof. Mikhael will then ask the Committee to vote by email on the proposal.

Future symposia: Changes in the procedure for generating proposals for future symposia were discussed. Previously, a subcommittee handled this, but for many years Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy has carried all formal responsibility for working with potential organizers to generate proposals. As the Symposium has grown, so has this task. If a subcommittee is actively soliciting proposals, we should have 2 or 3 to choose from each year. Prof. Ahmadi moved that the Steering Committee reactivate the subcommittee, with three members, to actively solicit proposals and make recommendations. Prof. Geiger seconded. He suggested one member rotate off each year and a new member be chosen. Prof. Michael noted it is very important for at least one member of this subcommittee to attend the Steering Committee meeting. Prof. Mikhael accepted this as a friendly amendment. After more discussion, the motion was amended to appoint two more members with a rotating chair. Prof. Abdel-Aty-Zohdy will be chair for the coming year. This was approved unanimously. Prof. Nooshabadi volunteered for the subcommittee. Prof. Ahmadi recommended Prof. Geiger, who agreed to serve. Prof. Ahmadi moved to appoint Profs. Nooshabadi and Geiger, Prof. Jenkins seconded, and this was approved unanimously.

Subcommittees: It was agreed that a similar subcommittee could assist the treasurer. However, only Prof. Jenkins can have signing authority at his university. Prof. Jenkins noted that this issue needs to be addressed in the next few years. Prof. Soderstrand suggested that Prof. Jenkins look for someone interested in taking over and report back next year. It was also agreed that the Membership Subcommittee should be enlarged to include three members. Prof. Michael will be joined by Prof. Jenkins and Prof. Mikhael. Prof. Soderstrand will continue to maintain the permanent MWSCAS webpage (www.mwscas.org).

Steering Committee membership: Prof. Mikhael encouraged the recruitment of new Steering Committee members who are active researchers in the field and potential candidates for hosting the Symposium. This is a serious responsibility. The Committee can have between 25 and 50 members and at present there are 41. The following new members were approved: Prof. Moataz Mahmoud Abdelwahab, Nile University, Egypt; Prof. Juan Montiel-Nelson, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain; Prof. Tae Wook Kim, Yongsei University. Prof. Mikhael will review the list of member activities to see if there are inactive members to be removed.

Dealing with "no-shows": Prof. Nooshabadi raised the issue of authors of accepted papers who register but do not attend the Symposium. There are various mechanisms for dealing with this problem. For example, the author may need to be present to have the paper published or submitted to Xplore. Prof. Geiger noted that technology exists to present a paper even if you are not physically present. Prof. Lie noted that a paper can also be moved to a poster session. Prof. Furth noted that there were two "no-shows" in the session he chaired. One arranged to have the paper presented by a colleague. The other did not contact anyone and just did not show up. Prof. Mikhael noted that this can be a massive problem. For now, this can be dealt with by the organizing committee.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carla Purdy