

APPROVED MINUTES

IEEE Robotics and Automation Society Administrative Committee (AdCom) Meeting Minutes VIRTUAL MEETING (ICRA 2020) 09:00 – 12:15 EDT, 5 June 2020

1) Meeting Called to Order

09:00 EDT (GMT-4)

The agenda and the full reports can be found at: <https://tawapps.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=15858>

2) Roll Call and Introductions

• 18 Elected Members (Voting Members)

- o **Term ending 12/31/20:** Minoru Asada, Tamim Asfour, Maria Pia Fanti, Kazuhiro Kosuge, Richard Vaughan (absent), and Jing Xiao
- o **Term ending 12/31/21:** Kasper Althoefer, Gianluca Antonelli, Fumihito Arai, Megan Emmons, Kenji Suzuki, and Richard Voyles
- o **Term ending 12/31/22:** Alin Albu-Schaeffer, Marcelo Ang, Jaydev Desai, Yasuhisa Hasegawa, Cecilia Laschi, Yasuhisa Hirata (absent).

- **Student AdCom Member (With Vote):** Geoff Nagy
- **RAS Junior Past President (With Vote):** Wolfram Burgard
- **ExCom (Voting Members):** Seth Hutchinson (President), Paolo Fiorini (Secretary), Venkat Krovi (Treasurer), and Frank Park (President Elect)
- **ExCom (Non-Voting Members):** Torsten Kroeger (VP CAB), Yasushi Nakauchi (VP FAB), Robert Ambrose (VP IAB), Nancy Amato (VP MAB), Aude Billard (VP PAB), Tony Maciejewski (VP TAB), Zhidong Wang (VP EPSB), and Hong Zhang (Parliamentarian)
- **Other Attendees (Non-Voting):** Raja Chatila (Former RAS Senior Past President), Dana Kulic, Aleksandra Faust (Associate VP MAB), Cara Nunez, Sinan Haliyo (ICRA2020), Kazuhiro Kosuge, Kevin Lynch, Lino Marques, Kathy Colabaugh (IEEE RAS Operations Manager), Amy Reeder (IEEE RAS Program Specialist), Alexis Simoes (IEEE RAS Program Coordinator), Kelly Smith (IEEE RAS Finance), Randi Sumner (IEEE Senior Director)

23 voting members attending - need 12 affirmative votes to pass motions

3) Approval of Agenda (including Consent Agenda and Standing Orders) (Fiorini): Approved

4) State of the Society Report (Hutchinson). The main points are:

- o Large increase in papers
- o Haven't thought about scale in 15 years. Staffing & Infrastructure to take on membership
- o Robotics industry has scaled up
- o All tech companies are now getting involved in robotics
- o Need to attract industry in Leadership
- o Society has changed and become more diverse, but we need to continue to become more diverse
- o TC structure cannot support the amount of research areas
- o Budget is enormous and we do not manage it well. We need to be more efficient with spending the money we have.

5) ICRA2020 Update (Kroeger - Haliyo). The points discussed are:

- o Canceled in person event due to COVID 19, went virtual

- Lost time in decision making of going virtual
- Conference was extended to 3 month long
- Drastically reduced registration fees
- Hoping to attract people from countries that do not always make it to ICRA
- Live events until June 17 2020, and all content will stay online until August
- Communicate with authors through SLACK
- Papercept support to link to papers
- Infovaya adapted their tool to allow all the new online interaction features
- IEEE-tv broadcasted live plenaries
- SLACK- allowed us to set up interactive platform (working well)
- Plenaries- 1 talk each day at 1pm UTC (best slot for global time zone)
- Plenaries-broadcast live and Q&A
- 3 plenaries and 7-8 keynotes
- Infovaya- industrial activity online, modified to become virtual presentation booths, 1 slide= 1 stand
- Online artistic event- \$100,000+ Euros invested
- Featured a spotlight for H2020 project- 21 projects featured, 5 direct streams showing online demos
- Almost 5000 registrations and still growing
- Slack- 5000 members and 4000 active members, 1600 channels created for papers, 55 keyword channels, workshops 500 participants
- Plenaries- 5000 people from 65 countries
- Small scale survey- are you happy? Only 150 people are unhappy ~ 4000+ are happy with how the conference has been run
- Budget- expected to lose money, lost many sponsors. 80K in sponsor income, 5000 registrants = \$200K

6) CAB Report Highlights and new initiatives (Kroeger). The points discussed are:

- Jaydev Desai joined recently
- Conferences & COVID 19- 8 fully sponsored conferences that have been affected so far
- Most conferences went virtual, some have postponed
- Financially co-sponsored conferences- 11 affected
- Wished IEEE came out with guidelines for virtual conferences sooner, many decisions were made without guidance in the beginning
- Kelly Smith was responsible for how smooth things went, thanks Kelly!
- Looking at hybrid models for future conferences- we need to have plan for the future
- Conference portfolio update- 82 events that RAS sponsors/ co-sponsors
- ICRA 2024- Seoul, South Korea / Yokohama, Japan: will discuss at IROS 2020
- Proposals for ICRA 2025, 2026
- Conferences the size of ICRA need 4+ years for conference organizers to plan, proposing 5 years of lead time for ICRA. 2 options: leave for 4 years lead time, consider to look for 2 proposals- ICRA 2025 & 2026
- Updated RAS addendum
- IEEE will increase the fee from \$1000 to \$1400 for technically co-sponsored, and paper fees. Analyzing the financial impact for increased fees
- Now involved in the conference quality committee. Looking at better communication and increasing transparency
- Infovaya- there was a motion from 2018. Investing \$15K per year to add features that are RAS specific
- Check the Appendix for info on CAB structure, conference management tools

7) FAB and Treasurer Reports (Nakauchi - Krovi). The points discussed are:

- We had a really good year in 2019, investment income was substantial. We function on operational expenses which is positive, we spend less than expected = operational surplus
- \$877.4K available for use next year, by the 50% rule for next budget year
- We try every year at IROS to make it so that we do not end up with a large surplus. We need to support more activities.
- Periodicals are all doing well. T-Ro, TASE, RAM, RA-L
- 2 main sources for revenue are periodicals and conferences
- Once the periodicals go to IEEE Xplore, we receive benefits
- Conference reserves have been large- \$11m, can only access through convoluted processes
- Budget timeline- first past due
- Society membership is very low compared to other IEEE societies
- \$295K = 3%
- First use operational surplus, then 50% of operational surplus from previous year
- Conference and publication surplus may decrease in 2021, research may decrease
- Launching Open Access Journals which may have a financial impact, first two years will have deficit, but expect income after that
- Renewal motions in consent agenda, others will be voted on later today

8) PAB Report Highlights and new initiatives (Billard). The points discussed are:

- Doubling the amount of reviewers
- New members on board
- Steady growth for pubs, especially RA-L
- Numbers of accepted papers has increased but proportionate for how many we have received
- Acceptance rates are fairly low ~ 40%
- Number of downloads are increasing
- Motion voted on in PAB- first step into changing short papers being submitted to RA-L & T-RO. Removed this option, universally approved
- Discussed structural issues- all journal publications be presented at conferences, Reviewers incentives, Submission & review of dataset and code along w/ paper, PAB bylaws and changes, RAS Open Access Strategies

9) MAB Report Highlights and new initiatives (Amato). The points discussed are:

- 9 committees, 3 programs
- 2 motions w/o financial impact
- 6 motions w/ financial impact
- Code of conduct/ CARES committee
 - Code of conduct for conferences (in consent agenda)
 - CARES committee will be a standard for other IEEE societies- has been approved and will be ready for IROS
- Developing countries faculty engagement program
 - Faculty engagement for 3 years, after pilot program. Faculty member has an ongoing mentorship program
- Gender Diversity
 - Collected data on gender diversity. Significant increase in women in leading roles since 2015. (2015 the year we had majority of women as ICRA organizers)
 - Nonflagship conferences have lower participation from women in leadership roles
 - Plans moving forward- release the full report by IROS with a summary for RAM article
 - All of the conferences could make progress

- Strategy for RAS Education Program

10) TAB Report Highlights and new initiatives (Maciejewski). The points discussed are:

- Educational collabs with technical committees
- Collabs with MAB for support for developing countries
- TAB establishes new TCs, TC triennial review, TC posters, conference surplus sharing, CEMRA projects (MAB), TEP (MAB), YP/TC events (MAB), Electronic Media presence (EPSB)
- TC structure, 44 TCs with 0 working groups (nonregional subgroups) - underutilized
- AdHoc committee on Education Strategy- tes create the educational content for this
 - Looked at potential for more collabs with IEEE societies- IEEE Education Society
- TAB will update bylaws and P&P
- New process for TC reviews
- Process for technical content curation
- How to engage more members in TCs?
- Encourage working groups across multiple TCs
- Partner w/ EAB & IEEE Education Society
- Process to identify most needed CEMRA projects- what are the topics that are of greatest need
- Faculty from developing countries- need to find out what are open/ solved research problems, due to not having access to publications

11) IAB Report. Highlights and new initiatives (Ambrose). The points discussed are:

- Standards Report
 - Standards group has become much more active, 6 active working groups
 - Activities at IROS, and virtual ones at ICRA 2020
 - Students participating in standardization efforts
 - Standards have been downloaded and purchased 2000+ times
- Delphi Study
 - Robotics2050.org, up and running
 - Modern version of a roadmap
 - More digestible to other industries that are not robotics experts
 - Many industries that are being disrupted by robotics and they can use the new website to help plan their policy development (ie. government)
- New Approaches- how to work w/ industrial sectors
 - Working w/ sister robotics associations. Collab options we are exploring. There is value in these collabs
 - Emerging sectors and value w/ working with them. Agricultural, construction, healthcare- we can work with these industries and their different associations
 - Thinking about having IAB subcommittees by sector. Start with big industries that will benefit from getting involved with RAS
 - Working with industry and different channels we have with communication
 - After COVID 19, how to work with these changes

12) Coffee Break (Fiorini).

13) EPSB Report (Wang). The points discussed are:

- Working on adding subtitles to videos
- Working on translation from Japanese subtitles to English
- Youtube channel has gained almost 1000 subscribers
- Resource Center contents have high quality videos

14) LRPC Report (Park). The points discussed are:

- Restructuring communities- need insights and ideas to achieve goals
- Be more responsive to younger members
- Establish a bigger presence at Las Vegas consumer electronics trade show
- Work with industry
- Get elected adcom reps to be more engaged with society members, role should be more than just oversight
- Send Frank any ideas or questions you may have

15) Award Committee Report (Kroeger) S. Tadokoro (not present).

16) Award Portfolio Discussion (Kroeger) The points discussed are:

- Mismatch between conference keywords and awards. We have a large number of papers in certain categories where we do not have awards
- Proposal to resolve the issue- decouple sponsoring from award topics. Create a sponsor pool instead of one sponsor award
- May replace categories and look @ popularity of awards
- If there is a category where we have a large amount of papers, maybe more than one award
- IEEE Foundation likes this model and would most likely use it for other societies as well.
- 4 tier levels, platinum -> bronze
- 4 discount levels based on how many years a sponsor signs up for
- Most likely implement this plan for ICRA 2022

17) SIGHT Report. Highlights and new initiatives (**Marques**) The points discussed are:

- Board- 12 members with gender and geographical balance
- Activities- 3 main types of activities: challenges/ competitions (humanitarian de-mining- Minesweepers); humanitarian projects; events
- 2020: Selected 7 projects out of 21 submissions
- Events and publications
- Special issue for robotics response to COVID 19 outbreak
- Do good robotics symposium

18) Motions (Fiorini)

19) MAB Motion (Amato) Student Activities Travel Support for co-Chairs to attend ICRA/IROS/CASE:
Motion Passed

Detailed text: To approve a budget of up to USD \$7,500 per year for three years, or a total of USD \$22,500 for 2021-2023, to support travel to IROS/ICRA/CASE for SAC Co-Chairs/Senior Chair according to AdCom reimbursement levels. Total budget requested: up to \$22,500 USD over three years (2021-2023).

20) MAB Motion (Amato) Free Student Memberships as prizes Student Activities Committee:
Motion Passed

Detailed text: To approve a budget of up to USD \$1,000 for free IEEE and/or IEEE RAS 1-year student membership prizes. Total budget requested: up to \$1,000 USD for 1 year (2021).

21) IAB Motion (Ambrose) Standards Activities Travel Support:
Motion Passed

Detailed text: IAB moves to support the members in standard defining activities to attend meetings of study groups and working groups in the period of 2021 to 2023 with travel grants of up to \$20K per year.

22) Award Committee Motion (Kroeger) Establishing IEEE RAS Student Branch Chapter of the Year Award:

Motion Passed

Detailed text: To move to propose establishing IEEE RAS Student Branch Chapter of the Year Award as a Society Award funded by the Society. One Student Branch Chapter in each geographic area is awarded (up to three awards in total), if a suitable awardee is identified. Each chapter receives \$1K USD for supporting their activities and a certificate at ICRA. Nomination: RAS MAB; Selection: RAS Award Committee Five years from 2021 to 2025

23) Award Committee Motion (Kroeger) ICRA/CASE NEW Best Paper Awards:

Detailed text: To move approve the continuation of IEEE CASE Healthcare Automation Award and IEEE ICRA Best Paper Award on Robot Mechanisms and Design for more four years from 2021 to 2024. RAS will explain the plan of the portfolio change to the sponsors, and suggest transition when the new portfolio starts. If the sponsor of one of each does not agree with the four-year sponsorship, the corresponding award will discontinue.

Motion 5: IEEE CASE Healthcare Automation Award

Motion Passed

Motion 6: IEEE ICRA Best Paper Award on Robot Mechanisms and Design

Motion Passed

24) SIGHT Motion (Marques) Humanitarian Project Support:

Motion Tabled

Detailed text: RAS-SIGHT requests a budget of up to \$40,000 per year for 3 years to enable RAS members to participate in and contribute to humanitarian activities of societal benefit across all regions of IEEE

25) Other/New Business (Fiorini) No New Business

26) Next Adcom Meeting (Fiorini): 30 October 2020 in Las Vegas, NV USA (IROS 2020 Venue

27) Meeting Adjourned (Fiorini): 12:15 pm EDT