



Minutes for SCITT Governing Board Meeting
December 7, 2023, 9:00 – 10:00 am
Zoom only, <https://csupueblo.zoom.us/j/6214223110>

Members:

Ms. Kari Gonzales (Chair), Ms. Ann Rajewski (Vice Chair)
Dr. Dave Lehmpuhl, Ms. Kat Papenbrock (absent), Ms. Lisa Staes (absent), Mr. Nick Hinrichsen, Mr. Ruben Pena, Ms. Sara Cassidy, Dr. Steve Cohn (alphabetically)

SCITT Director: Dr. Md Rashad Islam

Invited Guests: Mr. Michael McMaster, Dr. John Williamson (absent), Dr. Gail Mackin

- 1) Welcome – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam conducted the meeting together. Ms. Gonzales welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2) Approval of Meeting Minutes for 2023/08/15 – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
 - a. Ms. Gonzales asked if any comments or changes needed to be made to the August 15th meeting minutes.
 - b. There was none and all members motioned for approval for the minutes of the meeting.
- 3) Discussion/Approval of SCITT Bylaws – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
 - a. Ms. Gonzales asked for any amendments, questions, or concerns from any board members who did not participate in developing these bylaws.
 - b. Dr. Cohn asked regarding Article 2, second bullet point, “The board shall direct the spending of any state-funded money received by the institute” what about the other money? He believes this sentence could use more clarification.
 - c. Dr. Islam suggested adding “or unless directed by the funding agency” to the end of that sentence. This is because some money will come from the state, while some will come from external grants. When coming from external grants, it is usually well-specified by the agency in the grant proposal.

- d. Ms. Gonzales saw the point needed to amend the sentence. She believes the simpler option would be to take the word “state” out of the original sentence to say the “spending of any funding/money received by the institute.”
 - e. Dr. Cohn believed both amendment suggestions would be best.
 - f. Dr. Lehmpuhl liked Dr. Islam’s addition for the same reasons that it was suggested in the first place.
 - g. Mr. Pena wanted to include language that also isn’t so specific for grants because the institute could receive money from other means besides the state or grand funding, such as donations or bids.
 - h. Dr. Islam suggested removing “state-funded” from the sentence and then retaining his original suggestion of “unless directed by the funding agency” at the end of the sentence.
 - i. Board members agreed that it could leave it more open.
 - j. Next comment; Article 4, section 3. The word “or” should be replaced with “and”. Dr. Islam made this correction.
 - k. Next comment; using the term “workforce development” instead of simply “training”. Dr. Cohn clarifies that he is not suggesting eliminating the word “training”, but rather that “workforce development” is an important term and therefore, should appear in a few places within the document.
 - l. Dr. Islam added that “education, training, and research” (Article 2, bullet 3) comes from the State Bill directly and means workforce development. He asked if it should be changed at that location in the document.
 - m. Ms. Gonzales mentioned that it can easily be added with another comma in that location.
 - n. Ms. Rajewski agreed that it would be good to add because there is a focus on it in the transit industry in terms of EVs, new vehicles, and training maintenance staff. She believes it would be helpful for grant writing agencies to have the term included.
 - o. Dr. Islam added “workforce development” at the beginning of the three listed and then proceeded to add them to the other two locations in the document where “training” is mentioned.
 - p. Dr. Cohn made a motion to accept the draft bylaws as edited today. Mr. Pena seconded, and the rest of the members agreed with the motion.
- 4) Electing the Chair and Vice Chair – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
- a. Now that the bylaws got approved, it was the time to select the Chair and Vice Chair.
 - b. Ms. Gonzales would be happy to continue as Chair, but more than willing to allow any other board members to step up.
 - c. Dr. Lehmpuhl believed he would be a conflict of interest as a Chair, so he is taking his name out of any consideration.
 - d. Kari Gonzales was voted unanimously in favor as the Board’s Chair for the next term. The motion carries.

- e. Ms. Rajewski offered to help as Vice Chair, though is willing to step aside if someone with more experience wants to do it.
 - f. Ann Rajewski was voted unanimously in favor as the Board's Vice Chair for the next term. The motion carries.
- 5) General Update of the SCITT Operational Plan – Dr. Islam (15 minutes)
- a. Dr. Islam quickly reviewed the document and then asked for any questions on it.
 - b. Dr. Lehmpuhl asked to include the student research component in the operational plan.
 - c. Dr. Islam inserted “and performing research in” in the mission (section B under I. Governance, Staffing, and Operations).
 - d. Ms. Gonzales asked about the earning revenue and completing deliverables on some projects that are listed.
 - e. Dr. Islam answered by informing that currently, the only revenue source is the external grant. It's less about revenue and more about the research activity and how it contributes to the community. In the next step, he would like to receive some state funding if that is possible.
 - f. Ms. Gonzales asked, 1. What are the deliverables that the university is responsible for? And 2. How is the work getting done?
 - g. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Islam explained that for one of the examples, the university will provide two conferences/workshops on climate resiliency on railway infrastructure as a deliverable for one of these grants (SCITT-AY-2023 Governing Board – PowerPoint, slide 12).
 - h. Ms. Gonzales asked if CSU Pueblo was responsible for all the planning and execution of those workshops. Does the university have the resources for them?
 - i. Dr. Islam answered yes to both questions. Gail Mackin's office is going to assist in these conferences/workshops until Dr. Islam gets the funding for more staffing.
 - j. Ms. Gonzales asked about the 2nd funded research regarding teaching students about railways, how was this being accomplished when the university doesn't have any railroad experts?
 - k. Dr. Islam responded that the university had a program in the past, and he wants to start this program again. Regarding faculty, there has been an offer made to a post-doctoral researcher with a background in railway who will teach these classes. This individual accepted the offer and is just waiting on their visa. Dr. Islam himself is also very confident in teaching railway basics.
 - l. Ms. Gonzales would like to know how that college-level curriculum will be translated into high school level and lower educational opportunities.
 - m. Dr. Islam answered this by explaining that they had a middle school level curriculum previously. The plan for these courses to be more about hands-on activities and general railway engineering knowledge. The curriculum is still

in development. The overall goal with these is to grow interest in younger students for railway engineering. In high school, there are already some classes they can take for railway engineering. The TENG 140 class proposed would be geared towards them since it is a basic and entry level course.

- n. Ms. Cassidy also had a question regarding middle, high school, and community college programs and coordination. Seeing some of the District 60 MAGNET schools having some programs that are similar, she wonders if there are any possibilities for using some of the pathways that already exist and to layer in some of this newly proposed curriculum.
- o. Dr. Islam agreed that it would be helpful to coordinate with an existing facility.
- p. Ms. Mackin is aware of university programs and personnel that would be wonderful to collaborate with on this, including Dr. Margie Massey who has major connections within the greater Pueblo area. Resources are available on campus and can be utilized.
- q. Regarding the grant, Ms. Gonzales asked if a plan was already there and the grant was just for execution.
- r. Dr. Islam informed that the grant is for both the plan and execution of that plan. So, the curriculum still needs to be developed and then taught to the students. The high school coordinator of the university is also a part of this program and will assist in reaching the middle and high school students.
- s. Ms. Gonzales wanted, for these funded grants and future ones, the information regarding expectations and deliverables to be made available and stated more clearly so that everyone is on the same page about what is being done.
- t. Dr. Cohn had been working with another group with CU Boulder that provides internships for high school students and wonders if he should connect SCITT with them.
- u. Dr. Islam believed that would be very helpful.
- v. Mr. Pena also offered to assist Dr. Cohn with that as well, since SCITT is somewhat limited to the Southern Colorado Area.
- w. Dr. Cohn wanted to know if Dr. Islam thinks there is any limitation for research projects in the future if there are a lot of ambitious projects that require a lot of funding that require a 20-25% match from something outside.
- x. Dr. Islam agreed that matching can be very difficult. Some matches are from the facility. Some kind of external or local help to make matches can be very helpful.
- y. Mr. Pena explained that some grants don't require a match, however a lot of them do usually with an average of 20%.
- z. Ms. Gonzales asked if the match values listed for the two funded projects that have already been discussed are confirmed or if Dr. Islam is looking for people to help with that match.

- aa. Dr. Islam informed that before the proposal is submitted, he needs the permission from the university on the match. So, they do not yet have the cash for funded research on railway workforce development.
 - bb. Dr. Lehmpuhl added that before it is allowed to be submitted, they must identify the source of the matching funds. For grants that are already awarded, those have been identified when the proposal was submitted. He also asked Dr. Islam to send out the executive summaries of the two proposals being discussed, and the ones that are currently pending, to the Board.
 - cc. Ms. Gonzales did not want future projects to be limited by a match and wanted Board members to be willing to reach out within their networks to assist in meeting matches if the issue arises.
- 6) Update on Activities performed in FY 2023 – Dr. Islam
- a. Dr. Islam walked through the presentation (SCITT-AY-2023 Governing Board – PowerPoint) to discuss the activities.
 - b. The university approved a post-doctoral researcher for the next two years, which Dr. Islam is already in the process of hiring.
 - c. Research funding already which was previously discussed in this meeting; 1. Climate Resiliency study on Transportation Infrastructure from Federal Railroads Administration. 2. Railway Workforce Development from Federal Railroads Administration. 3. Seat Belt Monitoring Study at Colorado Port of Entries from Colorado State Patrol. 4. Wildlife Collision Study at Raton Pass at New Mexico Border from CDOT.
 - d. Pending funding projects include 1. Pilot of a Rail Camp for College Students from Federal Railroads Administration. 2. Region 8 Center for Safe, Equitable, and Transformational Transportation from USDOT. 3. Colorado with Hydrogen Refueling Infrastructure on the I-25 Corridor from USDOT.
 - e. Four proposed courses at the university for academics. These are currently a faculty center discussion and will hopefully be approved by next week. If approved, these courses would be offered in Fall 2024. Not a degree or certificate, just the courses.
 - f. Dr. Islam publicized the SCITT at the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Southern Colorado Branch Meeting in July of 2022 and to Colorado Asphalt Pavement Association in the same month.
 - g. The SCITT in collaboration with School of Engineering hosted the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) joint meeting at CSU Pueblo in March 2023.
 - h. Dr. Islam created the website and will continue to update.
- 7) Update on Activities to be performed in FY 2024 – Dr. Islam
- a. Regarding academics, proposals for certificates/Minor in Transportation Engineering, MS in Transportation Engineering, MBA in Transportation

Management. These programs must be approved through a long list of different boards and councils. It will take 6-8 months. The academic proposals will be Dr. Islam's primary focus next year.

- b. For research, the current research will continue, and the institute will try to submit more proposals to NSF, FRA, the State of Colorado, Pueblo County, and others.
 - c. SCITT will host a conference at the CSU Pueblo campus on October 24th, 2024 as part of the CRISI grant.
- 8) Next Meeting Schedule – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
- a. The Board should meet at least once a year per the bylaws.
 - b. If anything else comes up, Ms. Gonzales will reach out to Board members for any meeting times or information.
- 9) Action Items – Ms. Gonzales and Dr. Islam
- a. Dr. Islam would post the meeting minutes and the bylaws on the website.
 - b. Dr. Islam would send a detailed summary of the proposals to the Board members, both funded and pending.
- 10) Public Comments
- a. No public comments were made during this meeting.