

Minutes for the ITC-Research Computing Management Meeting
July 24, 2006 at 10:30AM
(2015 Ivy Rd, 2nd floor Conference Room)

Members: Alice, Hamp, Jim, Terry, Tim S., Tom S., Tim T.

Attending: Alice, Jim, Terry, Tim S., Tom S., Tim T.

Chair: Tim T.

Recorder: Alice Howard

(Click to review the original [agenda from this meeting](#) on July 24, 2006)

I. Corrections to [minutes from last Management team meeting on May 22, 2006](#)? No.

For consideration and information – [minutes from last standing committee meeting on June 26, 2006](#) .

II. Ongoing Discussion Topics:

- “Condo” Cluster #2 – aka Dogwood:
 - Update on configuration and rollout: still waiting on some cables and the next version of ROCKS – hoping they both come this week. Looks like dogwood could be ready by early August.
 - Katherine and Ed have a “configuration” list for dogwood TimT will email to the group in order to make sure we all know what’s going on dogwood and reduce omissions and surprises.
 - Update on SEAS faculty that wanted nodes or Infiniband cluster? Jim reported that Mitch has the pricing and now the researchers are deciding – so the ball is in their court now.
- Cedar Cluster: any problems/issues? (schedule of OS update will be based on dogwood rollout)
 - Hope to schedule the OS update before school starts.
 - Avaki gateway setup – still waiting on new software version release.
 - Could/should we move cedar to a 64-bit cluster? Have had some requests. Could start testing on a mini 64-bit cluster in the fall – but there is a lot of work to do. Decided to wait and discuss this at next month’s meeting.
- Aspen & Birch Clusters: (schedule of OS update to Birch ONLY in early August will be based on dogwood rollout)
 - Aspen can be retired once Dogwood is up – definitely during the fall semester, so could set a deadline of Thanksgiving. Aspen users should be able to move to dogwood directly – or recompile and then be ready to run on dogwood.
- Oak Cluster: TimT will check with Hamp about whether or not the round-robin login got enabled on July 5.
- Teak Cluster: Any issues or concerns?
 - Lester Andrews still asking Hamp about Gaussian/G03 for Linux – but we would need to sign a new agreement in order to get the Linux version.
- Andrew Grimshaw’s request for Linux front-end to campus grid project – waiting on next version of AVAKI which has not been rewritten yet.
 - However Marty Humphrey has almost finished a grid Windows client that does direct file transfers and Katherine is experimenting with it. Hope to bring up dogwood supporting Globus from the start for Marty’s client.
- Proposal for Linux cluster support as ‘for-fee’ service. At December meeting, Hamp said he’d translate current hourly Unix support rates into table/information showing cost for supporting cluster of X size for Y years.
 - TimT will check with Hamp.
- MPI Link Checker?
 - Hamp sent costs, seems too expensive and not especially necessary unless we’re getting Infiniband cluster.
- Update on transition from clear text passwords to Eservices for Unix logins/connections to blue.unix, HSM, & Longtmp?
 - This transition will involve a major user education issue – especially for blue.unix users.
 - No timeline for this project yet – it has to wait until the password synchronization web site is up.

- (Note: the ITC Transitions Group is handling the removal of telnet and ftp access to blue.unix.)
- Mitch Rosen's IT – Infrastructure Supporting Research Task Force.
(<https://www1.seas.virginia.edu/itrtrtf>). (Maillist is itrtrtf@virginia.edu) Final draft is circulating for input. Katherine is doing the final editing. Ed did most of the appendices that detail comparisons to other institutions.
 - Mitch sent an update about our participation in ORNL's response to NSF RFP for next generation/iteration of Supercomputing Centers: the Oak Ridge Associated Universities core universities: U Tennessee, Duke, Florida State, Georgia Tech, NC State, U. Va., Vanderbilt and Virginia Tech; and others including U Oklahoma and Rice have agreed to team with Oak Ridge National Lab on a grant submission for NSF's Petascale supercomputer program. It is listed as one award of \$200 million dollars over a four year period, beginning in 2010. The preliminary proposal is due at NSF September 8. We are in touch with the consortium schools, discussing potential roles and contributions from the participating universities. He will update us further as more details emerge.
 - "Priority" access for participants in condo clusters: Katherine's proposal for PBS "Service Units."
 - There was some discussion about what problem we are trying to solve. In general condo users do not want their jobs to wait – but rather to run immediately – and confirm that their purchase of nodes has given them an advantage, or higher priority, etc.
 - Katherine proposes a model of 2-3 queues where condo purchasers would have access to a higher priority/fast queue (and maybe even an express queue).
 - Another model would be to actually reserve nodes for condo purchasers – even if this meant that machines might be idle sometimes.
 - TimT will talk with existing condo purchasers to see how they respond to the "queue model" vs. the "own your own nodes" model. We will also contact some schools with successful condo cluster programs and see if we can learn anything from their models and experience.
 - Update on CSS Research Computing support staff and services relocating to Brown Science & Engineering Library and Alderman Library fourth floor in summer 2006.
 - Katherine and Ed moved to Brown on 7/17. Called the "Research Computing Lab" in Brown Library. Will be fully functional by the start of classes, 8/23. RCSC secondary number (243-8799) moves to Research Computing Lab in Brown Library.
 - Nancy and rest of RCSC will move to Alderman over 8/7-8/9; this will mark move of rest of the Research Computing Support Center out of Wilson. Space in Alderman called the "Scholars' Lab." The main phone number (243-8800) is moving to Scholars' Lab; staff phone numbers stay the same.
 - Kathy remaining in Wilson until office space in Alderman ready, hopefully mid-October. It's adjacent to Scholars' Lab in former ILL offices.
 - Tim's office remains in Wilson.

III. New Business

- Decided to continue these meetings monthly (as needed) and drop the "all staff" alternating monthly meetings – ask Robin, Mark, Joe Simard, and maybe Steve to join this management meeting – and ask staff to attend this meeting as topics warrant.

Next Scheduled Meeting of ITC Rescomp Management team: Monday, August 28, 2006, 10:30 AM in ITC-2015 Ivy Road, Room #220.

Go to: [ITC Research Computing Standing Committee Home Page](#)

