

Robotics and Automation Council  
Meeting Minutes: 4/25/88

Approved with minor typo corrections  
December 10, 1988

Robotics and Automation Council Meeting Minutes  
Franklin Plaza Hotel, Philadelphia, PA  
April 25, 1988

1. The meeting was called to order by President Ho at 1:04 pm.

2. LIST OF ATTENDEES

Y. C. Ho, President  
A. K. Bejczy, Past President  
G. N. Saridis, Founding President  
A. C. Sanderson, Vice President  
G. Lee, Secretary  
R. D. Klafter, Treasurer  
G. A. Bekey, Editor of Journal  
R. B. Kelley, Chairman, Publications Committee  
R. W. Brockett, Chairman, Meetings Committee  
L. S. Haynes, Chairman, Standards Committee  
A. A. Desrochers, Chairman, Education Committee  
W. E. Snyder, Editor of Newsletter  
T. Pavlidis, 1988 Conference Chairman  
V. J. Lumelsky, Chairman, Robot Motion & Path Planning  
T. J. Tarn, Chairman, Robot Dynamics & Control  
R. Tsai, Chairman, Computer Vision  
W. Trybula, Chairman, Manufacturing Automation  
T. Fukuda, Chairman, International Committee  
P. Khosla, Circuits and Systems  
R. J. P. de Figueiredo, Circuits and Systems  
W. E. L. Grimson, Computer  
J. Baillieul, Control Systems  
A. J. Koivo, Control Systems  
A. Abramovich, Industrial Electronics  
G.V.S. Raju, Systems, Man and Cybernetics  
W. A. Gruver, Systems, Man and Cybernetics  
D. G. Raheja, Reliability  
Alex Pai, Local Arrangement, 1989 Conference  
Lou Paul, Local Arrangement, 1988 Conference  
John Hollerbach, Program Chairman, 1989 Conference

John Jarvis, Guest

3. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda was unanimously adopted.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the R & A AdCom meeting held on November 3, 1987 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Cambridge, MA, were unanimously approved.

5. INTRODUCTION OF NEW OFFICERS AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Ho asked everyone in the meeting to introduce himself.

6. REPORT ON TRANSITION OF THE COUNCIL TO SOCIETY STATUS

6.1 Ho reported that he attended the IEEE Administration Meeting on February 16, 1988 and our request to change from the Council to Society was approved effective January 1, 1989. He requested the Council members to approve the R & A Society Constitution. He also noted that it is important not to modify any field of interests, otherwise we need to go through approval from the IEEE TAB.

6.2 Question was raised about opposition from other societies. Ho indicated specifically two societies against our request: Computer and Reliability Societies. Ho and Bejczy, RAC immediate past president, talked jointly to the Computer Society representative(s). The Computer Society requested more cooperation such as jointly sponsored conferences with the RAC. At the end, the Computer Society did not cast Yes or No vote. The Reliability Society objected to our request due to their philosophical view. They felt the IEEE has too many societies.

6.3 Bekey, editor of Journal, indicated that there will be a joint issue with the Computer Society in Software Engineering as a further indication of our willingness to cooperate with the Computer Society. Since the IEEE does not allow 2 issues in different transactions/journal to have the same contents, the JRA will distribute the joint issue to the Software Engineering subscribers as a "bonus." Ho also indicated that the Control Society also cooperated with the RAC by sending an issue of their Control Magazine to the subscribers of the JRA as a bonus.

6.4 Ho indicated that he will send a letter to all the subscribers (i.e., our current members) of the JRA informing them that their continued subscriptions will entitle them to become chartered members of the Robotics and Automation Society.

- 6.5 Ho, Bejczy, and Sanderson, vice president of RAC, will coordinate to nominate a slate of 25 candidates for the 18 AdCom positions. Current members (i.e., continued subscribers of the JRA) will vote in a mail ballot this fall. The elected 18 AdCom members will be randomly selected to serve for one-year, two-year, or three-year terms.

## 7. TREASURER'S REPORT

Klafter reported that the RAC is still in good financial shape. Net surplus at the end of 1987 is about \$22,000 with an accumulative net worth of about \$209,000. Major expenses for 1988 are: the Journal and the R & A Conference. Expected income this year are:

- (a) Profit from the 1988 R & A Conference.
- (b) \$22,000 from voluntary page charges (VPC) for the Journal. The actual total VPC income for 1987 was only \$900 - \$1,100 as reported by the IEEE Headquarters. Bekey indicated his estimated figure was \$1,400. Discussions continued on pros and cons of mandatory page charge for the Journal. Klafter also indicated a budgeted six-fold increase in the Newsletter expense (for 1988) and his underestimation of the AdCom expense.

## 8. PUBLICATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Kelley, the Committee Chairman, indicated the RAC publishes a Journal, Conference Proceedings, and Newsletter. The 1988 Conference has a 3-volume proceedings (one volume per day). Some members suggested mail service for mailing proceedings home.

### Journal

- 8.1 Bekey, continued from previous discussions, solicited suggestions from the RAC about the policy of page charges. Discussions were focused on difficulty of collecting, discrimination against academia, charge more on membership fee, etc. Finally the RAC decided to let Klafter and Bekey keep a watchful eye on the expenses of the Journal.
- 8.2 Bekey reported that Wolovich resigned from his associate editor (theory) and will be replaced by J.Y.S. Luh. Also Stephanou, past secretary, will be the book review editor. Currently the acceptance rate of the Journal is about 50%. This will be tightened up. The backlog is running at about one year and several special issues are in progress.

### Newsletter

- 8.3 Snyder, the Newsletter editor, reported that a special issue was in with a circulation of 7,000. Overseas mailing was the most expensive item in getting the special issue out. Snyder also raised the question about advertisement in the Newsletter. After some discussion, a motion (Walter, Khosla) to permit advertisement in the Newsletter was approved unanimously. Snyder also requested permission to switch from IEEE printing to non-IEEE printing. Although the costs are comparable, he cited that it is easier for him to coordinate with local companies. The RAC recommended that he uses his own judgement. Later discussions were focused on the status of changing the Newsletter to Magazine. It was recommended that we stay with the Newsletter for another year before changing to the Magazine. Also there were comments on trade-off between color printing versus simple printing with more pages.

## 9. MEETINGS COMMITTEE REPORT

### 1988 Conference

- 9.1 Kelley, the 1988 Conference Program Chairman, reported that the tutorials were very successful and even the Sunday Workshop had over 100 attendees. Kelley also commented on Phillips prize for student paper. The prize carries a \$1,000 award and is an open-end commitment from North American Phillips Corp. The agreement was established between Phillips Corp. and the R & A Conference. Kelley indicated a best student paper was selected among 42 papers. For other regular papers, there is a K.S. Fu best paper award and a best presentation award for the Conference. Saridis, Awards Committee Chairman, will have a subcommittee to decide these awards.
- 9.2 Paul, local arrangement of 1988 Conference, reported that two students per conference room would be helping speakers and session chairmen. These student helpers were from Temple University, Drexel University, and University of Pennsylvania. Only book exhibitions were solicited and each booth paid \$750 cash.

### 1989 Conference

- 9.3 Bekey, Conference Chairman of 1989 Conference, reported that the main theme of the Conference is Intelligent Robot Systems. The Conference will be held in the second week of May because of a drop of hotel rate beginning that week. The Conference projected a surplus of \$2,000. The registration fee will be \$180 per person with an estimated 650 attendees. Bekey also solicited suggestions for handling audio visual equipment in the Conference because they are expensive and usually not fully utilized. There will be no author breakfast. Reasons for not having author breakfast are: (a) the Conference pays for a fixed number of persons in advance, (b) the hotel charges 18% service charge. It was suggested that they may be able to get help from local groups to help their service.

### 1990 Conference

- 9.4 Koivo, the 1990 Conference Program Chairman, reported that the Conference will be held in Hyatt Regency, Cincinnati, Ohio. The date will be decided later. He suggested that it will be helpful to future Program Chairmen if past Program Chairmen can contribute their experience to a "Handbook for Program Chairman."

### Future Conferences

- 9.5 A proposal from University of California - Davis to sponsor the 1991 Conference in Sacramento, California has been received. Steve Hsia, a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, gave a brief introduction to Sacramento and indicated that he will do his best to make the Conference a success.
- 9.6 Although the proposal from UC-Davis was perceived by many as a good proposal, Brockett, Meetings Committee Chairman, indicated that there is a need to formalize the mechanism of submitting the proposal. Discussions then focused on geographic location - West, Midwest, East, etc. and maybe foreign countries. It was later decided that the Conference site for the 1991 Conference will be decided at the December meeting in Austin, Texas. A motion (de Figueiredo, Khosla) was unanimously approved to allow the Meetings Committee Chairman to form a subcommittee to come up with the framework of proposal.

### Utah Microrobot Meeting

- 9.7 The first meeting was held in Hyannis last November and the second meeting will be held in Utah in February 1989. The Meeting requested \$15,000 from the RAC for co-sponsorship. Jarvis indicated it was a good meeting last time and the RAC profited \$5,000 from it. A motion (Trybula, Brockett) - to allocate \$10,000 advance money (carry forward from last meeting plus advance) and no money for students and presenters except keynote speakers was approved unanimously. An amendment was also passed to authorize Ho and Brockett to negotiate it.

### Neural Network Meeting

- 9.8 Snyder indicated that the Neural Network Conference Committee requested co-sponsorship from the RAC. A motion (Bekey, Koivo) was approved to allow the RAC to authorize an observer to attend the Meeting and express the sense of the Council to join the Committee once the society is formed (with 24 for and 2 opposed votes). Snyder volunteered to go to the meeting as an observer.

### Other Meetings

- 9.9 Brockett, the Meetings Committee Chairman, reported that several associations requested cooperation with the RAC in their meetings/conferences. These do not require any financial commitment from the Council. All requests were approved unanimously except SPIE (Society of Photo-optical Instrumentation Engineers) - Robotics for Space Station. Several negative comments about SPIE were raised by the AdCom concerning their practices, a large sum of registration fee, and usually use the RAC name before requesting permission. A motion (Baillieul) was seconded and approved (9 for, 4 against) to authorize Brockett and Ho to write a letter to the SPIE not to cooperate in their meeting.

## 10. OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 Ho appointed Khosla as a representative to attend PACE (Professional Activity Council for Engineers) in September.
- 10.2 Request for donation to the IEEE Philadelphia Student Section was denied because they did not help out the 1988 Conference.
- 10.3 Haynes, Standards Committee Chairman, reported that no people working on robot standard and Robotics Institute of America (RIA) is working on robot standards for robot industry.
- 10.4 The Committee on Utah Microrobot Meeting in Hyannis requested funds to print 700 copies of the proceedings at \$5.00 each. A motion (Trybula, Brockett) was approved unanimously to authorize the request.
- 10.5 There were some discussions on increasing the membership fee to cover the loss revenue from page charges. It was decided to postpone such decision to the December meeting.
- 10.6 Brockett indicated there is a need to formalize proposal/letter to the Meetings Committee Chair for requesting cooperation from the RAC.
- 10.7 A motion (Tsai, Klafter) for best paper awards without prize money be made in different areas according to technical committees was tabled (Baillieul, Lumelsky).
- 10.8 Ho suggested that next RAC meeting be held in Austin, Texas on December 6, 1988 (the Tuesday before Conference on Decision and Control). Another suggestion was to move the meeting to the Saturday after the CDC to take advantage of the over-a-Saturday-night discount airfare. The "tail" won by one vote.
- 10.9 Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.
- 10.10 Next Meeting: Saturday, December 10, 1988 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Austin, Texas, 9:00 am - 2:30 pm, at the call of the President.