Draft Minutes of X3J14 Meeting #5

ANS Forth Technical Committee
August 10-13, 1988, Portland, Oregon

Call to Order

Ms. Rather welcomed the X3J14 Technical Committee (TC) and congratulated them on their first year anniversary. She thanked Mr. Betts for hosting this meeting and introduced Mr. Steven Egbert, Mr. Bett's alternate. There were 14 voting members at this meeting. The attendance list for this meeting is document X3J14/88-018.

The minutes of X3J14 Meeting #4 were approved.

Action Item Review of Meeting #4

1. Technical comments will be numbered consecutively from TC-001.
   Technical comments will be added to the proposal log.

2. Mr. Rash is squared away for the November meeting, October 26-29, 1988.

3. The Logistics Committee has developed a checklist, which was used for this meeting.

4. CBEMA has edited and distributed the press release written by Ms. Rather.

5. Ms. Rather has written to Mr. Shifrin advising him that he has been dropped from voting membership.

6. Ms. Rather has checked with CBEMA on Mr. Shaw's status, which continues to be that of a non-voting member. Ms. Rather reminded the members that two consecutive meetings must be attended before voting membership is granted.

7. BASIS 4 was sent; BASIS 4N ("Brave New BASIS" or "BNB") was sent out for letter ballot and passed.

8. Ms. Rather suggested the unusual thickness of the June 21 mailing delayed its delivery to some members. There is a lot of duplication with previous mailings because of amended proposals. In addition, some members didn't attend the last meeting and needed all proposals. A motion that proposals submitted and amended at meetings be sent only to those not in attendance, unless specifically requested, was passed 11-1-1. Mr. Craymer specifically requested to receive all proposals.

9. Mr. Dickens called CBEMA, and says that CBEMA prefers to distribute BASIS for us. Kinko's was investigated, and turned out to be unsuitable. Ms. Rather pointed out that we have a competent bulk reproducer now. She noted that we have already fulfilled several requests and can continue to do so. We have also publicized that people can write to the Forth Vendors Group for copies. It is also possible for the Forth Interest Group to buy a dozen copies and sell them at meetings.

Letter Ballot #3

Letter ballot #3 (approving BASIS 4N) passed 19-2-1. Both "no" votes were responded to in letters.

Logistics Subcommittee Report

Mr. Betts was requested to plan the 1989 meeting schedule and to report at the end of this meeting. Ms. Rather reviewed the Technical Committee (TC) progress to date and guessed that we will have a DPAns in 1989. At the last meeting we considered floating-point and other issues, which may have to be separate standards.

Documentation Subcommittee Report

Mr. Dickens apologized for sending BASIS 4N out too soon, and with too many technical changes. BASIS 4N has a few generic changes: a variable name refers to its contents. "Execution token" means the token that ' ("tick") returns for **EXECUTE** to use. Page 8 defines several other new terms. On Page 20 the "D" (defining word) attribute has been added to the set of attributes like "I" and "C." On Page 26, magic words like "parse" have been factored out and defined elsewhere. Response to LB-003 pointed out some errors, which have been corrected. Change bars added to BASIS will show how each proposal has affected the BASIS.

Mr. Dickens has been talking to the SC22 TAG representative, who recommended that if we wish any international (ISO) involvement, we should get started right now. There is about one year delay for any international feedback. Mr. Plauger (the ISO representative for the C committee) recommends we study rules on synchronization. 2-4 weeks/year are required in volunteer time for ISO representation.

Mr. Dickens distributed copies of the ISO Guidelines for the Preparation of Programming Language Standards and noted that the guidelines suggest that there cannot be optional features in the language. There was a great deal of discussion on this issue. It was noted that COBOL has proper superset layers and that the C standard has libraries which are not necessarily layered. Mr. Dickens will continue to investigate this issue.

Comments about the concepts section should go to Mr. Rash. A Table of Contents should be added to the BASIS.

Research Subcommittee

The Research Subcommittee has not been active since Mr. Kelly resigned as the chair. Mr. Nemeth volunteered to be the new chair at the last meeting, but was unable to attend this meeting. A call was made for new volunteers.

Technical Subcommittee Report

Mr. Bailey reported that GENIE activity is still low, but that two new participants have recently joined. Nevertheless, several concrete suggestions appeared there. There was some confusion since all proposals are not posted there. It was suggested that a proposal form and the current BASIS might be put in the GENIE library, but was decided that this would be too unwieldy. The technical proposal log with a brief comment for each proposal might be posted there, as a well as a notice on where to get the current BASIS. A motion that the TC should designate someone to respond to the concerns of GENIE (write them a letter) and should select someone to be a liaison was passed on voice vote. Ms. Rather volunteered to undertake this at Forth, Inc. until she could find a volunteer on GENIE.

There were 30 old proposals still unresolved and 36 new ones, 17 of which were from outside the TC. Discussion followed on who would write letters to respond to passed or failed proposals submitted from outside the TC. It was decided that each letter should go on someones action item list and that the final disposition of a proposal is not complete until the letter writer is designated.

Other Business

Mr. Dickens wrote a memo to remind us that our goal was to codify existing practice and that too many additions to BASIS could delay it. There was discussion on what might be excluded. Ms. Rather suggested we mount directed efforts on issues we have singled out, such as Mr. Baden has done with loops. Or we might schedule certain issues for certain meetings. Mr. Dickens suggested we might spend an entire meeting just to resolve the problems in BASIS.

Mr. Baden suggested that to encourage field trials by interested persons, the TC should consider a technical proposal disposition of "passed pending field trials." There was much discussion as to whether the TSC should ever recommend such a proposal to the TC. Ms. Rather moved that the TSC give the TC one of three recommendations: pass, fail, or field test; the TC would have four reactions: pass, fail, postpone and recommend for field testing, or return to TSC. This motion passed, was reconsidered, and ultimately failed.

Mr. Dickens moved to add a section to BASIS to specify experimental issues. Other members noted that this would be an implicit endorsement. Mr. Dickens withdrew the motion.

Mr. Rash then moved to commission a working group to figure out a mechanism to solicit public input on proposals. Mr. Fishman pointed out that this should be the responsibility of the Research Subcommittee. The motion failed.

Mr. Baden moved that the TSC should make sure that each proposal has exquisite prose and noted that the Documentation Subcommittee shouldn't be making changes and that it shouldn't have to. There was discussion on the extent that prose should be clarified, and what could be left to the Documentation Subcommittee. Ms. Rather suggested that all proposals should be of the form "change xxx to yyy." Mr. Sanderson responded that there's no substitute for reading the wording after it goes into the BASIS. Mr. Baden's motion failed for lack of a second.

Ms. Rather urged concerned members to write a letter to Mr. Moore, who left suddenly during the meeting, urging him to return.

Action on Technical Proposals

TP Number	Name	Status
TP-007	Purpose of Standard	withdrawn by author.
TP-015	Files	failed 12-1-1. MT
TP-018	Basic floating-point	withdrawn by author.
TP-027	Data Size Specification	withdrawn by author.
TP-038	Action of DO	failed 12-0-2. TP-039
TP-039	Rel. 1K Block Buffer	failed 0-12-0. AK
TP-043	Host OS file type spec	failed 0-11-1. RD
TP-046A	CELL in 4.2.1 doc require	passed 14-0-0.
TP-059	Input Stream	failed 12-1-1.
TP-060A	FOR ... NEXT loop	passed 12-0-0.
TP-068	Various	withdrawn as a comment.
TP-073	Tradeoffs	withdrawn by author.
TP-080	Smart COMPILE	failed 11-1-2.
TP-091A	Additional Double Numbers	passed 13-0-1.
TP-093	Operating System Interface	failed 12-0-2. TD
TP-094	Elimination of Branching	failed 12-0-2. TD
TP-095	Making All Loop Words	failed 12-0-2. TD
TP-096	Classes instead of Vocabs	failed 12-0-2. TD
TP-097	Forward Referencing	failed 12-0-2. TD
TP-098	Integer Division	failed 12-0-2. TD

TP Number	Name	Status	
TP-099	Cell Size	returned to author.	TD
TP-100	File Manipulation	failed 12-0-2.	MT
TP-103	DO ... LOOP Proposal	failed 12-0-2.	WB
TP-105	Postpone Compilation ...	failed 12-0-2.	DS
TP-106	Compatibility Packages	failed 12-0-2.	GB
TP-108A	Specifying Usage of PAD	passed 12-2-0.	
TP-111	Updating BLOCKs	failed 0-12-0.	GB
TP-112	Numeric Keyboard Input	failed 12-1-1.	ER
TP-113	Floating-point extension	failed 0-11-1.	MT
TP-114A	CHAR	passed 11-2-1.	
TP-115A	String literal	passed 13-1-0.	
TP-120A	Corrections to BASIS 4N	passed 13-1-0.	
TP-121	NEXT	failed 0-12-0.	GB
TP-122A	"Error" amendment to TP-064	passed 11-0-1.	MT
TP-123	"Name" amendment to TP-064A	failed 0-12-0.	AK
TP-124	"Seek" amendment to TP-064A	failed 0-12-0.	
TP-126A	Text File Access extension	passed 11-0-1.	
TP-127A	Comparison operators	passed 10-4-0.	MT
TP-128	Ed changes to BASIS 4N	withdrawn by author.	
TP-129A	Excoriated extension set	passed 14-0-0.	
TP-130	Delete SP@	passed 11-0-1.	
TP-131	Identify officers in BASIS	passed 13-0-0.	
TP-132	Misc. changes to BASIS	passed 13-0-0.	
TP-133A	Misc. changes to BASIS	passed 11-1-1.	
TP-134A	Minimum Maxima	passed 8-4-2.	
TP-135	Syntax specification	failed 3-10-1.	
TP-136A	Error specification	passed 11-2-1.	
TP-137	Readability of BASIS	passed 11-2-0.	
TP-138	Restore def of division	passed 13-0-0.	
TP-139	Pronouncing multiply ops	passed 12-2-0.	
TP-140	Revised EXPECT	withdrawn by author.	
TP-141	Use of #TIB	passed 12-1-1.	
TP-142	LIT	failed 12-1-1.	
TP-144A	Make BLOCK optional	passed 12-1-1.	
TP-146A	Move all pair words	passed 9-2-1.	
TP-147	Floating-point extensions	passed 11-0-1.	
TP-149	Input stream	withdrawn by author.	
TP-150	WORD	withdrawn by author.	
TP-151	EVAL	passed 10-0-2.	
TP-152A	Return stack contents	passed 11-0-1.	
TP-154	Make double-number words ...	withdrawn by author.	
TP-155A	Loop limit access	passed 10-0-2.	
TP-156	Loop index optimization	failed 12-1-1.	
TP-157A	Define current input stream	passed 9-2-1.	
TP-158	Redefine parse	passed 12-0-0.	
TP-159A	Rewrite WORD definition	passed 11-0-1.	
TP-160A	Revised description of EXPECT	passed 12-0-0.	

TP Number	Name	Status
TP-161	Avoiding unnecessary trouble	passed 11-0-1.
TP-162A	Glitches in 5.3.2.1	passed 12-0-0.
TP-163	Describing text processing	withdrawn by author.
TP-164	Division type selection	withdrawn by author.
TP-165	Complement to PICK	failed 0-11-1.
TP-167	File access word names II	failed 0-11-1.
TP-168	STATE is not a variable	failed 12-1-1.

Technical Proposal Notes

1. The group of proposals by Mr. Keane TP-050, 051, 056 are dealt with in the revised BASIS and are to be withdrawn by the author at some point.

2. TP-148 (Modify file access words) was returned to the TSC 8-4-0.

3. All proposal respondent letters should be sent in draft form to Mr. Tracy to be printed on official stationery.

ISO Process

Mr. Dickens described the ISO process in some further detail. Ms. Rather volunteered to do the initial paperwork. She suggested that all vendors and the FIG might enlist their European representatives. All immediate steps were organized into a motion in the form of a list of action items. The motion passed 10-1-1.

Action Items

New action items are listed below:

1. Mr. Dickens will write a memo to the TC describing the ISO procedure; included will be information on how interested foreign parties can contact the ISO.

2. Mr. Dickens and Ms. Rather will fill out the necessary ISO forms.

3. Ms. Rather will have a TC member attend the SC22 meeting in September in Washington, D.C.

4. Any TC members with foreign connections will urge them to participate in this effort.

5. TC language implementors will try the proposed DO ... LOOP.

6. Mr. Betts will set the meeting dates for next year.

7. Mr. Ragsdale will report on one's and two's complement ramifications.

8. Mr. Baden will solicit public comment on YET and THENCE.

9. TC members with feedback on systems concepts will send them to Mr. Rash.

10. Mr. Dickens will ask CBEMA whether we must or may publish through them.

11. Mr. Dickens will continue investigating having optional language words in the standard.

12. Ms. Rather will talk to Mr. Nemeth about chairing the research subcommittee.

13. Ms. Rather will write a letter to GENIE.

14. Mr. Tracy will maintain a library copy of each BASIS.

15. The Documentation Subcommittee will buy a readability index program.

Next Meeting

Mr. Rash asked for feedback on whether the next meeting should be at Goddard or at CBEMA. It was suggested we might meet at CBEMA but move to Goddard for Saturday.

Mr. Betts listed possible meeting sites for 1989 and pointed out that all East Coast meetings are scheduled for Washington, D.C.

OCT 26-29   DC   Mr. Rash
JAN   LA   Mr. Duncan
APR   DC   Mr. Colburn
JUL   SF   Mr. Shaw
OCT   DC

Alternate sites were suggested. The next meeting is scheduled for October 23-26 in Washington, D.C.

Adjournment

The fifth meeting of the X3J14 ANS Forth Technical Committee was adjourned at 3:00 P.M., on Saturday, August 13, 1988.

Submitted by: Martin Tracy, Secretary for X3J14 Meeting #5.