

Tuesday, October, 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 – 3pm ET - Call info: 1.800.944.8766 Code 28685

Present: S. Elhami, D. Haley, M. Salling, W. Nelson, J. Papajorgji

### Follow up reports – 20 min

1. donations letter - 5 min – M

Mark reported that he will work with Heather and Ray to identify individuals in prospective funding agencies, now that the letter is ready and approved by the Board.

2. financial status - 5 min – S

Shoreh reported the budget figures as follows:

- Total expenses in August and September '07: \$461.71, YTD: \$2,879.94; since 2003: \$18,563.41.
- Total contributions in August and September '07: \$7,750.00, YTD: \$9,029.00; since 2003: \$64,178.76.
- Total balance as of end of September '07: \$45,615.35.

3. Afghanistan's mission – 10 min - J
  - a. discoveries

Juna reported briefly on her experience in Kabul and on the numerous well funded projects in support of GIS that were going on. She reported that everyone she met and visited, including her students, expressed that AIMS was the best funded agency in Afghanistan and everyone complained that they do not share data etc. They were also as we already knew, considering going private, although UNDP had been funding them for several years.

- b. important lessons for the cc
      - i. org. policies

Juna shared her belief that it is very important and beneficial to the program that each cc member experiences by themselves the challenges of going on the ground as a volunteer. Although GC don't have any policies right now that require CC members to also be volunteers, she believes that it will improve deeply the cc members understanding not only of the volunteers' experiences, or the challenges faced in a country with a developing economy, but foremost in getting in touch with the political realities of the country's situation. She also suggested that it would be good for the GISCorps to implement a procedure when either it is required of a cc member to take up the challenge of becoming a volunteer on the ground or to make it a requirement when selecting new CC members, that they come from our pool of deployed volunteers. She brought up the example of the Peace Corps organization. This mindset contrasted with the proposed policy language for discussion which guards about not allowing cc members to go on a mission.

Shoreh stated that GISCorps should put emphasis on sending non-CC volunteers to missions. She also said that she sees no problem in sending CC members to fact finding missions where the partner agency or GISCorps do not expend any resources on the project. Mark stated that he can see the benefit for GISCorps when a CC member goes into a fact finding mission, but not in a project as a volunteer, as that was perceived by the three of them as a cc member taking away a project from other volunteers. Dianne will work to rephrase Section 6.7.10 to reflect these comments

c. future opportunities

Juna also mentioned that there were clear future opportunities for more GC projects, both on site and remote.

**Action Items – 30 min**

1. Group email communications – 5 min – W

Wendy reported that URISA's IT folks had taken care of adding the 2 new members to the open group email.

2. GISCorps staff, job description and implementation (*backup*) – 5 min – W, all

Discussion on job description for the dedicated GC staff happened here about the old and the new version of it. Please note that the first version was prepared in September of 2006 and delivered to the Board. It was decided to allow for a little more time to finalize the description and hopefully to start the formal process before the year's end, including payment from GISCorps to URISA. Wendy would be the point of contact.

3. Revised policies (*backup*) – 15 min – all

Discussion on revised policies with everyone giving their input. Final voting would be after November 21.

4. Year's main tasks – 2.5 min - all
5. Defining yearly workload and area of commitment per cc member – 2.5 min – all

Not much talk on 4 and 5 as it was mostly intended to include Kevin and Ingrid as new comers.

**Other – 10 min**

1. VVAF/iMMap project – 5min – all

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, we received a request from iMMap for a remote project. They are interested to deploy volunteers to digitize over 400 scanned maps of North Korea and create two data layers for roads and major population centers. In a couple of follow-up emails we asked questions about the project's budget and then set up a conference call for October 31<sup>st</sup>. At the time of this meeting, the

conference call had not occurred yet. Therefore, the following is a report on what happened at that call and afterwards.

Dianne, Shoreh, Mark, and Wendy attended the call on October 31<sup>st</sup> where Shawn Messick of iMMAP explained the project in detail. He said that this project is in partnership with UN World Food Program (WFP) called Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM). He also explained the technical aspects of the project. Shoreh asked about the funding for the project and Shawn said that they are scrambling for funds all the time and that there is no guaranteed source of income for them. He also said that if GISCorps volunteers do not help with this project, the data won't be compiled because there is no money for it. He said that getting request for work that requires volunteers' assistance is "common" for them and that they would like to use more volunteers for their projects. Mark asked if these datasets will be available to the public. Shawn said that he will let us know about that but more than likely it will be available to agencies who provide humanitarian assistance. Shawn also expressed interest in signing an MOU with GISCorps for continued partnerships.

Shoreh sent a summary of the call to CC members and asked that everyone would send their votes by November 2<sup>nd</sup>. By 11/2, all CC members except for Juna commented and agreed that we should take on this project. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Kevin accepted to take the lead and Dianne said that she would assist Kevin in the process.

## 2. Peace Corps – 5min – all

Dianne, Shoreh, Mark, Kevin, and Wendy attended a conference call with 11 Peace Corps staff on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The following were identified as areas where GISCorps volunteers can assist Peace Corps volunteers:

- 1) Provide GIS training to PC directors and staff members (either in the US or overseas)
- 2) Provide GIS technical support to existing PCVs both on-site and remotely
- 3) Provide GIS experts to Crisis Corps in post disaster situations

In the final correspondence, Tony Bloome, Peace Corps' Information and Communication Technology Specialist (our main contact) asked if we could provide assistance to them to identify a) sources of free GIS courses, b) update our open source web page, and c) conduct a research to find out which GIS interface is easiest for novice. We will recruit a volunteer to take care of these tasks.