

Minutes of GISCorps Monthly Conference Call – April 18, 2006

Present: Wendy Francis, Shoreh Elhami, Ed Wells, Mark Salling, Juna Papajorgji, Martha Lombard, Chris Dionne. The call started at 3:00PM and ended at 5:00 PM with Martha leaving at 3:45.

1. **Trademark Status & Financial Activities:** Chris reported that she has received the certificate of Registration for GISCorps' trademark from the US Patent and Trademark Office which means GISCorps' trademark is now official. The monthly financial report reflected the following: total expenses: \$9,041.99, total contributions: \$50,799.51, and total balance: \$41,757.52. All figures cover the period between mid 2003 and up to March 31st, 2006.

CC Organizational – Another lengthy discussion over the preferred model for recruitment was held. It was decided to make the final decision regarding query based recruitment vs. posting based recruitment or a hybrid of the two for after we move our web site to URISA's server.

More discussions regarding the finance/grant sub committee activities will be held in Vancouver.

2. **Web site update/demo** – Juna stated that she has communicated with Eric and as soon as URISA's site is ready for us, first the static files and then databases will be moved to the new server. Wendy said that the soft launch is scheduled for April 21st. After migration, Frank will evaluate the tasks in SOW to determine which of them are already available in the new environment and which ones have to be handled by the consultant and will then revise and send the new SOW to them to obtain cost estimates.

Juna demonstrated the new enhancements that she had made to the IMS application and also to the mission and volunteer's databases. CC members got a chance to test the new changes which are great.

GISP Credit for GC Volunteers – Shoreh emailed a draft to Scott and he will review and provide us with his feedback.

3. **Deployment related news:**

- **CATHALAC** – From a pool of three volunteers chosen by Mark and Frank, Frank Davenport of CATHALAC selected Josh Pierro for the Cartographer's position. Josh has responded favorably. Frank Davenport will get back with us as soon as he receives final approvals for all the associated costs. Juna reported that she had prepared an MOU based on a template that Chris sent her and has sent it to Frank Davenport. He will get back with her shortly.
- **Sri Lanka** – Living Heritage has sent us a project proposal and cost estimate and has informed us that they can cover the cost of meals and accommodations but not the plane ticket. Shoreh suggested that we send an email to all the volunteers and notify them of the availability of this position. Sending an email of this nature to volunteers is unlike what we have been doing so far, however, considering the circumstances; Shoreh thought that receiving a large number of interested volunteers would be unlikely. All

agreed to proceed accordingly. Shoreh will prepare the job description and will then send it to the HQ staff to be emailed to all the volunteers.

- **BrightEarth** – Shoreh met with Michael Graham in DC and he explained more details about their organization and also their needs for GIS volunteers. They have asked us to attend their monthly conference call to discuss the project in more detail and to also meet with their remaining committee members. Mark has accepted to take care of this project and along with Shoreh will attend the conference call held on April 21st.
- **South Africa** – No responses from South Africa yet and CC members agreed that the project is considered inactive now. Martha asked if she could go and visit with them since she is heading to South Africa to see her daughter. It was the collective opinion of CC members that if Martha visits the organization, we want her to make sure that the contact understands the situation – GISCorps does not follow-up with the organization when there has been no response (because it is considered a “dead” case), so this is not a GISCorps visit and that Martha is there only based on her personal interest in helping.
- **DHS/FEMA** – Shoreh met with Leslie Weiner-Leandro with FEMA while she was in DC. Ed Wells had put her in contact with Leslie and they discussed possibilities of providing volunteers to FEMA via one of their existing programs called Disaster Assistance Employee (DAE). Shoreh has also been in communication with Ron Langhelm (also with FEMA’s GIS division) in this regard. Ron and Leslie serve on the same committee and are both interested in signing an MOU with GISCorps to establish a continued partnership.
- **The Red Cross** – Shoreh met with Greg Tune of the Red Cross and he gave her a tour and also described their operations and also their needs for volunteers. He said that their short term need is for two volunteers. However, they are very much interested in establishing a long term relationship with us (signing an MOU) to ensure a continuous flow of GIS volunteers to their agency. They already have a volunteer program called DSHR and he said that GC volunteers could easily fit into that group which will facilitate all activities to a great extent. He said that he will prepare job descriptions for the two positions and will send them to us shortly.

4. **Other/New:**

- **Video tape review** – Shoreh will go over the power point that Data Transfer Solutions had sent with the clips and will then send the outcome to CC for their final review before it is sent to DTS. She will also ask them about revising/retouching the clips.
- **New Brochure** – Wendy had mentioned that their graphic artist could help us with the brochure. Everyone thought that the new brochure should be a non flashy, one page flyer with maximum of 2 colors and easy to re-produce. Mark will go through the web site and put relevant text into a document and he will then send it to the graphic artist to be finalized. Wendy will also work with Mark and the graphic artist on this project.
- **Policy regarding inactive projects** – Last month we discussed the issue of forwarding projects that are declared inactive to IRC members. The issue was discussed in further details once again and the majority of CC members

agreed that if a request for volunteer does not come to fruition, GISCorps would recommend that the agency contact URISA.

- **Following up with agencies** – Another issue was brought up regarding contacting agencies that place a request for volunteer and do not follow up. Mark asked if we should consider coming up with a policy in this regard. Do we want to follow up with agencies that stop contacting us? So far, this has not been the practice for GISCorps. We will discuss this matter further in Vancouver.
- **Conflict of Interest** – We also discussed the issue of conflict of interest. This issue must be further clarified for both our volunteers as well as the CC members. We need to spell out what is and is not allowed in our policies. We need to answer questions such as: Can a volunteer take a job with an agency that they worked as a volunteer right away? How about after 6 months? Should it be longer? How about CC members? Can they enter into any business with agencies that request volunteers? We will discuss these matters further in Vancouver.
- **Policy regarding Volunteers' presentations** – a discussion was held regarding volunteers' presentations. Everyone agreed that CC members should be the only ones giving presentation as representatives of GISCorps. Volunteers should give presentations about their experience as a volunteer and cannot represent the CC and obviously should not endorse the use of any hardware and software programs during their presentations and/or in any publications. We will discuss this matter further at our retreat in Vancouver.
- **Presentations** – Juna will give a presentation to New York GIS users and the SERUG conference and Shoreh will give a presentation to Michigan GIS users group (IMAGIN) on May 2nd.

Next call: May 16th 2006, 3:00 PM EST