

Minutes of GISCorps face to face meeting at URISA Annual Conference in Washington DC on Wednesday August 22, 2007, at 10:00 AM EST

Present: Shoreh Elhami, Dianne Haley, Mark Salling, Wendy Nelson, Juna Papajorgji, Kevin Sato, Ingrid Bruce.

1. **Financial Report:** The monthly financial report reflected the following:
 - Total expenses in July '07: \$56.43, and since 2003: \$18,101.70.
 - Total contributions in July '07: None and since 2003: \$56,428.76.
 - Total balance as of end of July '07: \$38,327.06.

Note: We received a check from BAAMA chapter for \$1,000 at the conference. Also, Engineers without Borders/University of Washington will send a \$1,700 check as honorarium for our latest Afghanistan mission.

2. Subcommittee Reports:

- **Website:** Shoreh reported that the list of enhancements (17 items) have been posted on a Google document page for the past couple of months and ready to be handed to the two programmers (with EDATS). They will take care of the first two items (our top priorities). **Shoreh will contact Paresh and Marcelle** to find out about their final recommendation on the test environment so these two tasks can get started. We need to look for additional resources to take care of the remainder of the enhancements.
- **Publications/Public Relations:** Dianne reported that the Volunteer Deployment Handbook is now online at: http://www.giscorps.org/vol_handbook.pdf. This document is the result of months of work by Dianne and a group of volunteers. She has also been developing newsletters and revising forms that are used in the recruitment process. All the revised forms are placed on GISCorps' FTP site. Shoreh asked if Dianne could update our brochure/flyer for future conferences which she said that she would. **Shoreh will provide all the graphics to Dianne.**
- **Financial Resources:** Mark had developed a white paper and a sample cover letter to donors several months ago. This document was reviewed by the BOD three times and each time several comments and changes were suggested. Those changes were reflected on the document and as a result the "Volunteer Release document" was revised and reviewed and approved by lawyers. The latest suggestion was to revise the GC Policy to reflect the allowance for travel expenses. That change was approved by the BOD at their August 19th meeting. Mark and his sub Committee will now proceed with **a) the research work on potential donors and b) start working on developing a Travel Reimbursement Procedure tailored after URISA's travel policies.**
- **Volunteer Development:** More changes have been made to the Standard Operating Procedure Manual (SOPM) document for recruitment by Shoreh and Dianne and the document was then provided to the web committee (latest copy on the FTP site). Shoreh will work with the web committee to ensure that every stage of the recruitment procedure is reflected on the new volunteer database and on the web site in general.

- **Partnership:** No more words from OCHA yet but we met with two people from iMMAP at the annual conference. Joe Donahue and William Barron. They are basically interested in working with us at two levels; 1) continue asking for our volunteers when emergencies arise as they did after the tsunami, 2) make us a part of a coalition that would work with a variety of players (governmental and non governmental) to both promote the use and value of GIS in an emergency response situation and also seek more support in form of grants and donations. The majority of the CC agreed that we should continue working with them on item 1. On item 2, even though there were some reservations, the decision was made to contact them and let them know that we will be interested in attending their meetings to learn more about their ideas and projects. **Mark will draft an email to iMMAP.**
- **K-12:** Shoreh reported that the K-12 sub committee lead by Beni Patel now has two new initiatives:
 - A non profit organization called cachingourworld contacted GC and asked for volunteer support. The founder, Rose Haverkos, asked that +/-60 volunteers help her inner city Title 1 children during the Geography Awareness week in November. Also, she asked for ongoing support on creating an online portal for images and maps from all over the world. Laura Horton (on K-12 committee) will be helping out with this project and Lucia Barbato (who recently joined the K-12 committee) is also helping with this project. Rose is from Ohio and Shoreh said that she could use her contacts in Ohio to help out with getting her volunteers for the Geography Awareness week events.
 - After meeting with ESRI people in San Diego, their team put us in contact with 4-H groups and Leeanne Pacatte (also on K-12 committee) who is leading this effort posted our volunteers' availability on 4-H list serve and since then 7 counties have expressed interest.

3. Other:

- **Statement to the URISA Board of Directors (BOD):** The following issues were brought up as part of a 33 page document/statement that was sent to the BOD on August 9th (a copy of this document is placed on the FTP site). The CC basically expressed concern over three issues and the Board and the CC (all CC members attended the BOD meeting) agreed on the following:
 - I. **Project Selection:** the concern was over lack of clarity as it pertains to line of authority relating to evaluation and selection of partner agencies. Even though our Policies place this responsibility in the hands of the CC, there have been interferences that have hindered our activities in the past. As we started the discussion on this matter at the BOD meeting more unclear relationships surfaced and as a result, it was decided that **Mark and Dianne would draft a protocol** that lays out the relationship between GC and URISA.
 - II. **Hiring:** Seeking part-time assistance to alleviate the work load of the Core Committee members. After a lengthy discussion over type of the assistance that GC needs, **Shoreh volunteered to**

revise the job description that was developed earlier this year and send it to Wendy. Wendy in turn will let us know which of those tasks could be performed by her staff, for how many hours per week, and for what hourly rate.

III. **Financial Matter:** Lack of autonomy to seek funds from potential donors, ambiguity in division of funds and/or authority over expenditures. CC's main concerns were over two issues; 1) seeking donations from potential donors; 2) division of funds. On the first issue, as it's mentioned above (under the Financial Resources), the BOD approved that we go forward with seeking donations. On the matter of division of funds, we brought up three issues: a) there should be no charges for services that were provided to GC by HQ staff since 2004 (contrary to some correspondences from HQ staff). This matter was agreed upon. b) If URISA plans to charge its Programs (i. e. GC) for various expenses, URISA Bylaws and Policy manual must reflect that immediately, c) If URISA plans to charge GC for any expenses, those expenses must be identified in detail and the amount provided to GC at budget time. In order to address issues b and c and in general to further clarify the financial relationship between the two entities, Mark will work with URISA's Finance Committee (CY Smith, Al Butler, Mark Sievers, and Allen Ibaugh).

- **Discussion over determining partner agency's budget:** The issue is over determining a partner agency's financial status as it relates to services that they are asking of GC and especially concern over working with PA's with very large budget. We had discussed this matter in the past and it was suggested that adding two questions to the Partner Agency's form would further clarify the PA's status. The two questions were:

- a) How much of your budget is set aside for the tasks that you are seeking GISCorps' help for?
- b) Would you afford to perform these tasks (perhaps by hiring consultants) if GISCorps volunteers weren't available?

While the majority of CC found these two questions helpful, they all agreed that finding out all the details about financial being of an entity is not an easy task (we are not a detective agency). The majority did agree however, that adding a third question especially when a grant is involved would be helpful as well.

- c) If the project that you are seeking GISCorps' assistance is funded by a grant, please submit a copy of that grant.

4. **Deployment related news:** Shoreh reported that the Pakistan and Biloxi projects are completed. The third Afghan project will be completed by September 7th and Juna is heading to Kabul by the end of the month. We have two more projects that have started and are in various stages (AAAS, HCV). Juna has selected volunteers for two of the GSDI projects in West Africa and Mongolia. And we have seven pending K-12 related (4-H club) in the works. There is also a request from Ohio IMT to create a GISCorps reserve group for emergency

response. Shoreh will ask that they send a formal request for this project. Also, we now have a Project opportunity webpage where a summary of missions in progress can be found at: http://www.giscorps.org/proj_opp.php.

5. **Elections:**

- **Candidates for Chair and Vice-chair:** Juna declared her interest in running for the Chair position and Mark for the Vice-Chair. The majority voted for the new assignments.
- **Candidates for at-large CC members:** Ingrid Bruce and Kevin Sato declared their interest in running for CC membership. The majority voted for adding both of them to the CC. Ingrid and Kevin: Congratulations and welcome to CC!

Next call: Tuesday September 11th, 2007 at 3:00 PM EST. ??