

**MINUTES OF USUCGER BOARD MEETING  
CONFERENCE CALL  
AUGUST 18, 2004**

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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jean-Louis Briaud-President, David Elton, Susan Burns, Stephen Dickenson, Carlos Santamarina (first 45 min. of conference call), and Russell Green

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** (Sarah Gassman – absent from conference call, but e-mailed comments/views on agenda items to the entire Board prior to conference call.)

**MEETING COMMENCED AT 2:30 P.M. CST.**

**1. USUCGER RESEARCH INVESTMENT AWARD**

Board Member Carlos Santamarina assembled a committee to select a recipient for the USUCGER Research Investment Award. The committee members were: J. Bray, R. Finno, S. Kramer, E. Rathje, G. Rix, and A. Whittle. During the first round of the selection process, five people were nominated for the award. During the second round, the committee members voted and selected Al DiMillio (FHWA) as the recipient (one committee member abstained from the second round voting).

The Board had a discussion on the frequency at which Research Investment Award is given (currently the award is given every three years), as well as the frequency of all the awards that USUCGER gives. The Board agreed that the issuance frequency of all the awards should be revisited.

**2. 2006 USUCGER CONFERENCE**

In the previous Board conference call, five possible locations were identified for the 2006 USUCGER Conference: UC Davis, UC San Diego, UN Reno, ASU (Phoenix, AZ), and U. Washington. An e-mail was sent by Jean-Louis Briaud to the Board Members to rank the top choices. The results were as follows:

1. UC San Diego
2. U. Washington & ASU (Phoenix, AZ)
4. UC Davis
5. UN Reno

The Board discussed the possibility of holding the 2006 USUCGER meeting in collaboration with another societal meeting (e.g., 2006 ASCE Geo-Institute meeting in Atlanta, GA). It was noted that such a collaborative conference would imply the conference location would be a priori selected, hence negating the above ranking locations. The advantages and disadvantages of running the meeting in parallel and sequentially with another meeting were discussed. There was general agreement among the Board that sequentially would be the best, if there was proper coordination among the two conference organizing committees. Jean-Louis Briaud stated that he would discuss the idea of a collaborative conference with Geo-Institute President Sandra Houston at an

upcoming ASCE event in October. There was general agreement among the Board that if collaborative conferences were to become the norm in the future, the collaborators should be rotated among the various societies to ensure USUCGER maintains its own identity.

### **3. USUCGER DISTINGUISHED RESEARCHER AWARD**

Jean-Louis Briaud sent a draft of the description of the USUCGER Distinguished Research Award to the Board prior to the conference call (e-mail sent August 18, 2004, with the subject line "UBOARD: Agenda revised"). The draft reflected some of the comments made via e-mail by Sarah Gassman, namely the inclusion of the word "innovative" as a descriptor of the research contributions of the recipient. Sarah also pointed out in her e-mail that the award description had conflicting sentences regarding the frequency at which the award will be given. As discussed in Item 1 above, the Board agreed to review the issuance frequency of all USUCGER awards, to include the Distinguished Researcher Award. The Board also agreed to use the word "affiliate" in place of "registrant" as the title for people associated with a USUCGER-member institution. There was agreement among the Board that the potential recipients for the Distinguished Researcher Award would be limited to US affiliates.

### **4. NEW RESEARCH INITIATIVE**

Overview: The new research initiative was outlined in an e-mail from Jean-Louis Briaud to the USUCGER membership at large (the e-mail was sent Tuesday, June 15, 2004, with the subject line "USUCGER: 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Emphasis = Research Help"). It is proposed that USUCGER ask professional organizations to develop a page on their web site where industry members can post problems that they face which can be solved by appropriate research. The proposed initiative differs from that headed by Professor Dowding (Research Committee) in that the proposed initiative is "ideas" focused as opposed to a contact database.

Jean-Louis Briaud stated that DFI and ADSC are the first two organizations contacted through Tracy Brettmann (DFI) and Scot Litke (ADSC). Both are very receptive to the idea and have started to implement it. The next two organizations to be contacted are the Geo-Institute (Sandra Houston) and ASFE (John Bachner).

### **5. HOUSE KEEPING ISSUES**

1. Logo at the bottom of the USUCGER website: Susan Burns replaced the old USUCGER logo with the new Logo at the bottom of the USUCGER website.
2. Vote on the USUCGER Membership and Dues Structure: On June 30, 2004 Jean-Louis Briaud sent an e-mail to the USUCGER member at large with the subject line "USUCGER: Vote on Dues and Membership". Attached to the e-mail was the proposed USUCGER Membership and Dues Structure, which was unanimously approved by the Board during the June 29, 2004 conference call. The purpose of the e-mail was to call for a vote among the members for adopting the new dues and membership structure. The e-mail requested that the votes be sent to Jean-Louis before August 2, 2004. There were a total of 32 votes: 32 yes and 0 no. Therefore the new structure is now in place and is posted on the USUCGER

website. The Board expressed appreciation for Barbara Luke's efforts in spearheading the change in the membership and dues structure.

3. Transfer of the USUCGER website and e-mail list to Georgia Tech: The USUCGER website and e-mail list will be transferred to Georgia Tech around December of this year. The reason for this is Susan Burns (webmaster) has accepted a position at Georgia Tech. No significant interruption to the website or e-mail list server is anticipated.
4. USUCGER treasury account: Sarah Gassman has setup a USUCGER bank account in South Carolina. Barbara Luke mailed a check for the balance of the treasury account (\$28,472) to Sarah on August 6<sup>th</sup>. Sarah is anticipating that the check will arrive soon.

## **6. NEW IDEAS**

Stephen Dickenson related recent experiences that he has had regarding lobbying efforts to increase research funding for port facilities in Oregon. Stephen thought that similar efforts at the national level for geotechnical research funding would be worth consideration. The Board agreed that this was a very good idea, as well as acknowledging the difficulties and cost of embarking on such an endeavor. USUCGER-backed lobbying efforts will be put on the next Board agenda for further discussion.

## **7. OTHER ITEMS**

1. TRB Workshop: Sarah Gassman stated via e-mail that she has currently received three applications for the 2005 TRB Doctoral Student Research in Transportation Geotechnics workshop. Sarah is the USUCGER moderator for the session this year. The deadline for applications is August 31, 2004; based on past experiences, she anticipates receiving about six more applications.
2. TRB PhD Reception: Sarah Gassman asked via e-mail whether USUCGER was going to host a reception following the PhD session at the TRB workshop. USUCGER supported such receptions for the past three years, which cost approximately \$1000 per year and was attended by approximately 50 to 100 people each year. The Board approved sponsoring the reception again this year.
3. Reimbursement for Travel Expenses for Board Members: There was a general discussion regarding the reimbursement of travel expenses for USUCGER Board members to various conferences, workshops, meetings, etc. In the past, Board members have only been reimbursed for travel expenses to USUCGER Board meetings. The Board voted in favor of the continuation of the policy that limits reimbursements for Board members' travel expenses to those incurred to attend USUCGER Board meetings only.
4. Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting was scheduled for October 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm CST

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 4:00 P.M. CST**