

## **MINUTES OF USUCGER BOARD MEETINGS**

**MEETING HELD IN AUSTIN, TX, (INCONJUNCTION WITH GEOFRONTIERS)  
JANUARY 23, 2005**

**AND**

**TELECONFERENCE MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 4, 2005 (TELECONFERENCE WAS HELD  
DUE TO THE LACK OF A QUORUM AT THE JANUARY 23, 2005 MEETING)**

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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE JANUARY 23, 2005 MEETING:** Jean-Louis Briaud-  
President, Sarah Gassman, and Russell Green

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FROM THE JANUARY 23, 2005 MEETING:** Susan Burns,  
Stephen Dickenson, David Elton, Carlos Santamarina

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR THE FEBRUARY 4, 2005 TELECONFERENCE:** Jean-  
Louis Briaud-President, Sarah Gassman, Susan Burns, Stephen Dickenson, Carlos  
Santamarina, and Russell Green

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FROM THE FEBRUARY 4, 2005 TELECONFERENCE:** David  
Elton

**JANUARY 23, 2005 MEETING COMMENCED AT 2:30 P.M. CST.**

**FEBRUARY 4, 2005 TELECONFERENCE COMMENCED AT 1:00 P.M. CST.**

### **1. TREASURER REPORT**

Treasurer Sarah Gassman presented the USUCGER treasury report. The current balance in the USUCGER accounts is approximately \$29.4k, from which the costs for last month's TRB session and reception and the Board travel expenses to the present meeting need to be deducted. It is estimated that the resulting balance will be about \$27.5k. It is estimated that the annual income is approximately \$9k, while the annual expenses are estimated to be around \$6.5 to \$8.5k; [Note: The averaged annual expenses over the last 4 years has only been approximately \$4.8k because the actual expenses for the website and accounting support were less than the amount allotted.] The income comes solely from membership dues, and the expenses include: TRB session and reception (~\$1200), website support (\$1600), website domain name (~\$35), accounting support (~\$500), Board Travel (~\$3000 to \$5000), GeoCouncil dues (\$100), awards (~\$200). Dues are biennial and are due September 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Jean-Louis Briaud proposed that the Board consider funding special projects with the excess income. The project proposals would have to come through one of the Committees and could be anything related to committee work (e.g., maintenance of database of agencies funding geotechnical research). Also, it was proposed that the travel expenses for the Committee Chairs to the annual meetings be covered or subsidized.

During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, the Board voted unanimously to give both the Research and Education Committees \$500 per year to be used at the discretion of the Committee Chairs. Also, the Board unanimously approved the Committee Special Projects proposal.

## **2. DUES SCHEDULE**

Jean-Louis Briaud will present an overview of the newly approved USUCGER dues structure at tonight's USUCGER general meeting. Sarah Gassman drafted changes to Article III, Section 2 (membership categories) of the bylaws that reflect the new dues structure. However, it was noted that Article III, Section 1 (membership qualifications) also requires changes so that it is consistent with the new dues structure.

**ACTION ITEM:** Russell Green will draft changes to Article III, Section 1 (membership qualifications) such that it is consistent with the new dues structure.

## **3. WEB SITE REPORT**

The USUCGER website and list servers have been transferred to Georgia Tech, although some glitches may still need to be worked out.

During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, Susan Burns reported that only one glitch still needs to be fixed with the website, other than that everything should be working.

## **4. AWARDS FREQUENCY**

Based on previous Board discussions, Jean-Louis Briaud proposed the following awards schedule:

- USUCGER Distinguished Researcher Award = Every three years (2008, 2011)
- USUCGER Distinguished Educator Award = Every three years (2006, 2009)
- USUCGER Distinguished Service Award = Every three years (2007, 2010)
- USUCGER Research Investment Award = Every three years (2007, 2010)

A general call for nominations should take place for each award, with the deadlines for the nominations being dictated by the date of the annual meeting at which the respective award will be presented.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Post new awards schedule on the USUCGER website.
2. Take photograph of award tonight's award ceremony and post on the USUCGER website, as well as write a press release and sent to GeoStrata, Civil Engineering Magazine, Geotechnical News, and the newsletters for ADSC, DFI, and ASFE.

## **5. ATLANTA 2006 USUCGER CONFERENCE**

The 2006 USUCGER meeting will be held in conjunction with the 2006 Atlanta GeoCongress – the USUCGER meeting will be held February 25<sup>th</sup>, the day before GeoCongress starts. The announcements for the GeoCongress were just sent out and the USUCGER meeting is listed in the announcement. Susan Burns and Carlos Santamarina

are taking the lead in organizing the USUCGER meeting. Jean-Louis Briaud will mention the 2006 USUCGER meeting at tonight's general meeting.

During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, the Board decided that the theme for the 2006 USUCGER meeting should be on lobbying for research funding (see item 7 below).

## **6. RESEARCH EFFORTS**

Both ADSC and DFI are working on developing web pages for their members to list geotechnical problems that may be able to be resolved by research. Once these web pages are up and running, USUCGER will include a link on its web page to them.

## **7. LOBBYING FOR RESEARCH**

In the past two Board meetings, the idea of USUCGER taking proactive measures to increase geotechnical research funding via lobbying efforts has been discussed. Stephen Dickenson has been involved in similar efforts at the state level regarding port facilities. Although the Board is interested in the idea, it is uncertain where to begin on embarking on such an endeavor. During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, the Board decided that the theme for the 2006 USUCGER meeting should be on lobbying for research funding, with pertinent lobbyists being invited to the meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jean-Louis Briaud will ask Stephen Dickenson to write a couple page proposal on USUCGER lobbying efforts. This proposal will be used as a starting point for discussing collaborative lobbying efforts with other organizations (e.g., ASCE).

## **8. EDUCATION EFFORTS**

There was a general discussion of the activities of the Education Committee, but the exact details of the activities and their status/progress were unknown. [The same was stated for the activities of the Research Committee.] Two suggestions were made to remedy this: 1) Have the Committee Chairs write annual reports; and 2) Have the Committee Chairs be involved in the Board meetings – see Item 10 below.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jean-Louis Briaud will request via e-mail that the Research and Education Committee Chairs write annual reports (a couple pages in length) on the respective committee activities/initiatives/progress.

## **9. MSE WALL STUDENT COMPETITION**

The first national MSE wall competition was held on Monday, January 24, 2005 in conjunction with the GeoFrontiers conference. Twenty teams submitted proposals to participate in the competition, but funding was only available for five teams. USUCGER was not involved in the organization of the competition nor the selection of the teams. Jean-Louis suggested that this competition may be something that the Education Committee should be involved with (i.e., helping establish and promoting regional competitions, which would be used to determine the participants in the national competition).

Jean-Louis Briaud handed out the following pre-written "Recommendation to the GI Board" at the Board meeting about the MSE Wall Competition. The Board edited "Recommendation" is:

1. The USUCGER Board congratulates the GI Board for its MSE Wall Student Contest initiative.
2. USUCGER is prepared to provide logistical support and cooperation for future MSE Wall Student Contests.
3. The USUCGER Board recommends that any student team that wishes to participate in the competition be allowed to participate, with regional competitions being held and used to determine which teams participate in the national competition.
4. The USUCGER Board recommends that the student geo-competitions not be limited to MSE walls, but rather the focus of the competition change to other geo-themes periodically.

#### **10. NEW MEMBERS**

Dave Elton and Susan Burns will be completing their terms as Board members this year, with Susan assuming the duties as President of USUCGER. Consequently, there will be one opening on the Board. The Board thought that the new Board member should have the same junior/senior rank as the out-going Board members. In this case, the new Board member would be a "Senior" person to replace Dave Elton. The criteria for discerning whether a person is Senior or Junior person is left up to the nominating committee. Also, because Susan Burns will be assuming the duties of President, consideration needs to be given as to whom will take over the duties of webmaster.

It was suggested that the Chairs of the Research and Education Committees be somehow integrated into the Board. It was suggested that they be non-voting members of the Board. Currently there are no term limits set for the Committee Chairs.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Susan Burns, acting as President-Elect, will organize a nominating to recommend names of potential (senior) Board members. The names of the candidates should be established in time to have an April election.
2. Board vote on integrating the Committee Chairs into the Board as non-voting members.

#### **11. GENERAL MEETING**

The USUCGER General Meeting was scheduled for Sunday, January 23, 2005, from 7:30 to 8:30pm at the GeoFrontiers Conference. Jean-Louis Briaud prepared the agenda for the General Meeting and passed it out to the Board for review. Sarah Gassman volunteered to make sure the room was appropriately set up for the General Meeting.

#### **12. USUCGER – GEO-INSTITUTE MOU**

Jean-Louis Briaud, acting in his capacity as a member of the Board of Governors for the G-I, drafted a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the G-I and USUCGER.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jean-Louis will send the draft MOU for a Board vote.

Jean-Louis sent the draft MOU to the Board members as an attachment to an e-mail on Friday, January, 28, 2005. During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, the Board unanimously approved the MOU. Susan Burns acting as USUCGER President-elect will electronically sign the MOU and will forward in to the GI Board of Governors.

### **13. TRB SESSION AND RECEPTION**

Jean-Louis Briaud reported on the TRB session and reception which Sarah Gassman organized and Jean-Louis chaired/hosted. There were nine presenters at the session with approximately 15 to 20 attendees. Approximately 35 people attended the reception. Due to the trend in decreasing attendance at the session/reception, Jean-Louis suggested that the next Ph.D. session be held in conjunction with a GI conference and the reception be held following the triennial USUCGER meetings, as opposed to the session and reception being held in conjunction with the annual TRB meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** Bring to a Board vote Jean-Louis' proposal to hold the USUCGER Ph.D. Session in conjunction with an annual GI conference and hold the USUCGER Reception following the triennial USUCGER meeting.

During the February 4<sup>th</sup> teleconference, the Board unanimously approved the proposal to switch the venue of the USUCGER session and reception. The USUCGER Reception will be held Saturday night, 25 February 2006.

**ACTION ITEM:** Sarah Gassman will draft a proposal for a USUCGER Ph.D. session to be held at the 2006 GeoCongress (Session proposal deadline for GeoCongress is 31 March 2005). following the triennial USUCGER meeting.

### **14. NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The next meeting will be held via teleconference on Friday, February 4, 2005, at 12:00 CST. (The time and date for this meeting was sent to the entire Board via e-mail from Jean-Louis Briaud on Monday, January 31, 2005, with the subject line "UBOARD: Meeting Friday?"

The next meeting will be held via teleconference in approximately a month and a half; no specific date and time were set for the teleconference.

### **15. MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Jean-Louis Briaud and his wife donated \$1000.00 to USUCGER to use at the discretion of the Board. Jean-Louis asked to be kept informed of how the money is spent.
2. The Board decided that Board member attendance at a Board meeting is requisite for reimbursement for travel expenses to the meeting.

**JANUARY 23, 2005 MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 4:20 P.M. CST**

**FEBRUARY 4, 2005 TELECONFERENCE ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 2:30 P.M. CST**