



Geological Society of Connecticut



Agenda- Board of Directors Retreat Geological Society of Connecticut August 8, 2014, 12:30 – 6:00 PM Ralph Lewis Home, Hadlyme, CT.

Present:; Peter LeTourneau, Ralph Lewis, Harold (Fritz) Moritz, Janet Stone, Dan Vellone, Drew Hyatt

General Discussion (pre-meeting)

- RL reported on an email request as to whether the GSC would provide a membership list to AEEG (association of environmental and engineering geologists).
 - Considerable discussion followed on the benefits and drawbacks of providing membership lists to those outside the membership and to those in the membership.
 - Several mechanisms to get permission from members were discussed but there was no resolution to the discussion.
 - DV indicated he would investigate what the AEEG organization wanted to use the list for and what they would provide. DH will forward the original email request to DV.
 - It was agreed that we would not provide the list to AEEG at present (*i.e.* no response to the email at this time).

Call to Order: 13:32

Old Business:

- a) Minutes from last meeting – moved , seconded, unanimously approved

Reports:

- a) Treasurer's Report submitted electronically by MT was accepted and is appended to the end of these minutes

Discussion Items as per Agenda Circulated via email

- (1) **Web Site** - *Peter suggests a 5 year assessment. Dan has obtained a proposal from a designer who would be paid and Matte has a proposal based on free student set up and easy operation thereafter. I think this decision rests on how much we need to do to support either approach. In either case, we still need to supply content/material for the site. The question boils down to: 1) who maintains the smooth operation/troubleshooting/modification etc. of the site, and do we want to pay for this? 2) Do we want to post the material or pay to have it posted? I have forwarded Dan's and Matte's emails about this. The devil is not in the details of each proposal but in what we are and are not willing to do (see Other Discussion Issues below).*

- a) RL expressed, on behalf of the organization, great thanks to PL for his efforts in designing, developing, and maintaining the GSC website. This has taken a significant amount of time for which all were very appreciative.
- b) RL summarized various points of discussion on the website, noting that it has outgrown the good efforts of one volunteer.
- c) It was noted that content development for posting on the website would remain the responsibility of the board, regardless of future directions that the website might take.
- d) Two models have been presented:
 - o Option A: As summarized by DV involved hiring a professional web design person to revamp the website taking existing content to a new interface. Benefits include expandability, continuity, potentially greater functionality (e.g. mobile content, apps, etc.). Drawbacks seem to be primarily costs.
 - o Option B: As developed through the efforts of MT and her student employee was to have a student build and maintain the site. Benefits: cost-effective, seems to meet our present demands, perhaps faster response time depending upon how the exchange of content is arranged. Drawbacks: continuity may be an issue as there is more frequent student turn-over.
- e) General discussion followed:
 - o It would be necessary to have some form of payment for the student.
 - o It would also be important, regardless of the approach, to have a single point-of-contact on the board to work with the student.
 - DH indicated possible interest in serving as the board point person, but that this might mean that he would need to be replaced as co-secretary.
 - o It should be noted that MT was not at the meeting and that she will likely have important feedback on this issue.
 - o PL was in favor of option B at present, perhaps reevaluating in the future to determine if moving to a professionally platform is better.
 - o DV suggested that for a student run web site it might make sense to affiliate with a professor rather than a student, perhaps approaching a media arts professor as opposed to a geoscience professor.
 - o JS commented that of critical importance is the ability to post time-sensitive materials (in addition to regularly anticipated posts).
- f) Motion: Adopt the new look website following the Matte/Lindsey model (option B above) within the limits of what is possible at this stage as the new approach to the web site.
 - o Approved and agreed to adopt for the fall meeting.

- DV took separate notes which he subsequently circulated via email prior to the release of these minutes. His detailed notes are appended at the end of these minutes.
- g) Newsletter discussion followed:
- PL indicated that ideally a newsletter would be released 4x per year. Presently we have 2 newsletters per year and there are some challenges to getting these out.
 - The key issue is that content needs to be provided to the newsletter person in a timely fashion.
 - Ads on the newsletter are not permitted given the nonprofit status of the organization.
 - There was discussion as to whether the newsletters should just be for articles and move other items to the website.
- h) Motion: Charge the communication committee to meet and bring a proposal to the board for their next meeting on developing a newsletter for circulation 4 times per year. Passed.
- (2) **Annual Meeting**: *Will we pay for venues?*
- a) It was agreed that the organization has not in the past and does not intend to pay room fees for annual meeting venues, recognizing that the board has and is likely to pay for catering and related expenses.
- (3) **NEIGC and Spring Field Trip**: *Nothing concrete on NEIGC yet but have met with Wesleyan twice. Field trip ideas?*
- a) JS and RL spoke with Wesleyan about the 2015 NEIGC meeting. There will be requests to lead field trips. Nontraditional (nonacademic) trips are welcome. Please raise the idea of running a field trip with peers to drum up interest.
- (4) **Scholarship Fund** – General Principles Going Forward
- a) RL summarized feedback he had received via email on scholarship funds, fund, raising, and other related ideas.
 - b) Several have suggested using the fall annual meeting as an opportunity to encourage contributions to the scholarship fund.
 - c) DV raised the possibility of increasing the price for the annual meeting to include a contribution to the scholarship fund.
 - d) Discussion followed on advantages and disadvantages of doing this.
 - e) PL commented that it would be important to know the accountants perspective to make sure we stay within the constraint imposed by our nonprofit status. PL will contact the accountant to be clear on limitations relating to fund raising and our nonprofit status.

(5) Other Discussion – Attendance at Board Meetings. *Attendance at Board Meetings has been marginal lately, and committees have not been conducting business for quite a while. One requested agenda topic relates to a definition of nonperformance by board members. In several instances the make-up of the board (heavy on public employees who are constrained in carrying out certain functions such as recommending consultants when answering Society E-mail requests and/ or soliciting sponsorships, etc.. This may also apply to any initiative regarding professional licensing of geologists? We are a volunteer organization and can only pull off what people who volunteer are capable of or are willing to do. As much as we would like to, devoting large amounts of time to Society undertakings is often not feasible or practical.*

Given this, we need to think long and hard about what we want to take on in the future. How limited are our resources (financially and time wise), and what can we realistically do given our present make-up. The following is a list of ideas that have been brought up as agenda items or in meetings. Which of them can we realistically do (all, some, or none)?

- a) RL commented on the need to encourage participation by board members on activities, and to work through the committee structure to maintain forward momentum on board initiatives. Also he emphasized that it was important to consider, realistically, what is possible given the volunteer nature of the board
 - It was agreed that board members need to engage in GSC initiatives through meeting attendance, by serving as a champion for an initiative, and by contributing time, content, or expertise as pertinent to the issue at hand.
- b) DV raised the suggestion of developing stronger ties with academic departments and encouraging students to become involved in GSC activities. Productive discussion followed. DV volunteered to write a draft letter to department chairs inviting them to be part of an advisory group. He will circulate that draft letter to the board via email.
- c) Discussion followed on what is the fundamental purpose of the organization
 - It was generally agreed that the GSC is an organization that enables professionals and others with interest in the Geology of Connecticut to meet and discuss issues of interest. The fundamental functions of the GSC are to:
 - Organize and run a fall annual meeting and a spring field trip with elements similar to those presently used at these meetings.
 - Provide recognition on work relating to the Geology of Connecticut through the Peoples award, and a student scholarship/research fund
 - Provide a website that deliver's useful content from the society to its membership.
 - Provide a newsletter reporting on geoscience in CT that has outreach to academia, professional community, and citizen geoscientists.
 - It was agreed that initiatives undertaken by the GSC should relate to these fundamental functions.

- It was also agreed that all initiatives would need to have a board member serving as champion in order to ensure that the initiative moves to completion.
 - d) Discussion followed on how best to reinvigorate sub-committee activity.
 - It was suggested that subcommittees need to meet so as to be able to report back to the board at board meetings.
 - RL gave a charge to the Education and Communications subcommittees to meet prior to the next board meeting to report back on: (i) what has been accomplished in the past year, (ii) what the committee needs to do as it relates to the four fundamental indicatives identified above, and (iii) determine whether there is a need to juggle membership on the committee.
- (6) Other Discussion – Fundraising: *Sponsors (limited/no ability of public sector Board members to approach potential sponsors)? Merchandise Sales (how much effort for the potential return)? Advertising (same question)?*
- a) FM and DV indicated interest in investigating fund raising through the sale of merchandise – FM will champion this cause and report back to the board.
- (7) Answering E-mail Requests: How important, who coordinates?
- a) RL reported on the variety of email that the organization receives, and he requested direction on how to field general interest emails (*e.g.* what kind of rock is in my backyard type of question).
 - b) The group agreed that RL could respond to emails, and that general questions (*i.e.* rock in my yard) were not consistent with the function of the organization. However, it was suggested that the Education committee may want to revisit this issue and make recommendations to the board.
 - c) RL will track and respond to email.
- (8) CT Bedrock Map: What is the plan? Can we pull it off?
- a) FM commented on the need for a new bedrock map of CT. General discussion followed.
 - b) JS commented that Bob Wintsch is the most appropriate person to do this.
 - c) There was general agreement that this is an issue that the GSC can encourage, but that it is beyond the scope of the organization to undertake by itself.
- (9) Speakers Bureau: Who is willing to travel to give talks?
- a) There have been suggestions of developing a speaker bureau to enable the membership to request presentations from experts on a variety of geological topics.
 - b) The general view is that this may be a difficult task, and that it is not consistent with the primary functions of the organization to have a formal speaker's bureau

on the web site. However, informal requests through member email could be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

(10) Society Journal? Professional Licensing?

a) Not at present

b) Professional licensing – GSC could be an advocate but not a driver for this issue.

Next Board Meeting: Oct. 1, 2014

Motion to Adjourn 5:28 p.m.

Attachment 1: Treasurer's Report



GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CONNECTICUT

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Board of Directors 2014

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Mike Wizevich

Geological Society of Connecticut Treasurer's Report

August 6, 2014

Accounts

Summary as of August 5, 2014

PayPal	\$6457.55
Savings	\$ 797.48
<u>Checking</u>	<u>\$ 180.13</u>
Total Assets=	\$7435.16

Scholarship Fund:

\$2000.00 [via BOD 2/2014]

\$ 183.57 [donations since Nov 2013 Annual Meeting Announcement: donations – PP fees]

~~\$-500.00~~ Scholarship Award to James Farrell 6/2014

\$1683.57 TOTAL [Included in assets reported above]

Other Activities:

Tax Year Summary July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014 underway.

Detailed accounting to be available for next BOD meeting October 1, 2014

submitted by M.Thomas

Appended Email Summary from DV on Website Discussion (sent Saturday August 9)

We had a very good time at Ralph's home yesterday, and very productive discussions of the agenda topics. One topic in particular that we devoted a good amount of time discussing was the update and revision of the GSC webpage. It was collectively agreed to pursue a student-developed website, building upon the updated framework that Lindsey has already created. Again, here's what she put together as a sample. www.geologicalsocietyct.weebly.com

In an exercise to quantify the Society's needs for development and management, we compiled the following list. Additionally, we can use this list to identify if these tasks are within Lindsey's abilities, or if we wish to move on another direction in the future (professional consultant, other student resources e.g., computer science, etc.). If there are items or tasks not outlined here or if you have other thoughts for website content, please share them so that we can move in a direction to ***possibly*** have the new website functional in time for the annual meeting this Fall.

PayPal Functionality – initial set-up/pre-meeting assistance and as-needed maintenance

Membership Database – Initial development/integration, link to PayPal registration for dues renewal and meeting/field trip registration, etc., and as-needed

(GSC Secretary on-demand access)

Board Meeting Minutes – 6x/year

BOD Elections –

- Call for nominations, mid-September
- Ballot, mid-October

Taxes – 1x annually

Activity Calendar – initial development, quarterly updates (4x/year) or updated by BOD Secretary???

Annual Meeting (Fall) –

- Pre-meeting notice, mid-September
- Meeting registration, mid-October
- Post-meeting pictures, etc. – January

Spring Field Trip –

- Pre-meeting notice
- Meeting registration
- Post-meeting pictures, etc.

GSC Website Store/Merchandise – TBD

Publications/Field Trip Guides – TBD/As-needed

Thanks again to Ralph for welcoming us to his home. My son, Jack, had a particularly good time!

Dan